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"We still know virtually nothing about Shakspeare in his presumed capacity as a playwright."

(Professor Peter A. Jaszi represented DeVere at the Sept. 25, 1987 debate before three U.S. Supreme Court Justices. His brief reflected extensive and positive research which the following excerpt therefrom (pp. 60-65) clearly reveals.)

From time to time, Stratfordian scholars have suggested that there is really nothing unusual or suspicious about the gaps in our information about Shakspeare, and in particular that the absence of any contemporary evidence clearly connecting him with "Sheke-speare" or Shakespeare of the poems and plays is only to be expected. In particular, Dr. James McManaway makes this argument, somewhat unconvincingly even on its face, in his The Authorship of Shakespeare.<sup>105</sup> His choice of Marlow and Johnson as examples are hardly helpful to his case, since almost all stages of Johnson's career are manifestly better documented than any stage of Shakspeare's (or Shakespeare's), while the mystery surrounding Marlow relates to his death, rather than to his education (which included a spell at Cambridge) or the circumstances of his career as an author, which is further documented (according to McManaway) by a surviving literary holograph.

McManaway's trump card is John Webster, whom he (justly) describes as "[t]he author of the Jacobean tragedies that rank nearest to Shakespeare's." Somewhat discouragingly for his attempt to portray our knowledge of Webster as somehow typical, he proceeds to quote a 1941 biographical note which runs as follows:

Of the Elizabethan dramatists there is not one concerning whose life we know less than John Webster's. Hitherto antiquarian research has failed to bring to light any biographic data of any consequence. We do not know when or where he was born or died, who his parents were, what sort of education he received, whether he really was a tailor by trade, whether he was married, how he earned his living, and so forth.<sup>106</sup>

But as a result of scholarly activity over the last 46 years, our picture of Webster is now considerably more complete. Although his birthdate remains obscure, we know vastly more about his father, a coachman and hirer-out of horses and rigs, than we do (for example) about John Shakspeare; along with miscellaneous facts about the location of his business premises, the circumstances of his apprenticeship, and so forth. We know that the elder Webster's trade connected him with both the Merchant Taylor's Company (in whose justly-famed school his son John almost certainly was educated) and with the "show business," as a provider of horses and equipage for ceremonial occasions on which (among other things) plays were performed. Thus, we have the basis for at least an informed guess as to how John might have been introduced to the career he eventually pursued—something that cannot be said of William Shakspeare and his supposed literary calling. We know at least as much about the details of the playwright's family life as we do of Shakspeare's, and much more about his professional career. It has been established, for example, that unlike his brother Edward he was not apprenticed within Merchant Taylor's Company, and that he appears to have claimed his hereditary privilege of membership in order to be able to put himself forward to write the Lord Mayor's pageant the next time a guild member was elected to that office — a task which it is recorded in the books of the company that "John Webster (the) poet" received L 270 in 1624.

<sup>105</sup> McMANAWAY at 8-10.

<sup>106</sup> McMANAWAY at 8, quoted S. A. TANNEBAUM, JOHN WEBSTER, (A CONCISE BIBLIOGRAPHY vii (1941).

Though there is some doubt as to whether he ever became an actor, there can be no doubt that John Webster, the coachmaker's son, grew up to be John Webster the dramatic poet. And if there were, we could refer to an attack on Webster by Henry Fitzgeffrey of Lincoln's Inn who in a 1617 poem entitled Notes from Blackfriars refers to him scathingly as "The Playwright, Cartwright," an obvious attempt to use a reference to his family's trade (which his brother Edward continued to follow) to suggest his supposedly clumsy playwrighting. Most important of all, we can hear Webster's voice, as he speaks in his capacity as a playwright, across the years; the published editions of his plays include both preface and end (in the case of The White Devil) a remarkable "afterword" in which the author praises the actors, concluding by saying that "so in particular I must remember the well approved industry of my friend Mester Perkins [who is known to have played Flamineo], and confess the worth of his action did crown both the beginning and end."<sup>107</sup>

That so much is known about Webster is not any more remarkable than that in 1941 his career remained so obscure. In intervening years, considerable scholarly energy has been devoted to the dramatist, and it has yielded these considerable results, among others. Even so, however, incomparably more time and effort has been devoted to the search for Shakespeare's traces in literary and legal archives.<sup>108</sup> What is truly remarkable, then, in light of this is that we still know virtually nothing about Shakespeare in his presumed capacity as playwright.

The contrast between the publication history of Webster's plays, and that of the work conventionally attributed to "Shakespeare," is particularly striking. Webster (like Jonson and other playwrights of the period) was actively involved in the publication of his own plays. Moreover, his justified pride of ownership is apparent: The preface of his edition of The White Devil, for example, condemns the low taste of popular audiences which apparently had failed to appreciate the play's merit.<sup>109</sup> In striking contrast, the author of the plays of the Shakespeare canon appears to have taken no role whatsoever in their publication. What is true of the author's failure to prosecute piratical publications of the plays is equally true of his apparent failure to promote himself through authorized editions. If we assume the self-made Shakespeare to have been the author, this omission is extremely puzzling, to say the least. But if he was in fact a nobleman, sheltering behind the pen-name "Shakespeare," the reasons for the author's otherwise inexplicable modesty — effectively amounting to silence — are clear.

In the last decade of the 16th century, and the first decade of the 17th, the plays conventionally attributed to "Shakespeare" were as popular as any in the repertoires of the acting companies, with the possible exception of Jonson's.<sup>110</sup> Pamphleteers, poets, diarists and letter-writers of that period record their generally highly favorable impressions of performance of such plays as Henry VI, Titus Andronicus, Love's Labor Lost, Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, Richard II, the Henry plays, Twelfth Night, The Comedy of Errors, Hamlet, Antony and Cleopatra, Pericles, Othello, Henry VIII, Richard III, Macbeth, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale — all without making any mention whatsoever of the author's name.<sup>111</sup> This lack of any attribution would be remarkable enough if all the recorded recollections of the plays in performance were those of ordinary theater-goers, who might have been indifferent to the authorship question, but many were, in fact, those of literary professionals, such as Nashe, Tofte, Marston, Daniel and the anonymous author of Ratsey's Ghost.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>107</sup> The preceding partial summary of the facts known today about Webster is derived from C. FORKER, SKULL BENEATH THE SKIN: THE ACHIEVEMENT OF JOHN WEBSTER [hereinafter "FORKER"] 1-61. Many details of Forker's account have been omitted, some because they were mere speculation, and numerous others simply in order to limit the space devoted to this example.

<sup>108</sup> By various estimates, Charles and Hulda Wallace alone examined either 3 million or 5 million documents in their early 20th Century search for Shakespeare-related materials. See generally, SCHOENBAUM at 645-657. Many of the most crucial documents, such as the Shakespeare will, have been known for centuries, id. at 138, and Professor Schoenbaum doubts that future finds of such magnitude are likely. Looking for Shakespeare in SHAKESPEARE and OTHERS 31, 40 (1985).

<sup>109</sup> FORKER at 32.

<sup>110</sup> See generally Bentley, Shakespeare's Reputation — Then Till Now, xi 111 ANDREWS 705 (plays quite popular before 1610, and somewhat less so in later years of reign of James I).

<sup>111</sup> Reminiscences of early performances are conveniently assembled in EYEWITNESSES OF SHAKESPEARE: FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS OF PERFORMANCES 1590-1890 (G. Salgado ed. 1975) [hereinafter SALGADO] 16-38. Further information on the SIMON FORMAN'S BOOK OF PLAYS, a manuscript attributed to a London astrologer and medical practitioner who was Shakespeare's contemporary, in which performances of MACBETH, CYMBELINE and THE WINTER'S TALE, are described, is found in S. SCHOENBAUM, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: RECORDS AND IMAGES (hereinafter RECORDS) 3-20. Schoenbaum, incidentally, concludes that the BOOK OF PLAYS is genuine, id. at 20.

<sup>112</sup> SALGADO at 16-18, 26 and 28-29.

## A THEORY ON THE RIVAL POET OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

By Petar R. Moore

I offer the following theory on the identity of the Rival Poet of Shakespeare's Sonnets: Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. This theory is really obvious, especially if one believes that Oxford wrote the Sonnets, but no one seems to have noticed it because all focus has been on the word 'Poet' rather than on 'Rival.' I assume that the Earl of Southampton was the Fair Youth (for all of the usual reasons) and choose Essex as the Rival Poet for the following reasons. First, Essex was Southampton's great friend and idol during the 1590s. Second, Essex liked to "evaporate his thoughts in a sonnet," as one of his friends put it, and also wrote at least one masque; he was a poet. When Essex was twenty a contemporary called him "one of the best poets among the nobility of England," and, long after his death, his wit was praised by Ben Jonson (who was notoriously stingy with applause). Third, the Rival Poet was learned (Sonnet 78, line 7) and had a "polished form of well refined pen" (Sonnet 85, line 8), while Essex received his M.A. from Cambridge at age fourteen. Fourth and fifth, the Rival Poet was "of tall building and of goodly pride" (Sonnet 80, line 12), and Essex was tall and as proud as Lucifer. Sixth, two sonnets (80 and 86) contrast Shakespeare to his rival with much nautical metaphor, so it is a reasonable supposition that the Rival Poet was a sailor, and Essex was indeed a naval hero (Southampton served under him in the Azores Expedition of 1597). Seventh, the Rival Poet had an "affable familiar ghost/which nightly quills him with intelligence" (Sonnet 86, lines 9-10), and Essex established his own international intelligence service (as part of his rivalry with the Cecils), headed by Anthony Bacon, who resided at Essex House. Eighth, the Rival Poet was "by spirits taught to write" and had people "giving him aid" (Sonnet 86, lines 5 and 8); Anthony Bacon's brother Francis was Essex's paid consultant, occasional ghost writer, and, along with Anthony, headed Essex's brain trust. Also, Anthony Bacon and Essex's private secretary Henry Cuffe, a former professor of Greek, are believed to have assisted Essex with his writing.

Finally, and rather tenuously, there are Shakespeare's words that he "holds his rank before (the Rival Poet)" (Sonnet 85, line 12). This passage has a clear surface meaning about love, but I also take it as an allusion to certain events of 1597. In October of that year, Queen Elizabeth promoted Lord Howard of Effingham to Earl of Nottingham (which made him the junior earl, close behind Essex), and also appointed him to the office of Lord Steward, which meant that he took precedence ahead of all earls save Oxford, the Lord Great Chamberlain. This infuriated Essex, and so the Queen made him Earl Marshall, which meant that he took precedence right after the Lord Great Chamberlain and ahead of the Lord Steward; thus Oxford 'held his rank before' the Rival Poet.

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## STAY STRATFORDIAN, WHY GOEST THOU BY SO FAST?

By Morse Johnson

A routine entry in the Registry of the Stratford-upon-Avon Trinity Church records the burial on April 25, 1616 of "Will. Shakspera, gent" — the man tradition has established as the poet and dramatist William Shakespeare. For a person who presumably was well-known throughout England, it is certainly strange that there is no other contemporaneous documentation of his death nor any of how and when he died. And it is, moreover, only assumed — there is no church record — that his remains lie in the floor of the chancel under a nameless slab inscribed only with (spelling updated):

Good friend for Jesus' sake forbear,  
To dig the dust enclosed here.  
Blessed be the man that spares these stones,  
And cursed be he that moves my bones.

Hearsay reported in 1693 that this crude doggeral was "made by himself a little before his

\*(This article retreads well-trodden ground. Such clear-cut anti-Stratfordian evidence, however, should not lose its devastating impact by inattention. Besides, how else could I use such a nifty title?)

death" and in 1694 that "these words were ordered to be cutt by Mr. Shackspeare." The eminent barrister and Shakespearean scholar, Sir George G. Greenwood, put the following question:

Are we, really, to believe that the bard of the world's admiration, the sublime teacher, the great-minded, tolerant, gentle philosopher, died with a curse upon his lips — an imprecation against any man who might move his bones? A mean end vulgar curse indeed! (underlining not supplied).

Professor Schoenbaum (William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life, Oxford 1977, p. 307) provides the traditional rationale:

(This) malediction expressing a conventional sentiment in commonplace phrases solemnly forewarns not the casual passerby — he would hardly come with spade in hand — but the sexton who, because of the limited burial space available in the church, sometimes had to dig up graves and remove bones to the adjoining church house.

Apparently, Stratfordians believe, and want the world to believe, that the man who they think gave the world those exalting and penetratingly introspective plays, poems and sonnets resorted to the "conventional" and "commonplace" for his valediction on his gravemarker and also, again according to Professor Schoenbaum, was far more concerned about the preservation of his bones than the perpetuity of his works (Shakespeare's Lives, Oxford 1970 p. 6):

Apparently, he died neither knowing or caring about the fate of works that posterity would value beyond all other accomplishments of the literary imagination.

In significant contrast are the inscriptions engraved on the grave-markers of those of his relatives buried there in the same location. (spelling updated and clarified):

\* "Here lieth interred the body of Anne, wife of William Shakespeera, who departed this life the 6th day of August 1623, being of the age of 67 years." (Followed by a six line spiritual and affectionate tribute in Latin).

\* (Hall & Shakespeare coat of arms)

"Here lieth the body of John Hall, Gent. He married Susanne, the daughter and co-heir of Will. Shakespeare, Gent. He deceased November 25, A.D. 1635; Aged 60." (Followed by a six line commendatory tribute to him and his medical skills.)

\* (Nashe, Shakespeare & Hall coat of arms)

"Here rests the body of Thomas Nashe, Esq. He married Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of John Hall, Gent. He died April 4, A.D. 1647, Aged 53."

\* (Shakespeare & Hall coat of arms)

"Here lieth the body of Susanna Hall, wife of John Hall, Gent, the daughter of William Shakespeare, Gent. She deceased the 11th day of July A.D. 1649, Aged 66." (Followed by a ten line tearful and loving tribute to her "wit" and "mercy").

No account of the funeral services has ever been discovered but Professor Joseph Quincy Adams, one-time Director of The Folger Shakespeare Library, in his A Life of William Shakespeare (Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1923 p. 472-473) assures his readers it can be assumed that 11 named members of Shakespeare's immediate family and 12 named friends were present and that "the people of the town, no doubt, came in full force to do honor to Stratford's most distinguished citizen."<sup>1</sup>

If "Will. Shakspeare, gent" had been known during his lifetime as the dramatist and poet William Shakespeare — "Stratford's most distinguished citizen" — why no name on the gravemarker? no record of the location of his grave? no vital statistics? no coat of arms? no family connection? and no tribute? More significantly, why is it that not one of his relatives

<sup>1</sup>William Camden, commentator and Ben Jonson's "most revered" teacher, in his Britannia (1605) identified the "worthies" of Stratford but made no mention of Shakspeare who had a residence there at that time. In his Annals for the year 1616, Camden took 7000 words in reporting the significant events of that year but did not list the death of William Shakespeare.

or one of his Stratford friends and associates or any other Stratford resident living at the time of his death ever at any time is known to have identified him as such?

Will. Shakspeare is believed to have gone to London in the late 1580s but there is no known mention of his name or the name of William Shakespaare there until 1593 despite the fact that by then at least 10 of the plays had been written and 7 of them performed. Following the 1616 entry in the Trinity Church Registry, an amazing gap of total silence enveloped both Stratford and London until the early 1620s despite the fact that according to tradition he was recognized as the playwright of the most acclaimed and popular plays of that period. No other still-celebrated playwrights and poets of that time remained unmentioned either during the peak of his creativity or at his death and burial. Is it rational to assume that those duplicated blackouts recorded Shakespeare at such meaningful times can be attributed to mere coincidence?

Sometime in the early 1620s and before 1623, the Stratford Monument was installed on the wall of the Trinity Church chancel, nearby but not contiguous to that nameless gravemarker. It was not only the first monument memorializing the dramatist and poet William Shakespeare but also provided the first public posthumous tribute, and its bust was the first of two portraits which most traditional authorities accept as the only authentic ones. There is no record in the Trinity Church or elsewhere as to the date of its installation or of any accompanying ceremonies or of who arranged and paid for it and ultimately approved of its design and contents. Such an extraordinary background for such a significant and belated artifact would be considered by scholars to be a curious phenomenon were it to have involved any other acclaimed literary figure of that age. Traditional Shakespearean scholars, however, have become too inured to the veil of secrecy which persistently enveloped the person of William Shakespeare to feel any obligation to provide an explanatory hypothesis therefor.

Stratfordians rely on the monument as an indispensable linchpin of their attribution and present it as a conventional, identifying and historic memorial to the man they assume had been entombed nearby in 1616. Anti-Stratfordians, on the other hand, contend that the social, political and authoritatively enforced mandates which had compelled the concealment of the identity as "William Shakespaare" during his lifetime were still in place and it became necessary to contrive a stalking horse with enough plausibility to initially divert or confuse and thereby satisfy or discourage the inquisitive. Any person who did not know the identity of the man who wrote the great works would have no reason to believe that the man about whom they knew nothing could not have been born and buried in Stratford.

An uncertain reader could, at the outset, justifiably find this anti-Stratfordian scenario tenuous but should not embrace that conclusion unless the monument itself corroborates the Stratfordian scenario. It has to be one or the other — genuine or specious — and a careful and informative scrutiny will prove which is the most probable.

Traditional biographers have, of course, carried reproductions of the monument and its features but have never attempted to interpret or clarify the aberrant, incongruous and befogged epitaph on the plinth below the bust (spelling updated and in one word corrected):

JUDICIO PYLIUM, GENIO SOCRATEM ARTE MARONEM:  
TERA TEGIT, POPULUS MAERET, OLYMPUS HABET.\*

STAY PASSENGER, WHY GOEST THOU BY SO FAST?  
READ, IF THOU CANST, WHOM ENVIOUS DEATH HATH PLACED,  
WITHIN THIS MONUMENT, SHAKSPEARE WITH WHOM  
QUICK NATURE DIED; WHOSE NAME DOTH DECK THIS TOMB,  
FAR MORE THAN COST; SINCE ALL THAT HE HAST WRIT,  
LEAVES LIVING ART BUT PAGE TO SERVE HIS WIT.

ABIT ANNO DOMINI 1616  
AETATIS 53 DIE 23 APR.

\* (A Nestor in wisdom, a Socrates in intellect, a Virgil in Art: The earth encloses, the people mourn, Olympus holds.)

\* John Taylor's *The Praise of Hempseed* (1620) implies that William Shakespeare is dead but is not a eulogy. William Basse's poem was written before 1623 but not published until the 1630s.

Professor Schoenbaum airily dismissed this epitaph in toto on the senseless inference that those responsible for this momentous and silence-breaking tribute chose a eulogist who did not know anything about the man being memorialized — presumably the well-known dramatist and presumably interred nearby — or that the monument was not a tomb or that it was not large enough to hold the uncremated remains of an adult but also did not furnish him with that bedrock information and passively accepted the bizarre and misinforming result (Shakespeare's Lives, Oxford, 1970 p. 3):

Whoever wrote these lines has little to tell us. What can we expect of a eulogist so poorly informed as not even to know that his subject rests under the floor rather than in the well?

While Stratfordians have uniformly treated this first public eulogy, undoubtedly sponsored and approved by some who personally knew and most admired William Shakespeare, as having little or no import, they have uniformly treated posthumous hearsay, picked up by Aubrey around 58 years later and by Rowe around 85 years later, as having, in many respects, reliable import. If the widely disproportionate emphases given these two pieces of evidence has not been deliberate, it stems from a subjective deduction that this three and four generations-later hearsay undergirds the orthodox attribution while a conscientious analysis of this nonsensical, confusing and unseemly contemporary epitaph would perilously endanger it. Such selective use of evidence has been labeled by some as "cognitive dissonance."

The Latin couplet appears to convey an elevating and illuminating parallel between the capacious genius of William Shakespeare and the respective genius of three greats of antiquity. Not even traditional scholars, however, have claimed that Will. Shakspeare, like Nestor, brought venerable and experienced wisdom to the affairs of state. Nor was there, in the words of scholar Walter Begley, "much of the 'Socratic method' or the Socratic philosophy displayed in any part of the life of (Will. Shakspeare)." As to Virgil, Shakespeare's contemporaries found, as posterity has found, that the Latin poet who had the greatest influence on his works was Ovid.

Such inappropriate parallels tend to expose the monument as a tongue-in-cheek artifice, but the omission of the most towering component of William Shakespeare's preeminence all but conclusively proves it: there is no reference on the monument to Shakespeare as a playwright. This preposterous exclusion has never elicited even a passing concern by any traditional authority whose works I have read. Is it conceivable that an engraved tribute on a public monument to Giuseppe Verdi, for example, which described his genius but made no reference to his operas would not have been widely and persistently denounced in Italy and elsewhere as an unacceptable blunder? The pervasive manipulations of influential Stratfordians in the academic and literary worlds have encased Will. Shakspeare with Teflon and thus induced many discerning men and women to accept this glaring oversight as a run-of-the-mill occurrence rather than an intended intimation of a hoax.

The first two English couplets, comprising one-half of the epitaph, announce that "DEATH HATH PLACED/WITHIN THIS MONUMENT, SHAKSPEARE," reaffirm that "SHAKSPEARE . . . DIED," and reduntantly point out that his "NAME DOTH DECK THIS TOMB." This tautological message is outlandishly introduced by a peremptory command, "STAY PASSENGER," then a querulous question, "WHY GOEST THOU BY SO FAST?" followed by an inane instruction, "READ IF THOU CANST," which is also an inept, double-teke jest. Since these four lines emphatically imply that there is no other tomb or monument in that section of the chancel which should or would attract a visitor's concentrated attention and explicitly announce that the "SHAKSPEARE" being memorialized is in "THIS MONUMENT (underlining supplied) and his name is on "THIS TOMB," (underlining supplied), it is self-evident that the man interred under the nameless gravemarker is not the "SHAKSPEARE," whose first name is suggestively omitted.

Logically, the question now to be answered is who was the "SHAKSPEARE" memorialized and entombed therein, except for the bewildering paradox that the monument is not large enough to hold the uncremated remains of an adult man. Charlton Ogburn in the "Appendix: Adventures in the Quest for the Shakespeare Manuscripts" to his The Mysterious William Shakespeare documents the fascinating and convincing deduction that

those manuscripts are the remains of Shakespeare which the monument entombs. He describes his epiphany at pp. 789-790:

I was reading an adversary's comments on the book to which I had contributed. The book made the point that Ben Jonson, when he wrote in the First Folio, "Thou art a monument without a tomb," could hardly have had the Stratford man in mind as Shakespeare the dramatist, since if there was one thing the former was not without in 1623 it was a tomb — the one with the famous curse on it. My critic countered that Jonson was speaking metaphorically or figuratively. His argument was, however, invalid; Jonson was replying to a proposal that Shakespeare be buried in Westminster Abbey. He could not be, Jonson was saying, because he had no tomb — no body. As I reflected on this there came to mind a line from the letter of dedication in the First Folio to the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery: "we most humbly consecrate to your H.H. those remains of your servant Shakespeare" (underlining supplied).

Shakespeare's remains were his works. Shakespeare had no body. "Thou art a monument."

If this hypothesis is not conclusively provable, the blatant paradox must be recognized as the definitive signal that the monument was a ruse.

The last couplet, in addition to being in part incomprehensible, makes an uncouth reference to the "COST" of the monument and seems to characterize Shakespeare's writings as being eternal by reason of only the "WIT" they displayed.

The existing bust on The Stratford Monument is destined to be celebrated as a far more notorious fake than the forged Piltdown Man which seduced all but a few paleontologists and allied experts for only 50 years. Those few were also subjected to the same derision and ostracism as anti-Stratfordians have experienced. I doubt that the annals of history record any contrived and authoritatively accepted dissemblance which, although conclusively exposed for several centuries, is still considered by orthodox authorities to be veritable.

The original bust was in existence for at least 125 years without in any known way being depicted in even approximate conformity with the existing bust. Stratfordians have no evidence proving that the existing bust is the original bust. During that period, however, there were depictions of the original bust, the first being an engraving in Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire (1656).<sup>3</sup> The second is an engraving in Rowe's The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare in Six Volumes (1709). This engraving is not from the same block as Dugdale's but, with a few minor variations, is substantially the same as his. It could, however, not have been copied from Dugdale's since the latter only spells out the first two Latin words in the eulogy and indicates the balance with dashes, while Rowe's spells out all twelve Latin words in the couplet. This is positive evidence that Rowe's engraver, or one of his colleagues, must have visited the monument in person. The third is an engraving in the "revised, corrected and expanded" second edition of Dugdale's Antiquities (1730) which is from the same block as used in the first edition. These cited engravings depict a bust vastly different in almost every important feature from the existing bust. The following column illustrates most of those major disparities:

Dugdale's (1636 & 1730)  
& Rowe's (1709) engravings

Has overall appearance of a dour and rustic tradesman.

Drooping shaggy moustache extending below the corners of the mouth and connects with shaggy whiskers from ear to ear around the edge of the jaw. Chin is clean shaven.

The existing bust

Has overall appearance of an amiable and cultivated author.

Horizontal well-groomed moustache curling upward at ends. Well-groomed goatee on lower lip, broadens at chin and ends in a point below chin. No other whiskers.

Arms parallel with body.

<sup>3</sup>Stratfordian Charlotte C. Stopes in her comprehensive article on the monument ("Monthly Review," 1904) points out that, "(Dugdale) seems, judging from the notes of his diary, to have prepared his work in the neighborhood of Stratford-on-Avon about 1636, though the publication was delayed by the civil wars for twenty years."



Arms akimbo.

Hands awkwardly holding a lumpy gunny sack, with ragged knots at all four corners, apparently containing grain or wool.

Right hand fingers hold upright quill pen and left hand lies on a piece of paper. Both hands rest comfortably on smooth pillow with formal tassels on two visible corners. Piece of paper extends over front side of pillow and covers part of seam.

Almost all traditional Shakespearean scholars, however, by not making any mention thereof, inexcusably treat the Rowe and both Dugdale engravings as either non-existent or wholly irrelevant. Professor Schoenbaum does reproduce the Dugdale engraving — but makes no reference to the 2nd edition of Rowe — and, after confessing that it “differs strikingly from the one we know,” rejects its validity (id., p. 6):

“The best, and simplest, explanation is that this illustration, like others in the volume, misrepresents the object, in keeping with the freedom exercised by seventeenth-century engravers. Dugdale’s main interest, moreover, lay not in the monument but in the armorial bearings, which he has accurately reproduced. For better or worse, the image in the monument is authentic.”

To reach his “better or worse” conclusion, Professor Schoenbaum has been compelled to repudiate Dugdale — as he was compelled to repudiate the monument’s epitaphist — by discrediting his integrity as a craftsman and to circumvent the verification of his accuracy by the engravings in both Rowe and the “corrected” 2nd edition of Antiquities. He also assumes that those who looked at the monument during the period 1623 to 1747 and also looked at at least one of those published engravings, including the editor of the 2nd edition who lived near Stratford, must have worn blindfolds on one or the other occasion. If, moreover, the present bust is considered to be the one seen and sketched by Dugdale, the engraving in his book cannot be characterized as a mere misrepresentation but is a complete transformation and a blatant travesty. An inattentive engraver, or even one allowed, in Professor Schoenbaum’s undocumented assertion, “the freedom exercised by seventeenth century engravers,” would not intentionally convert an urbane author into a rustic tradesman, nor a symmetrical, elegant pillow, firm enough to be written on, into an asymmetrical, commonplace and malleable gunnysack, nor delete a prominent quill pen and conspicuous goatee, nor adorn a clean shaven jaw with shaggy whiskers, et al.

Some mistakes, however, have been found in a few of Dugdale’s engravings in Antiquities but none so egregious, multiple and instantly detectable. Such mistakes, moreover, appear in engravings based on sketches drawn by others and not, as in this instance, in engravings based on sketches drawn by Dugdale himself. An eminent 19th-20th century barrister reported that Dugdale’s “scrupulous accuracy, united with his stubborn integrity” has elevated his Antiquities “to the rank of legal evidence.”

The Trinity Church records show that the monument was “restored” around 1747. Contemporary accounts report that such restoration involved “features, which (by having the face molded off) are much decayed.” Mrs. Stopes reports as to the 1747 “restoration of Shakespeare’s tomb” (id.):

“Orders were given to ‘beautify’ as well as to repair it. We are left altogether in the dark as to the degree of decay and the amount of reconstruction, but that it was fundamental seems evident.”

The bust is composed of limestone which, particularly when sheltered from the elements, is not very prone to decay, if at all, to the degree the restoration implies. The existing bust, for example, has not suffered decay to such an extent for 240 years. Such “restoration” and “reconstruction” of limestone sculpture would require the use of mortar which would be permanently discernible. The absence of such evidence verifies the construction of a replacement bust.

There are only two features on the monument which can be said to specifically associate Will. Shakspeare with the “SHAKSPEARE” being memorialized. One is the inscribed date of death, the accuracy of which is made questionable by the incorrect listing that he died at the age of (‘AETATIS’) 53. Will. Shakspeare died just before or just after or on his 52nd

birthday, the exact date of his birth having never been ascertained. The other one is the coat of arms granted to his father which is reproduced on the shelf above the bust. It is altogether unlikely that more than 1% of the visitors to the monument would know the coat of arms unless collaterally provided with that information at the time of the visit. If the monument was designed to recognize and honor Will. Shakspeare as William Shakespeare, this is certainly a peripheral and obscure way to do so, particularly since the first name was omitted. To be efficacious, moreover, the strategem required a few ostensible indicia in addition to its placement in the Trinity Church. If its sponsors did intend that recognition and honor, why did they play such misinforming, secretive and nonsensical games rather than provide an undeceptive and explicit declaration?

It is both astounding and depressing that a very high percentage of the world of letters has for several centuries lived comfortably and uninquiringly with this foolish, inappropriate, misleading, deficient and aberrant epitaph and the substitution 125 years later of a presentable bust for one which no cogent person could think was intended to be an authentic portrait of the most prestigious and prodigiously endowed man of letters during England's golden age. Joseph Alsop has charged that when "the professoriate is deeply but wrongfully committed . . . factual evidence of an inconvenient kind is frequently handled with total ruthlessness." Charlton Ogburn has provided the most tenable explanation of why traditional Shakespearean scholars of undeniably superior intellect and merited repute have allowed the collegial dictates of partisanship to suppress the disciplinary dictates of scholarship (id. p. 153):

" . . . they feel, consciously or unconsciously, that their cese depends absolutely on absolute acceptance: Give admittance to the tiniest doubt, and doubt, proceeding from one incongruity and implausibility in the structure to another and growing by what it feeds on, must speedily consume the whole . . . that in their hearts they fear that the Stratford faith must be unblinkingly swallowed whole if it is to be swallowed at all . . . "

\* \* \* \* \*

## A THEORY ON THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN

By Peter R. Moore

The Two Noble Kinsmen was first published in 1634 as by John Fletcher and William Shakespeare, and is believed to have been first performed in 1613. Modern scholarship has confirmed the identification of the two authors, but gives no convincing date for the Shakespearean portion of that play, nor any explanation of its motivation — why Shakespeare began it, and why he failed to finish it. I would like to offer such a theory.

By February 1603, Queen Elizabeth was weak, ill, and clearly declining. On March 9, three newsletters (which have been published in the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*) were sent from London to Venice by one Anthony Rivers, who wrote that some of the Court feared that the Queen would soon die, some felt that she would not last past May, while all agreed "that she cannot overpass another winter." Rivers added that "she cannot abide discourses of government and state, but delighteth to hear old *Centerbury* tales, to which she is very attentive." The Two Noble Kinsmen is a revision of 'The Knight's Tale' from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and so let us hypothesize that Shakespeare began this play to please the ailing Elizabeth. What other evidence can we find to support this theory?

The Queen died in her sleep on March 24, 1603, and Shakespeare is believed by most scholars to refer to this event in Sonnet 107. He wrote that "The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured" (i.e., Elizabeth has died), that "peace proclaims olives of endless age" (i.e., the peace-loving King James has peacefully ascended the throne), and that the Fair Youth to whom most of the Sonnets were addressed had been "suppos'd as forfeit to a confin'd doom" (i.e., the Earl of Southampton, almost certainly the Fair Youth, had been imprisoned in the Tower of London since his participation in the Essex uprising of 1601; the new King promptly freed him). If we respect the order in which the Sonnets were published in 1609, then we may suppose that Sonnet 106 was written just prior to the Queen's death, and it begins as follows:

When in the chronicle of wasted time  
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
And beauty meking beautiful old rime,  
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights.

I am hardly the first to suggest that these lines indicate that Shakespeare had recently been reading Chaucer, and the letter's story of Pelemon and Arcite (the two noble kinsmen who were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment in a tower) should have reminded Shakespeare of the fate of Southampton. And so The Two Noble Kinsmen may have been intended as an appeal to Elizabeth on behalf of Southampton.

Another reason for dating The Two Noble Kinsmen to early 1603, and, incidentally, for believing that the Earl of Oxford was Shakespeare, is found in Englandes Mourning Garment, a pamphlet by a meddling and shady character named Henry Chettle. His pamphlet was published just after Elizabeth's funeral, and it includes a poem calling on specific poets to commemorate the passing of their late, great Queen. The poets are not named, but are clearly identified by references to their works and by being given appropriate classical names. For example, one is described thus:

Neither doth Coryn, full of worth and wit,  
Thet finisht dead Museus greicious song . . .

The classical Meseus wrote a poem on Hero and Leander that was an inspiration to Christopher Marlow, whose own 'Hero and Leander' was cut short by his death in a brawl in 1593. It was later finished by George Chapman, who, by 1603, was also famous for his translation of Homer, whose supposed source for the Iliad was a poem by the legendary Corinnus. Thus we see that Chettle's "Coryn" is Chapman, and that Chettle's references and allusions identify, rather than conceal, those he calls upon.

According to all authorities, Shakespeare is addressed in the following verse.

Nor doth the silver tonged Melicert,  
Drop from his honied muse one sable teare  
To mourn her deeth that graced his desert,  
And to his laies open her Royell eare.  
Shepherd remember our Elizabeth,  
And sing her Repe done by that Tarquin, Deeth.

The mention of Tarquin reminds us of Shakespeare's popular epic poem 'The Rape of Lucrece' (Tarquin was the rapist), and the references to Melicert's silver tongue and honeyed muse are similar to other tributes to Shakespeare's verse. But orthodox scholars are at a loss in explaining why Shakespeare is named for Melicert, though one suggested that Chettle may have been hard pressed to think of a rhyme for "desert." As we briefly look at the story of Melicert, we will see that his name applies very well to the Earl of Oxford.

Melicert was the son of Ino, who angered Juno, who drove Ino mad. So Ino threw herself and her child into the sea and both drowned. The gods then took pity on Melicert, and he was made into a god, called Palaemon by the Greeks and Portunus by the Romans. His Roman temple stands in the Forum Boarium. It is hard to see how Chettle could be more helpful.

First, we see that Melicert was also known as Palaemon, which is the name of one of The Two Noble Kinsmen, and thus we gain a bit of evidence that Shakespeare was working on that play when Elizabeth died. Next, we see that Melicert was a being with a dual identity, which makes his name apt for Oxford/Shakespeare. Also, we note that if the suffix is dropped from the location of Melicert's temple, then we are left with the English word 'Boar': Oxford's heraldic symbol and the name of the tavern (the Boar's Head) where his acting troupe regularly performed. Lastly, we should consider the full name, Forum Boarium. The latter word, also spelled bovarium means 'of the cattle' or 'of the oxen,' and the Forum Boarium was Rome's cattle market, thus we get another symbol for the Earl of Oxford.

Incidentally, I believe that Shakespeare did commemorate Elizabeth in one of his plays, but that is another story.

What else in The Two Noble Kinsmen supports our theory? The play opens with a

song praising the flowers of spring, which seems like appropriate encouragement for a sick person in late winter. Lines 7 and 10 of this song are as follows:

Primrose, first born child of of Ver (Latin for spring, pronounced 'vere').

Oxlips, in their cradles growing, (emphasis added)

The underlined words may be the concealed signatures of deVere of Oxford. It may also be noted that the Shakespearean portions of The Two Noble Kinsmen are unlively and more grend in words than in actions, which makes them well suited for recitation, as opposed to performance by a troupe of actors.

Lastly, we should look at the prologue to this play, which prologue may be by Fletcher, but is certainly not by Shakespeare. Three sentences of the prologue read as follows (from the Signet Classic edition of The Two Noble Kinsmen):

We pray our play may be so, for I am sure  
It had a noble breeder, and a pure,  
A learned, end a poet never went  
More famous yet 'twixt Po and silver Trent.  
Chaucer, of ell admired, the story gives:  
There constant to eternity it lives.  
If we let fall the nobleness of this,  
And the first sound this child hear be a hiss,  
How will it shake the bones of that good man,  
And make him cry from under ground, 'O fan  
From me the witless cheff of such a writer  
That blast my bays, and my femed works make lighter  
Than Robin Hood!' . . .

It is usually assumed that the 'noble breeder' of the first sentence and 'that good man' of the third sentence refer to Chaucer, but his name is set off by itself. Also, if "that good man" is supposed to be Chaucer, then the word "writer" in the third from last line should be plural, that is, Chaucer's ghost should object to the two writers, Fletcher and Shakespeare, who have not done justica to his noble tale. It is just es logical to suppose that the "noble breeder" and "that good man" are ralerences to Oxford/Shakespeare, who might protest Fletcher's chaff.

The theory therefore is that Oxford wrota The Two Noble Kinsmen to encourage the eiling Elizabeth end to plead for Southampton's freedom. When the Queen died and Southampton was freed, these motivations collapsed; besidee, as Oxford began this play for Elizabeth, he mey not heve had the heert to finieh it for others. When Oxford died in June 1604, the unfinished manuscripts of The Two Noble Kinsmen end tha likewise incomplete Henry VIII should heve come under the control of his widow. She died January 1813, and I suspect that it was then that the two manuscripts were discovered by Oxford'e theatrically minded sons-in-law end were given to Fletcher to complete.

\* \* \* \* \*

"WAS 'THE BARD' REALLY 'THE EARL?'  
THAT, AS THEY SAY, IS THE QUESTION"

(Charleston, S.C. Naws & Courier, 1/10/88)

New Orleans, (AP) — Ruth Loyd and Minos Miller turned minds trainad in the law to historical research and say the evidence is clear. Shakespeare's plays and poems were written by the 17th earl of Oxford.

"The thing that impresses most lawyers and judges who have time to look into this question is that it's a matter of evidence as to who wrote the plays," sayd Minos Miller, a retired state judge from Jennings.

The question was debated at a mock trial in September, but tha earl didn't get a raelly good shake, says Miller end his wife, an ettorney and member of the Louisiana State University

Board of Supervisors. The three U.S. Supreme Court justices who presided over the hearing said that there was no clear and convincing evidence that the works were written by Edward de Vere, earl of Oxford during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

"The presiding judge, Justice (William) Brennan interrupted the argument extensively and hardly permitted the attorney, attorney (Peter A.) Jaszi, to argue," Millar said. Furthermore, he said, the questions that Brennan asked Jaszi included many "oldtime misrepresentations by the Stratfordians."

Stratfordians, for the uninitiated, are people who believe that the plays and poems attributed to Shakespeare really were written by William Shakespeare (sic), son of a glover from Stratford-on-Avon. The Millers make no claims to being the first to put forth the contention that Shakespeare was a pen name. Arguments that Sir Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare were brought up in the 19th century. Christopher Marlowe also has had his adherents as author of the greatest body of plays ever written in English.

The Shakespeare Authorship Society, dedicated to proving that the plays were written by that long-dead earl of Oxford, was founded in the 1920s. The Millers joined in the late 1960s. They became interested in the issue when Miller read a few review articles about it, but work and raising a family got in the way of research for nearly a decade.

When they started, the Millers learned that several of the books cited as major sources were out of print. So they decided to get them republished, putting their own money into the project.

Millar, who comes from a prominent Acadiane family, won't say how much they spent. "It's the kind of thing like when you go to buy a Rolls Royce. If you have to ask, you can't afford it."

Their edition of "Shakespeare Identified," a 1920 volume by J. Thomas Looney, is in two volumes, with extensive editorial notes by Ruth Loyd Miller — the historical researcher of the family. Several articles by Mrs. Miller, who recently completed her master's degree in English literature, were included in their edition of "Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays" by Eva Turner Clark.

The other volume they republished is "A Hundred Sundrie Flowres," a volume of poems published anonymously in 1573 and reprinted in 1575 as "Posies of Georga Gascoigne." The book, say the Millers, was really written by Edward de Vere and pirated by Gascoigne while de Vere was out of the country.

"As soon as Oxford came back from Italy those books were taken off the market and confiscated by authorities," Miller said. "What I'm telling you is our research . . . 'Posies' were confiscated. 'A Hundred Sundrie Flowres' was not."

Ruth Loyd Miller is thinking of going after a doctorate, her advisor, Albert Fields, said he is encouraging her to do so. She is a careful, thorough researcher and writes well, he said. Has she convinced him that Oxford wrote the plays?

"I say I don't take sides in that I'm not involved with the research. I'm a teacher of the plays — you might say a scholarly researcher in the plays. If the evidence continues to accumulate, it may be that more and more people will be convinced. I might be one of them I don't know. But since I'm not a researcher in the area, I am not going to say that I'm absolutely convinced. But I'm certainly not going to say . . . it's not honest scholarly research. Because it is."

Mrs. Miller said that if she does go for a doctorate, she's already collected and written enough on the debate to have a good start on her dissertation. During her work towards her masters, she said, her professors often tried to steer her toward other topics.

"Some of my professors had twinkles in their eyes as they would assign research topics," she said. "One said, 'All right, Mrs. Miller, you're going to do this study for this paper — I think it was the one on Emily Dickinson — and there won't be any way to tie in Shakespeare.' But somewhere along the way, you can always find a way to tie in a paragraph or so."

\* \* \* \* \*

## LETTERS

(Since, as the editor, I occasionally receive interesting and informative letters from both members and non-members and, at the suggestion of the trustees, the Newsletters will regularly print such letters in a column set aside for that purpose.

The letter from Gerald J. Cavanaugh illustrates that readers of The Mysterious William Shakespeare and other anti-Stretfordien works frequently do not know of the existence of the S.O.S. Obviously, by enlisting more members, the Oxfordian attribution will be more pervasively and, I hope, persuasively broadcast.

May I also encourage the members to provide me with not only names and addresses of any person to whom I should send the most recent Newsletter but also some persons — drama critics, English professors and teachers, playwrights, actors, et al. — who should be receiving the Newsletter even if they do not become members.)

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am writing because I found your name and two paragraphs quoting you on page 20 of Ogburn's The Mysterious William Shakespeare.

I am not a Shakespearean scholar, being a mere civil engineer (retired). Discussions of Shakespeare among engineers are roughly as frequent as conversation about Spinoza among welders. However, I attend the Unitarian Church, where the subject comes up a little more often. I have been suspicious of the Stratford "Shakespeare" since reading Mark Twain on the subject many years ago. Even so, I found it remarkable how rapidly Ogburn was able to convince me.

If you could find the time, I should like to have some information from you. First, since I do not suppose the paragraphs written by you and quoted in the book exist in isolation, is the rest of your writing available in the public prints, or how could I obtain a copy?

Second, is the proposition advocated by Ogburn alive and well? Frankly, I have never heard of Edward de Vere before opening this book, nor have I seen any mention of him since except in publication mentioned by Ogburn. Are Messrs. Rowse, Marder, Evens, Levin etc. as intransigent as ever? (I have The Annotated Shakespeare in 3 volumes edited by Rowse, and can no longer read the included biography without being half outraged, half amused.)

May I hope to hear from you?

Gerald J. Cavanaugh  
Cincinnati, Ohio

(I wrote to Mr. Cavanaugh and enclosed a copy of the last two Newsletters. In his reply, he wrote, "I received with great pleasure your letter . . . am sending off today an application for membership SOS").

To the Editor:

Although Smithsonian is one of my favorite magazines I somehow missed the November issue until I providentially ran across a copy that was still on one store's shelf late in December. In it I discovered letters commenting on the Reed article on Shakespeare/Oxford in the September issue. I expected there would be a lively mixture of opinion but was dismayed to find that in the clamor of anti-Oxford ignorance was a lone voice attempting to point out some of the problems with the case for Will of Stratford.

That would have been unfair enough but this was singled out for a response. Most magazines let readers have their say while some allow the authors of the articles in question to comment. This was different: it was clearly not a response from Reed, whose article had been, I understood second hand, watered down to neutral on the issue, despite his personal opinion that the case for Oxford was strong. I called the letters editor at the magazine to find out who had editorially intervened here, not to defend an article that was openminded but to "set the record straight" from the Stratford point of view. I was informed that the letters editor, Jane Scholl, had written the reply, relying on a research assistant who had "gotten the information from a Shakespeare scholar." Perhaps if they run an article on, say, Afghanistan,

General Secretary Gorbachev could be asked to correct the letters.

When I suggested that there was no balance of view in the letters selected to comment on the article I was told that they printed a sample of what they had received by deadline time. I know others who responded for Oxford but apparently the Stratfordians have a special arrangement with the post office for early delivery. Then again, perhaps this was as accurate a statement as the one that the magazine simply lets readers air their opinions without interference — a standard that does not apply to Oxfordians, of course.

Finally, I wondered if this person who chose to expound on the "facts" about Shakespeare had bothered to read Charlton Ogburn's book, the central point of the debate. I think her negative answer would apply to all those who plumb the depths of ignorance in the printed letters. It is easy to dismiss a brief article which cannot do justice to the complexities and subtleties of the case for Oxford — and subconsciously these critics apparently fear to be exposed to the full story.

Scott S. Smith  
Thousand Oaks, Calif.

To the Editor:

I think we Oxfordians have been too negative in our approach to advancing our cause. In my experience people often close their minds at the first mention of the problem because they think Shakespeare is being attacked or they feel they are being forced to decide on a difficult question the relevance of which is vague to them. Either way the encounter becomes no fun and there's an end to it. Therefore I propose we develop a more pro-Oxford and less anti-Stratford stance in our public posture. Let people meet Oxford on his own merits as a great theatrical producer and patron of the arts, an admired playwright who ran a school for playwrights, an accomplished musician and lyric poet, a great dancer and favorite of the Queen, who acted in his own productions before her, in short, a real-life Hamlet (very possibly the author of the famous Ur-Hamlet of the 1580's), the undiscovered last of the great Elizabethans and a man who must have shared a relationship with Shakespeare.

As people become more familiar with this man the rest will become self-evident. To this end I think we should have not another dry debate, ground to tortured details no one can stand, but a simple birthday party, to which all are welcome, to celebrate the great man and his times.

With this in mind I'm planning to hold the first annual Oxford Day Dinner at the Harvard Faculty Club this April 22nd with Elizabethan song and dance and the poetry of Edward De Vere. The Society should work to celebrate the Earl's birthday every year in as many different cities as possible. Being an Oxfordian should be fun.

Charles Boyle

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### THE CASE AGAINST WILL SHAKSPERE

DAEDALOS is a professional agency for the investigation of matters unusual, paranormal and historical/archeological interest. The September 24, 1987 debate before three United States Supreme Court Justices in Washington, D.C. inspired Mark McPherson, its Director and Founder, to approach and persuade Michigan Appeals Court Judge Myron H. Walls to be trial judge in "The Case Against Will Shakspeare." Mr. McPherson will be the prosecutor and has arranged for an eminent Detroit attorney to serve as counsel for the defendant.

The press release quoted Charlton Ogburn:

"It's a grand idea and a clever one of Mr. McPherson to demand an appeal in this fashion . . . The September Supreme Court 'verdict,' albeit rather fanciful, misleadingly gave the impression that the case for Shakspeare was furthered, yet nothing could be further from the truth. The justices in the case confessed their frustration and even serious doubts about the immortal Bard. I feel the Michigan 'trial' will be unique, and will lend a new opportunity of giving vent to the truth, as opposed to the longstanding, false impressions perpetuated about William Shakspeare."

"THE CASE AGAINST WILL SHAKSPERE" will be presented Sunday, April 24 at 7:00 pm at Oakland Community College's Royal Oak Campus Auditorium, 739 South Washington, Royal Oak. Seating will be limited and all tickets will be \$10.00. Further information or reservations may be made by calling 675-8692.

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PLANS FOR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION FOR OXFORD  
IN BOSTON ON APRIL 22, 1988

The Shakespeare Oxford Society North East Bulletin reports:

"Plans for the April 22nd birthday celebration for Oxford are taking shape. There will be a dinner with Elizabethan/Oxfordian music and entertainment at the Harvard Faculty Club, 20 Quincy Street, Cambridge, Mass. For reservations or information please contact Charles Boyle, 208A Washington St., Somerville, Mass. 02143 (Tel. 617-776-7782). Charles has made inquiries about lodging for out-of-towners and feels the Quality Inn, Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. is the most reasonable and 'decent.'

The following day, April 23rd, a SOS Trustees' meeting will be held at M.I.T. (Mass. Inst. of Technology).

Although the Oxford Birthday Party is of SOS North East origin (Charles Boyle's great idea), we hope that SOS members from everywhere will join us for this first annual celebration!"

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## JOIN SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY AND RECEIVE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The purpose of the Shakespeare Oxford Society is to document and establish Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) as the universally recognized author of the works of William Shakespeare. Each Newsletter carries articles which impart a wide range of information and commentary which the editor considers relevant to that purpose. Some articles will inevitably contain opinions, deductions and evidence which some SOS members believe to be invalid, inaccurate, irrelevant or irrational. The Newsletter is always open to letters of dissent and correction.

### Annual Dues

Student \$7.50

Regular \$15.00

Sustaining \$50.00 or more

The Shakespeare Oxford Society does not have any paid staff and cannot rely on one volunteer to handle all communications and process all functions. As a result, the following three addresses should be used as of April 1, 1988 for the respective purposes as indicated:

1. First-time and renewal membership dues and any outright tax deductible contributions to:

Shakespeare Oxford Society  
P.O. Box 147  
Clarksville, Maryland 21029

2. Requests for information about memberships to:

Stephanie Caruana  
Box 913, RR 1  
Napanoch, New York 12458

3. Articles, Letters To The Editor and any other materials submitted for publication in the Newsletter to:

Morse Johnson, Editor  
Suite No. 819  
105 West 4th St.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202



Morse Johnson, Editor  
105 West 4th Street, Suite #819, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

SOME "FACTS" AND FANCIES INVENTED BY PROFESSOR JAMES A.D. BOYLE FOR HIS  
BRIEF AS COUNSEL FOR WILL. SHAKSPEERE IN THE DEBATE SEPTEMBER 15, 1987  
BEFORE THREE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

Charlton Ogburn  
(Part of a letter to David Lloyd Kreeger)

The moot court at American University was a trial of my book, The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality, in which I was not permitted to speak a word in defense of what I had written. Professor Boyle's brief is unquestionably an attack on my book and me ("the leading Oxfordian advocate," it calls me) . . .

As a foundation of his case, Boyle accuses the Oxfordians of attributing to de Vere an "obsessively maintained mask of secrecy" (p. 5), and "obsession with secrecy" and a "schizophrenic attitude towards secrecy" (p. 7), that they "swallow the whale of an assumption that Edward de Vere would scheme and plot to pass off his work as someone else's" (p. 15) and have him "think it necessary to go to such extreme lengths to hide his authorship of the greatest plays the world has ever seen" (p. 17). What are the facts? The Oxfordian case is that anonymity was, for excellent reasons (which Boyle himself touches on) forced on de Vere. "When he cried in the Sonnets, 'My name be buried where my body is,' " I ask in my book "was he voluntarily renouncing the fame that could have been his or was he, sick at heart, acquiescing in a fate pronounced by others?" Speaking of the pressure undoubtedly brought to bear on him to forego acknowledgement of his offspring, I write that "I can well imagine that this pressure amounted to a command from the highest quarters." Later I observe, "Even if his better judgment called for the protection of the de Vere name, for the sake of his heirs, from a taint of association with the authorship of plays for the public theatre, the denial of recognition could well, I should think, have reduced him to such despair as Lear voices . . ."

Boyle goes on to manufacture another preposterous contention to foist upon the Oxfordians. "The plays for which Elizabeth is supposed to be paying one thousand pounds a year [a reference to the annuity granted Oxford by the Queen] are also the plays she is supposed to be working to suppress" (p. 20) "The same conspiracy [sic] that was working to suppress de Vere was also funding him." Oxfordians have of course never advanced so nonsensical a notion. These are the plays, recall, that Ben Jonson wrote "so did take Eliza and our James." As I make explicit in my book, Elizabeth doted on the stage and would have regarded Shakespeare's plays as one of the chief glories of her reign. "Working to suppress" them, for the love of Heaven!

An "Oxfordian explanation is that de Vere hides his true name because he is frightened that he will be punished by the powerful Elizabethan state apparatus of censorship," Boyle states (p. 20) in another case of manufacturing absurdity and attributing it to Oxfordians in order to ridicule them. That this is his aim is made plain in the next sentence: "Oxfordians are — with good reason — eternally vigilant for people who might ridicule their ideas": thus American University's exemplar of the code of the profession.

"The plaintiff makes much of the fact that de Vere was a published author of poems and plays under his own name" (p. 15). What, again, is the fact? No play of de Vere's was ever published under his own name; even the titles of any plays he wrote as himself are unknown. As for his poems, the only one I know published under his own name was in his preface to Thomas Bedingfield's translation of Cardanus Comferte, written when he was twenty-three. The Paradyse of Daynty Devises, the most popular Elizabethan miscellany, published when de Vere was twenty-six, contained half a dozen poems, it is true, signed E.O. And that is all. Given Boyle's misrepresentations, that Oxford published his plays in his youth

and later "would scheme and plot to pass off his work as someone else," Boyle is able to charge that "neither Ogburn nor Looney seem to have any reasonable hypothesis as to why this change of mind occurred" — not surprising since there was none outside the fertile field of Boyle's invention.

"The Oxfordians must also present de Vere as a person who is revealing his name over and over again in almost every line of his plays": Boyle, p. 22, in another unrestrained resort to invention. A few instances may have been cited in which de Vere reveals his name in a line (hardly over and over again in one!) but offhand I cannot think of any (except a very poignant apparent giveaway detected by Lord Charles Vere in a speech of Touchstone's which Boyle would not have heard of).

On p. 20, Boyle cites a passage on p. 10 of The Mysterious William Shakespeara in which Quaan Elizabeth comments bitterly on Essex's plan to have Richard II performed to prepare the populace for Elizabeth's overthrow at his hands. The passage, quoting Lambarde's report of the incident, reads, with Elizabeth speaking:

"I am Richard II, know ye not that?" Lambarde replied: "Such a wicked imagination was determined and attempted by a most unkind Gent, the most adorned creature that ever your Majesty made." Lambarde was presumably referring to the Earl of Essex, but Elizabeth, at least was evidently thinking about the play and its author. "Ha that will forget God," she exclaimed, "will also forget his benefactors: this tragedy was played 40 times in open streets and houses" — an offense hardly chargeable against Essex, who was certainly, moreover, never accused of having forgotten God."

It is revealing to see Boyle unscrupulously recast Lambarde's report:

I am Richard II, know ye not that?" was Elizabeth's comment to Lambarde, "He that will forget God will also forget his benefactors; this tragedy was played 40 times in open streets and houses." Lambarde's response [which in the original followed Elizabeth's first sentence and is now moved by Boyle to follow instead of precede her second] clearly shows — if any proof were needed — that she was thinking of Essex. "Such a wicked imagination was determined and attempted by a most unkind Gent., the most adorned creature that ever your Majesty made." Ogburn claims that, because Essex was not responsible for all of the forty performances, and could not be accused of forgetting God, this must refer to de Vere.

By inserting, "all of the" before "forty performances," Boyle has me conceding that Essex was responsible for some or most of the forty — which is ridiculous, he having been responsible for none of them — and thus making me appear a fool and eliminating the reasonable inference (unassimilable to Boyle's case) that Elizabeth was speaking of the author. As for my claiming that "this must refer to de Vere," I made no mention of de Vere in this connection or in any other for 136 pages.

Given Boyle's reliance on falsehood, it is not surprising, I suppose, to find him transforming Essex's planned employment of the play Richard the Second into the playwright's intention in writing it. (How this squares with his contention that the playwright was Shakspeare of Stratford, I do not know). He writes: "Elizabeth was many things — but she was not a person who would fund plays that aimed at her overthrow." Of course the play was not written to bring about Elizabeth's overthrow. It was an integral part of the saquanca of historical plays, in which the fact of Richard II's forced abdication was essential for an understanding of the War of the Roses, which makes up such a large portion of those plays. I stress the point in my book that the historical plays were written — insofar as they had a current political purpose — to appeal to English patriotism and above all to show the catastrophic consequences for the nation of a disputed succession; and Elizabeth's right to the throne was very much disputed, and on pretty good grounds. The plays would have moved an audianca not to seek Elizabeth's

[Editor's Note: In his letter (1583) to Queen Elizabeth, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, wrote:

"But I submit all these things to God's will, who knoweth why it best pleaseth Him to afflict my Lord of Oxford in this sort, who hath, I confess, forgotten his duty to God . . ." (underlining added).]

overthrow but to unite behind her, whatever the effect of Richard the Second given alone by Essex, who evidently abandoned the plan.

Boyle writes [referring to the material in the Appendix to The Mysterious William Shakespeare], "Apparently Ogburn believes that the Chief Constable of Stratford is somehow mixed up in a mysterious effort to downplay a criminal attempt [1973] to break into the monument in search of exactly those manuscripts." This is the opposite of what I clearly indicate my suspicion is. The Chief Constable and the Director of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust were apparently the only two persons to claim any knowledge of the alleged break-in of the monument. No reporters were called in to witness the damage and no photographs taken of it, indeed no tangible evidence exists that it actually took place. As I say, when questioned about it the Chief Constable was "frosty and uncommunicative" because, the inference of all of this is the break-in was a fiction.

On p. 6, Boyle speaks of "Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's friend, whose lavish praise of Shakespeare's work is seen by the Oxfordians as a fiendishly subtle way of denouncing Shakespeare as a fraud and pointing the finger at Oxford." Reverting to this allegation on p. 26, Boyle says of Jonson's second, long poem prefacing the First Folio of 1623, "It is rather sad that this personal tribute from one great playwright to another should be taken for denigration, irony and deceit." The question that keeps arising in my mind is how a polemicist with so little conscience is able to live with himself. Boyle cites nothing in the work of any Oxfordian to give grounds for his snide accusations.

What are the facts? Before I had written more than seven pages of The Mysterious William Shakespeare, I declared that in the First Folio "Ben Jonson delivered a panegyric on Shakespeare" that was "an astonishing and dramatic development" in which "he hailed Shakespeare in a poem of eighty lines as the soul of the age and Britain's triumph. Probably no other writer in history has received such a tribute from the pen of a fellow." A few pages farther on I speak of Jonson's "ringing acclamation of Shakespeare" and on p. 229 refer to the publication of Jonson's "Eulogy of Shakespeare" as providing "one of the great dramatic moments in the history of literature."

"De Vere died in 1604," says Boyle (p. 29) while "'Shakespeare' continues to write . . . There is a fair amount of evidence that 'Shakespeare' was still writing after de Vere's death." There is not a scrap of such evidence. Moreover, in Sonnet 107, clearly dated by internal evidence as of 1603, the poet speaks of himself as near death, while, as Boyle must know also, the poet was clearly dead when William Shakespeare's Sonnets (the form of title for a deceased author) were published in 1609, on evidence stressed in The Mysterious William Shakespeare.

"If de Vere was the author, why should he conceal it?" Boyle asks rhetorically (p. 6). "The argument that it was infra dig for a nobleman to write plays is destroyed by another part of the Oxfordians' own case: the evidence that Oxford was already a well-known poet and playwright who supported a troupe of actors." As Boyle must surely be aware, this is all humbug. The prohibition was against a nobleman's writing plays for the common theatre, as opposed to the Court, which had doubtless been the scene for the comedies Oxford was known to have written, and against his publishing either poems or plays under his right name. As for maintaining a troupe of actors, this was entirely de rigueur for a nobleman. The 15th and 16th Earls of Oxford had both maintained such troupes as did the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Warwick; there were the Queen's men and, under James, the King's. That acting troupes had royal, as well as noble, patronage is fully known to Boyle.

The brief quotes me as having stated in my book (p. 572) that Oxford "was publicly accusing his wife of adultery." Accustomed as I am to Boyle's habitual practice of deceit, he is still capable of taking me aback. I said no such thing as he attributes to me. The "public" he speaks of consisted of one person, Oxford's cousin, and what I wrote was the exact opposite of what he says I wrote: "He [Oxford] was not [repeat not] charging his wife with adultery."

So much for a sampling of the outstanding transgressions in the first 30 of the 118 pages of Boyle's brief. This is as much as I can drive myself to read of his handiwork. However, a few of such transgressions from farther on come back to mind.

"Mr. Ogburn," Boyle asserts on p. 38, "seems to hint that de Vere . . . wrote most of John Lyly's novels and all of his plays." To back up this wild charge he cites pp. 43-44 and 625-6 of my book which contain nothing to support it, offer no such hint. Of the plays attributed to Lyly, Boyle repeats on the next page "that Ogburn thinks that Lyly did not write the plays." No page in my book is cited on which I expressed this thought because none could be; I have never had the thought.

In The Mysterious William Shakespeare, I write that the Stratford man's "name was demonstrably not Shakespeare. However unanimously the biographers write of the father as John Shakespeare, John was never called Shakespeare by his fellow Stratfordians, as far as we know, and neither was his brother Henry of Snitterfield. In the Stratford registry of christenings, marriages, and burials the rendering of the name as Shakspeare is 'fairly uniform,' according to Chambers [Sir Edmund K. Chambers, the ultimate authority]. In only one of thirty entries he reproduces is the name given as Shakespeare; that is the record of the christening in 1583 of Will's daughter Susanna — who, twenty years later, is married as Susanna Shaxpere. John's name was nearly always rendered Shakspeyr by one town official, while another tended to Shexpeare, Chambers tells us; they never wrote it Shakespeare. Walter Roche, ex-master of the Stratford grammar school, whose authority I think we may grant, spelled it Shaxbere. It was Shaxpere on one of Will's marriage documents, Shagspere on the other." His name was recorded as Shakspeare in his christening and in the burial register.

In the case of the dramatist, by contrast, the name is always spelled Shakespeare or Shake-speare. The difference is not one of the casual nature of Elizabethan orthography, as Boyle tells us. It is a matter of names with different pronunciations, one taking a short "a" in the first syllable, the other e long. In his six known signatures, Shakspeare of Stratford spelled the name — insofar as he was able to write at all — as requiring a short "a." He never, to the best of our knowledge, called himself Shakespeare, however doggedly Boyle and his other adherents do so. In defiance of the evidence, Boyle asserts, ironically (p. 7), that "the man from Stratford just happened to have the same name as de Vere's pseudonym." To justify the claim, he charges what I wrote in my book! This is where I speculate that in 1597-98, when Francis Meres first sprang on the world the name "Shakespeare" as that of a dramatist with twelve plays already to his credit, today's noted Stratfordian was stepped as a stand-in for the author and paid to hustle himself back to his home, where his patent disqualifications for the role would not queer the game — and where he would speedily buy some \$80,000 worth of real estate with funds inexplicable by such as Boyle. I wrote (p. 745) that "though others of similar name were probably available, [those in authority] picked William Shakspeare." In the direct quotation of this paragraph, and within the quotation marks, Boyle coolly changes "Shakspeare" to "Shakespeare." Naive persons like me thought a lawyer would court disbarment by such a sleight-of-hand.

Boyle on p. 78 in a tortuous footnote of tortured argument, citing "OGBURN at 97-8," asserts that Oxfordians "claim that no other contemporary playwright hyphenated his name." What I made very clear is that it was not the dramatist who rendered the name "Shake-speare" but, time after time, printers of his plays and others referring to him in publications who thus signified that they recognized the name as a pseudonym. Even after misrepresenting the Oxfordians' position, the best that Boyle can do to show that "it appears to be factually incorrect" is to cite a case in which Marlowe was written "Mar-Low" (and I believe he means "Mar-lon"). But we are not talking about a single aberration in someone's hand but of repeated renderings of the name on the author's printed works and in other formal references to him in publication, including the First Folio. What I wrote in The Mysterious William Shakespeare is not, as Boyle is forced to pretend, that no other contemporary playwright hyphenated his name but, far more significantly, that

"I think we have every right to ask that the Stratfordians either acknowledge that Shakespeare's contemporaries [who hyphenated the name] were signaling the name as a non de plume or produce another case of an English name so hyphenated."

That, no orthodox scholar, no one on Boyle's side, has been able to do. There is no such case — that is, in which an English name is repeatedly split by a hyphen unless it is a made-up name describing an action ("Master Starve-lackey," obviously fictitious, is an

example from Shakespeare). It is with indisputable evidence that "William Shakespeare" was a pseudonym that the quaking house-of-cards of the Stratford theory tumbles altogether; and no pervarications by James Boyle — such as (p. 13) that Shakespeare's "friends say that he is the author and the actor and his contemporaries evidently think that he is the author and actor" (which is not the case if by "Shakespeare" Boyle means the man from Stratford, as he explicitly does) — can restore it.

\* \* \* \* \*

## A THEATRE MAN LOOKS AT SHAKESPEARE

John L. Price

During the forty years that I have been an Oxfordian I do not recall having seen any arguments presented from the viewpoint of the practical, practicing man of the theatre. It seems to me that this is a serious oversight. I believe that if Stratfordian scholars had been as involved as I have been in the day to day operation of theatre, they might have been more sympathetic to a revision of some of their hypotheses. Genius is all very well, but a day has twenty-four hours for all of us, and in those days before word processors, telephones, jet transportation and superhighways, electric and hydraulic backstage horse power, the expense of time must have been all-consuming when it came to running a theatre company in repertory, and especially when having to do business in an increasingly hostile political environment. Operating a theatre is tough enough, even when you have city hall in your hip pocket!

The Stratfordians, for the most part, claim that in addition to writing the plays, Shakespeare was also assisting in the management of the company and acting as well. It's patently obvious that he also took an active hand in the direction of the plays. As basic stage direction, Hamlet's advice to the players has never been improved upon. For all I know, the Stratfordians may have him taking tickets and sweeping the stage, as well as holding the horses of the cash customers!

Stop and think what the daily pattern of life was in those days. The actor was constantly learning new roles, since the bill was perpetually changing — and not with just a standard repertory either. The Elizabethan actor had to be a really quick study.

The morning through early afternoon hours would have been given over to rehearsals and the business and technical affairs of the theatre — costumes, props, set pieces, wigs, and much just plain business type business — not to mention political problems with the Puritans.

Then came the performance. After that, presumably, the actors worked on conning their parts for the next day's play. Then there were the bare necessities of life which had to be looked after, and back then, everything took more time — no gas, electricity, running water, indoor plumbing or any of the 20th century time saving miracles which we all take for granted. And, oh yes, how about an occasional night out with the boys at the Mermaid Tavern? Then back home, if you were a playwright, as well as an actor and shareholder in the company, to burn the midnight candle and grind out another scene for the next opus in the works. Have you ever tried to write by candlelight? Very inefficient, and in those days, very expensive as well. After a few years of that as a steady diet, a tin cup and dark glasses would have been a normal expectation.

Although days were quite long in summertime, allowing for more daylight work, the diurnal cycle was still just twenty-four hours. As a producer of professional musical stock for twenty-two years, with an outstanding staff at my disposal, and all of the technological miracles of our time, I was still obliged to work a thirty-six consecutive hours shift every week, in addition to my standard fourteen to sixteen hour days. I didn't perform too often, so I was not overburdened with having to learn lines, choreography, or music, and almost never had to tinker with the script or write program notes, press releases or ads. Nevertheless, even without these drains on my time, the daily problems which arose kept me in an ulcerous regimen which would probably have killed me had I not loved the work so much.

Before anyone raises the issue of apples and pears, let me point out that one of the most popular features of the Elizabethan theatrical presentation was the afterpiece of a jig or burgomask, and these were nothing more nor less than the rudiments of what became

musical comedy and burlesque.

Productions at court or the palaces of the nobility antailed a great deal of special effort and much 'axtra time. Taking the show on tha road prasanted evan more distractions and constraints on the time of the company than touring doas today, and tha conditions were infinitely worse.

Of course there was time off during virulent periods of plague or spells of bad weather, but these certainly could not accurately be forecast in advance, and in the case of tha plague, it often maant that tha company laft London for the provinces.

Over the yaars I have known and workad alongsida a great many very talented theatre people, and from what I have obsarvad, there's just no way that the Swaet Swan of Avon could have done all of the things which he is supposed to have done. And remamber, ha had a family back in Stratford which he supported and prasumeably spent some tima with off and on, not to mention the enlightened litigations and business dealings of which we know he was so fond.

All I can say is, if Will Shaksper did averything tha Stratfordians claim he did, he's not just a genius, he's Superman!

Of course, if he were the 17th Earl of Oxford, we've got another whole ball gamè.

\* \* \* \* \*

1240f

#### THE DATING OF THE TEMPEST AND "OSTLER v. HEMINGS"

Judge Minor D. Miller, Jr.

Coming back to the graat dabate, I hava absolute and untarnished faith in tha validity of my worries. Suraly enough, tha worst fears were realizad in the dabata when it appeared Professor Jaszi had not been sufficiently briefed by his advisors on the sources of The Tempest. In my edition of S.I. Vol 1, pp 435-466 on The Tempest one will find historical citation for assigning an early date for composition of Tha Tempest.

The Stratfordians hava long relied on a dating of the composition of The Tempest basad upon an account by Sylvestar Jourdain of a shipwreck at Barmuda. Jourdain's shipwreck occurred in 1609 and his account was published in 1610. The Jourdain account, according to Stratfordians, was the sole source available for Shakespeare to know of a shipwreck at Bermuda — supplying the reference to the "... Bermoothes." Since de Vera diad in 1804 he could not have known of ship wrecks at Barmuda. Ergo, he was not Shakespeare the dramatist.

This Stratfordian misrepresentation is one of the most amazing ravalations of sloppiness in academic resaarch — and shows tha dangers practiced by literary scholars when they fail to explore historical sources.

Barmuda was discovered in 1500, and was correctly located on maps thereafter. Shipwracks on Bermuda wera familiar hazards to English sailors by the mid 1500s. Well known to all excapt Stratfordian scholars was Sir Walter Ralaigh's account in 1591 of the loss of "Tha Ravege in a tampest, and what before in the bay of Mexico, and about the Bermudas, thara were 70 and odde consumed and lost." Vol. 111, Richard Hakluyt. The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation (raprinted AMS Prass Inc., NY. 1965). Bermuda is shown on the 1582 map by Michael Lok for Frobisher's expeditions. Tha 17th E of O was the heaviest individual invastor in Frobishar's Third expedition.

In the early 1580s, following tha Third Frobisher expedition, da Vere purchased the ship the Edward Bonaventure. Later, when men and ships were commandeered for England's dafanse against the Spanish Armada, it is known that de Vere outfitted and commanded his own ship against tha Armada in 1588. Whether this Armada ship was the Edward Bonaventure is not now known. The next wa hear of the Edward Bonaventure, she is one of three ships which met misfortuna in a storm at Bermuda. Two accounts of this shipwreck of the Edward Bonaventure at Bermuda were printed and raported by Hakluyt. Further rasaarch may someday



reveal whether de Vere still owned or had a financial interest in the Edward Bonaventure when she was wrecked at Bermuda. Meanwhile it is within the realm of rational belief that de Vere, at least, had a continuing interest in the common welfare of the ship.

It seems to me that the generations of scholars who have **continued** to make the **factual error** that Sylvester Jourdain supplied the "first account of a ship wreck at Bermuda" fly in the face of all that is expected of scholars. How absurd!

Furthermore, a parallel reading of the lines of The Tempest with the Jourdain account and the account of Edmund Barker of the last days of the Edward Bonaventure, and of Henry May of the shipwreck on Bermuda in 1593 nullifies the Stratfordian position. When one compares the May account of the shipwreck at Bermuda and the Jourdain account, one sees that Shakespeare's Tempest draws almost word for word on May. Now, why should Stratfordians flinch at this? In 1583 to 1593 (the "missing years" in Shaksper's biography) Edward de Vere would be expected to follow his investments by reading reports of the Frobisher expeditions. Why won't scholars admit that the May account of a Bermuda shipwreck, at the very least, could have been by Shakespeare? Is it because "scholars" find it essential that de Vere be dead before The Tempest was composed? Otherwise, "all is lost" — "all is lost."

My second concern was whether Professor Jaszi had knowledge of the Ostler v Heminges case [Court of King's Bench, Coram Rege Roll, plea of Thomasine Ostler against her father John Heminges, 1615 (KB 27/1454, rot.692), 13th year of James I], in which Shakespeare, who had owned Globe shares, was alleged to be dead. The men from Stratford was alive when the pleading was filed. In years past, both Charlton and the Cyrs (as well as Schoenbaum) have refused to take a hard look at Ostler v Heminges which, I submit, blows Shaksper completely out of the time slot and place in Stratfordian claims. The Ostler case was discovered by Professor Wallace — back in the early 1900s, along with the to-become-famous Bellot case (which yielded another "signature").

The Ostler case was transcribed but not translated in Chambers two volume Life of Shakespeare. Chambers added punctuation to fit his mold; but his added punctuation does not appear in the original document. A translation of the legal Latin, as originally written, will not support Chamber's transcription. The Chamber's added punctuation was adopted by B. Roland Lewis in his two volume work The Shakespeare Documents, Stanford University Press, 1940. Though Lewis' work is more Stratfordian, it is superior to Schoenbaum's 1975 edition of William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life, The Scholar Press — which plows the same ground while giving little recognition to Lewis. Lewis' book presented the Ostler case in Latin without an English translation, but added the Chamber's comma which is not present in the original. Schoenbaum didn't even mention the Ostler case. That tells reems about Schoenbaum — "In his omissions ye shall know him."

There is good reason for Schoenbaum's omission. Years ago, Dr. Louis Benezet of Dartmouth College realized that, given a correct translation and the original **lack-of-punctuation** of the pleadings, the Ostler case destroyed the Stratfordian position that the Stratford man owned shares in the Globe. Miss Gwyneth Bowen (an Oxfordian from London, now deceased) inquired further and agreed with Benezet. On the strength of the Benezet and Bowen findings I included their interpretations of Ostler in S.I., realizing I might be seriously challenged by "scholars." In order to prepare for the expected attack — I had two Latinists translate this document from the original. One was Dr Fred Youngs (Ph.D. Cambridge University — LSU Tudor — Elizabethan Professor, who originally studied to be a Catholic priest, and who "taught me" paleography so I can work with 16th century hands), and the other a well qualified Latin expert. Fred said the point "jumped at him from the page." The William Shakespeare who was a shareholder at the Globe was dead (by 1615) when Hilary Term commenced in the 13th year of King James. Shaksper was among the living when Ostler filed her pleading alleging Shakespeare was dead.

A few years back, Dr F G Emmison [M.B.E., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S., F.S.G., former County Archivist of Essex, and author of the Elizabethan Life series], as a personal favor to me, transcribed and translated the document directly from the original in the London Public



Record Office. There is no doubt that the William Shakespeare who owned shares in the Globe Theatre was, in the opinion of a fellow owner of shares, dead in 1615 when Thomasine Ostler filed her pleading against her father. Since Shaksper died in April 1616, this evidence would have given Justices Brennan, Blackmun & Stevens good ground for another "gnawing doubt."

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## FROM AND TO THE JOURNALS

New York Times (4/26/88):

### SHAKESPEARE AND FREUD: THE BARD IS ANALYZED ON THE ACADEMIC COUCH

\* \* \* \*

Next up was Prof. Joel Fineman of the University of California at Berkeley, who delivered a treatise titled "The Sound of 'O' in Othello: The Real of the Tragedy of Desire." . . .

(He) noted how many characters in the play had an "o" in their names (Roderigo, Cassio, Brabantio, Lodovico, Iago, Othello) and suggested this meant (or signified), apart from all the characters being Italian, that Shakespeare was attaching special importance to the letter.

Turning to Desdemona's Willow Song, the chorus of which ("sing willow, willow, willow") she repeats several times, Professor Fineman said it is clear Shakespeare is putting his own signature to the character of Othello. Thus, Shakespeare's nickname of Will corresponds to the "will" of the Willow Song, and Othello's Act V confession to Desdemona's murder, "Here I am," all runs together to form "Will-O-I am." . . .

The final paper was by Prof. Angus Fletcher of the CUNY Graduate School, who spoke on "'Shakespeare' and 'Freud': The View From Outer Space." . . .

Professor Fletcher drew parallels between Shakespeare and Freud: Each man was a master wordsmith, for example, and each made up stories, or, in Freud's case, dreams. "Shakespeare used many, many words," Professor Fletcher said, "more than anyone else to that time. Joyce had to make up words to compete with Shakespeare. Freud, too, was a clever writer — very, very clever. He can get you to believe almost anything."

It was then, perplexing, said Professor Fletcher, that until his dying day Freud denied Shakespeare's authorship of the plays, believing they were written by the Earl of Oxford.

Once again it was the psychoanalyst to shed light. "Freud was only human," Dr. Barchilon said apologetically. "It was no accident that Freud was jealous of Shakespeare. He was jealous of Dostoyevsky, too. He made Freud nervous. He gave him insomnia. Freud had to deny that Shakespeare knew so much before him"

Wilborn Hampton

April 28, 1988

To the Editor of The New York Times:

I read that Professor Angus Fletcher finds it perplexing that Freud, "a master of wordsmith," went to his death bed believing Edward De Vere, the Earl of Oxford, lay concealed behind the name Shakespeare. The professor proposed jealousy as a possible motive for his belief, as if Freud thought changing the man would diminish the works. But that doesn't really make sense. Freud was an intelligent man who had sought the truth throughout his life. Perhaps his belief isn't so perplexing. Perhaps he simply loved the works, weighed the evidence and came to his conclusion. Actor/playwright Leslie Howard, in his anti-Nazi film Pimpernel Smith, also spoke up for Oxford. Though they are not professors of Shakespeare both these men have some first-hand knowledge of the creative imagination. Their opinions merit fair hearings, not faulty explanations.

By the way, Joel Fineman might add this to his list of Shakespeare's penchant for the sound of O and its possible use as a name clue. In the first folio (dedicated to the Earls of

Pembroke and his brother, Montgomery, Oxford's son-in-law) Hamlet's final words are actually "The rest is silence. O, o, o, o." Most subsequent editors have deleted the O's as superfluous. But for someone like Freud, who understood the character to be autobiographical and who loved good word play as much as the author, a wonderful pun may be found in all those O's, illuminated by what Hamlet (as an old English word for "nameless") says while dying in the arms of his best friend, "O good Horatio, what a wounded name, things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!"

Charles Boyle

[Newsletter Editor's note: Professor Fineman might also add to his list the names of many other characters in other plays, e.g., Angelo, Antonio, Banquo, Benvolio, Claudio, Horatio, Malvolio, Mercutio, Oberon, Olivia, Ophelia, Orlando, Orsino, Prospero, and Romeo]

Palm Beach Post (4/6/88):

Group persuades 'jurors' Bard really Earl, not Will

LAKE WORTH — Sex. Scandal. Intrigue. War.

No, this is not a Shakespearean tragedy. But it is perhaps the greatest literary cover-up of all time, or so say members of the Oxford Shakespearean Society.\*

What is tragic, they say, is that lowly "Stratford man" has been given credit for writing the magnificent plays and sonnets under the nom de plume William Shakespeare.

"Everybody knew who wrote the plays, the Earl of Oxford," said society member Lawrence Lavan.

Lavan and three cohorts took their argument to a 17-member jury Wednesday at Palm Beach Junior College. Only the plaintiff was heard from. Will of Stratford had no defenders in the presentation to the jury and 150 other spectators.

"To many, the whole thing is something like learning there is no Santa Claus," said speaker and former radio personality Rolf Kaltenborn. "The main point I want is to stimulate interest in reading the great plays and the great poems."

The panelists, who also included Peter Sammartino, the former president of Fairleigh Dickinson University, and retired businessman Charles Gallant, claim Will of Stratford was not much more than a bumbling illiterate who was whipped and fined for poaching and trained as a butcher's apprentice.

On the other hand, Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, was a swashbuckling courtier and nobleman — well-traveled and well-known at court. So well known, in fact, that Oxfordians, as his supporters are called, state matter-of-factly that he was Queen Elizabeth I's lover.

In Elizabethan days, actors and playwrights ranked right up there with vagabonds and thieves. Noblemen simply did not write plays or poetry.\*\*

So a massive cover-up was created in which Will of Stratford, by then a small-time worker at the Globe Theatre, played a major role. How else can one explain Will's sudden wealth, Oxfordians ask?

Much about Shakespeare's work can be explained, they said, if the plays and poetry are considered almost autobiographies of de Vere.

After deliberations, the PBJC jury ruled 12-5 in favor of the Earl of Oxford.

Still, it was the Bard himself, whoever that may be, who wrote: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet."

Belinda Brookman

\*[sic — Shakespeare Oxford Society]

\*\*[sic — Noblemen did write plays but not for the public theatres and, also, wrote poems but not for the commercial market.]

The New Yorker (4/11/88):

## ON AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

### The Authorship Question

"It remains possible, in 1988, to study Shakespeare in high school and college, to see the plays on stage and screen, to read program notes, reviews, articles, and whole books of Shakespeare scholarship without ever being told that the Stratford man — as the anti-Stratfordians call him, for clarity's sake — was a country bumpkin who could scarcely write his name."

James Lardner

\* \* \* \* \*

## SPECIAL SHAKESPEARE EDITION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW

On September 25, 1987 Supreme Court Justices Brennan, Blackmun and Stevens heard arguments and rendered opinions as to the contested identity of the person who wrote the plays, poems and sonnets attributed to William Shakespeare. This outstanding event received nation-wide coverage, with articles, among others, in the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and "National Review". The proceedings were recorded by PBS and has been broadcast both here and in England.

Two American University, Washington College of Law Professors argued the case, with Professor Peter Jaszi advocating the authorship of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford and Professor James A.D. Boyle the authorship of Will. Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon.

The American University Law Review has announced that a forth-coming edition of its Law Review which will include a preface by David Lloyd Kreeger, the briefs of Professors Jaszi and Boyle, and the opinions of the Justices. A copy of the official transcript of the oral arguments will also be available.

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\* \* \* \* \*

## SHAKESPEARE REVEALED IN OXFORD'S LETTERS

By William Plumer Fowler

"... indispensable to anyone who takes a serious look at the authorship question..." John Sobran, NATIONAL REVIEW, November 6, 1987.

"A work of monumental scholarship, unparalleled dedication and elegant craftsmanship." Morse Johnson, (Editor, S.O.S. Newsletter)

A thoughtful book, with documentary evidence compelling the inescapable conclusion that the works of William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon were actually written by Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, who concealed his identity behind the pseudonym "William Shake-speere" so similar to the Stratford theater-worker's real name, William Shaksper(e).

In addition to an introduction reviewing the case for Oxford's authorship, the book's three facets comprise: 1. Full transcriptions of thirty-seven of Oxford's most significant letters; 2. A detailed study of the letters' remarkable parallelisms, in both thought and proseology to the writings attributed to William Shakespeare; and 3. A kaleidoscopic review of Shakespeare, in choice vignettes with samples of Shakespeare's humanism, profundity, and wit.

The author is a retired lawyer and a recognized poet. He is a graduate of Roxbury Latin School, Dartmouth College and Harvard Law School. He was president of the Shakespeare Club of Boston for twelve years.

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## FOREWORD\*

by

Charlton Ogburn, Jr.

The one subject of inexhaustible interest to mankind is man himself. All societies in all ages have shared a yearning for knowledge of the nature of man and his place in the cosmos. Man's characteristic preoccupation with the enigma of himself is so profound, his disquiet so far-reaching, that in most cultures a special place is reserved for the individuals deemed qualified to expound the essential mysteries. Indeed, these are often accorded an authority equal to that of the temporal power.

In our own society, the conventional conception of man in his niche in the universe has been increasingly derived from popular science. The materialists are our priesthood, and for our generation theirs is the official interpretation.

It is characteristic of our deterministic philosophy to interpret mankind in terms of the lowest common denominators. Man in our orthodoxy is an animal with his behavior rooted in an animal past. Writing before the "Age of Reason," Pascal could describe man as at once the scandal and the glory of the universe. But man is to us neither the godly hero nor the diabolical villain: he is the epitomization of the ordinary. It is the Average Man to whom we defer. He carries the day not by force of example but by weight of numbers.

Besides the two authorities that traditionally confront us — the authority of government which tells us what is incumbent upon citizens of a society, and the other, theological, philosophical, or scientific, which sets forth our genesis and our significance in the universe — besides these, there is still another voice, non-authoritative, personal and potent, which interprets us to ourselves. This is the voice of the artist. It is the great literature, the painting or sculpture, the symphony or concerto, opera or oratorio, which imparts a conviction of truth — of ultimate harmony and meaning — and produces in us a feeling of exaltation.

Often the truths conveyed are ephemeral: they do not endure as patterns of life shift and change. But the work of a few transcends their own era, remains fresh and vital, abiding with us. Of no one is this more strikingly the case than of Shakespeare. The nature of Shakespeare's genius was "such as to exalt the glory of man," to show that the resources of human nature are unfathomable and that the human spirit can be neither explained nor contained by the mean attributes the rationality of our age allows it.

Since his time, the principles of governmental authority, as well as the theological, philosophical, and scientific edifices of thought, have undergone drastic alteration or have been abandoned. Yet Shakespeare's conception of man seems not only to have retained its validity but to acquire added force and illumination with the passage of the centuries. As science progresses and man's stock in himself tends to sink lower in relation to his increasing mastery over his material environment, the prospect is not that the truths bequeathed to us by Shakespeare and a few other superlative artists will be superseded, but that they will be the only certainties we can hold to.

If Shakespeare's appeal is greater today than it has been during the three intervening centuries since his time, the reason may be that our age, like that of Elizabeth, is one of expanding horizons, of speculation in unfamiliar fields, of formidable uncertainties and few signposts. The roving and unconstrained imagination of four centuries ago finds its counterpart in this present age of unstable values and shattered institutions, as it has not done in all the years between. The man of the Renaissance was an adventurer in a chartless universe, and this is what man has again become in the twentieth century. The directions in which our predecessors in the era of Elizabeth and the Medicis set forth into the unknown are those which we have followed: the mould of our civilization took shape in that age of trial and discovery. What we are now was to a considerable extent determined in those formative years of our culture.

\*This Star of England by  
Dorothy & Charlton Ogburn (Sr.)

All art has a tremendous potency for mankind, none more so than the incandescent creativeness of Shakespeare's genius. It has been observed that Balzac's characters were more typical of the generation that followed him than of the one he depicted; likewise that, after Kipling's best stories had been written, such men as he described began to be encountered in the far places of the world; so that these artists actually created men.

It is not the business of art to follow reality. Reality follows art. When we gaze at a sunset, we do not see it "as it is" – as an amalgam of Copernicus's vision of the earth's revolution round the sun and Max Planck's quantum theory of light. We see it through the eyes of generations of painters and poets who have infused into the spectacle the lofty symbol of aspiration and resignation or the grandeur of celestial harmony. The mathematician cannot postulate his universe without symbols. Without words man cannot think; and without the identification of our emotions which the artist has traditionally given us we could scarcely feel. For it is not only the phenomena of our material abode that art has endowed with significance: art has, through the ages, given us our ideas of ourselves, the intimate and impelling characterizations which we recognize as "true" because they come to life in terms of our common experience. A character in fiction becomes real in proportion as we can see ourselves in him. At the same time, we are real to ourselves in proportion as we recognize ourselves in portrayals of men and women in literature. Inspired by the artist, man creates and re-creates himself. The greater the artist, the more enduring is the conception of man that he provides. There is perhaps no other criterion of supremacy in art.

The pre-eminence of Shakespeare lies in his having achieved a more comprehensive realization of man's potentialities than any other poet has done. He not only created characters, but in a very real sense he created the English race as we now know it. All genuine artists are explorers. They extend the boundaries of our known world, and we others follow, our heritage and our lives enhanced by their vision. Their conception of mankind is fulfilled in time by the culture of which they are the expression; their bright vision becomes a commonplace. Although many a poet has only a transitory influence because, limited to a peculiar set of circumstances, he lacks universality and thus permanent significance, Shakespeare is immortal. The spectacle of his dramas gives us a sense of ultimate realization of essential humanity, as nearly ultimate as we are likely to conceive; gives us, indeed, an apprehension like a god's.

It is not that Shakespeare's characters are superhuman: literature abounds in characters of superhuman heroism, superhuman strength, or villainy, and we find them merely tedious. Shakespeare's men and women are not superhuman but superbly human.

What is absent from Shakespeare is the mediocre, the lifeless, the half-formed, the imperfectly comprehended, the trite, the passive, the mean and the meaningless. What is absent, it might be said, is that which modern writers conscientiously represent and define, on the grounds that life is like that. This is what we imply when we say that Shakespeare's conception of man is a lofty one. For to him it is the essence of man's destiny to encompass a totality of experience and to bear a burden of self-knowledge that marks him a figure of infinite capacity, himself at once the explanation and the mystery of the universe. However else Shakespeare's heroes and heroines, villains and villainesses feel and act, they feel and act greatly, in keeping with an exalted conception of man's fate. In a time like ours when the arts form what has been called a petty conspiracy to debase the stature of men, one finds reassurance in the manifest instinct of our generation to turn to the poet who, above all others, has endowed man with a stature great even in his weakness, transcendent in meaning even in the face of final futility and extinction.

In a way, it may be considered a tribute to the works of this genius that almost from the time of his death the large majority of people have been content tacitly to assume that these works were given to the world like manna. All of a sudden, in the conventional view – or at best after a few years' gestation of a most mysterious kind – the dramas and poems simply appeared, full-panoplied, like Pallas from the brow of Zeus. What was their substance? Why were they written? More than three centuries of critical scholarship throw no light upon these questions. Indeed, such questions seem hard to have arisen in scholastic minds. What manner of man was he who brought forth the supreme works of literature of our language? "Little," we are told, "is known of the author of the plays"; or, in a shameless imposition upon our credulity, we are given "lives" of Shakespeare which are airy imaginings undisciplined except by a few facts largely irrelevant.

The Elizabethan age was the young manhood of our civilization. It was a time when we awoke to the world around us and took fire from what we saw; a time when, as in the spring, the essences stored beneath the surface through the long medieval twilight rose in all their vigor for the flowering of the Renaissance. It was above all, as we have said, the time when the character of our culture took shape. And in no one person was the quality of the age so richly illuminated, so powerfully sustained, as in the author of the poems and dramas of Shakespeare. He was to this Golden Age as the centerpole of a tent to the canvas. The whole literature of the times was elevated through him. Like Aeschylus, in the Golden Age of Greece, he inspired and exceeded his followers. Contemporaneous writers attained to

excellence became they shared the stage with him. Without this man's genius, there would have been no such Elizabethan age as we know.

Had his plays and poems been frankly offered as anonymous, no doubt the scholars of subsequent times would have been quick to respond to the challenge and would long since have cleared up the mystery of their origin. The works were, however, published under the name "William Shakespeare," which resembled the name of an obscure young grain-dealer of Stratford, one William Shaksper (or Shagsper, or Shakspe, or Shaxper, as it was variously written). According to the few meagre records of him which exist, this Shaksper spent some years in London during the period when the dramas were appearing in the public theatres. As a result of this coincidence, generations of school-children have been instructed to believe that the incomparably talented and sensitive genius who wrought the plays out of the tumult of joys, anguish, and intellectual zest to which they bear unmistakable witness, out of a broad learning and experience, out of an intimate familiarity with the whole range of court-life, to say nothing of a jealous and passionate pride of heritage, who contributed more than any other hundred writers to the creation of the language we speak, was a kind of amiable nonentity, nearly unknown to his contemporaries, almost illiterate. We are told that his interest in the literary age he crowned was so slight that after dashing off the plays he returned to the grain business in Stratford and for a period of years paid no further heed to literature, received not a single visitor from the theatrical or literary world, was never referred to, while living, as a writer, was accorded no public comment upon his death; further, that he had never thought it worth while to teach his daughters to read or write, and that he left no book or manuscript in his carefully drawn will. This is the legend we were taught as children to believe, and most of us adults have been content with it.

The conventional attribution of the works of Shakespeare has corrupted the judgment and insight of generations. It has misled us as to the whole nature of artistic creation. Solely on the strength of the example Shakespeare has been supposed to afford, we have been prone to believe that the artist may be no more than a pipeline between a source of divine inspiration and a pad of paper, that since his participation is only that of a medium in a seance, all things are possible to him without volition, knowledge, or effort. This fiction corresponds with no valid human experience. It would reduce art to the level of prestidigitation, of pulling a rabbit out of a hat. Yet one must accept it if one is to believe that the dramas of Shakespeare were written by a man who – if he could write at all – could have had no possible experience of what he was writing about, and to whom the point of view from which he wrote would have been foreign to a degree almost impossible for us to comprehend in these days of social fluidity and classlessness.

The identification of the uneducated, unlettered, undistinguished, and virtually unknown Shaksper with the brilliant, highly cultivated, worldly, intuitive genius whose self-portrait emerges unmistakably from the series of nobly born Shakespearean heroes, imposes upon us not merely a misconception of the personality behind the dramas but a misconception of the origins of all artistic production. For, as even the meanest artist knows, there is nothing upon which the creator can call outside himself. What he produces must come from what he contains, and all his prayers will not add to the raw material with which he works one single experience, one element of knowledge, one insight that he has not himself acquired honestly and for the most part painfully in the process of living. There is no help to be sought from any quarter. What he produces is what he is. It is himself that he mines: there is no other source of ore. That is why the task of artistic creation is among the most exhausting occupations known to man. Joseph Conrad remarked that he had spent twelve hours a day bent over in the hold of a ship under the weight of hundred-pound sacks of wheat, but that this toil was not to be compared with that of writing.

It is, therefore, not only the author of the Shakespearean dramas who has so long awaited recognition. It is all artists. To those who have labored in the bitter void where artistic creation can alone take place, in order to enlarge the world in which our spirits may roam, the least repayment we can make is to disabuse ourselves of the myth that spontaneous generation can occur in the mind of the artist, and to comprehend that his achievement has been wrested from the resistant soil of the experience he has endured and mastered.

Of all Shakespeare's contemporaries of whom we have any record, the least likely to have written the plays and poems was William Shaksper. Thirty-five years ago an English schoolmaster, J. Thomas Looney, having like so many others found it impossible to relate the one to the other, set out with an open mind to try to determine who among all possible candidates *could* have written the plays. On the basis of internal evidence, he first enumerated all the characteristics and qualifications which the author must have had. Against these he measured all the possibilities and inevitably eliminated each – all of them but one. Only one man met the clear specifications. As he pressed his inquiries further, additional supporting evidence came to light. The case, as it progressed, approached ever nearer the irrefutable. The results of this fascinating work of ratiocination were published under the title, *Shakespeare Identified*. The findings contained in that study were, it is evident, unlikely ever to be challenged. However, *Shakespeare Identified*, masterful as was its analysis, left enormous reaches of the subject unexplored.



Since its publication, a vast amount of new evidence has been unearthed, a great part of it as a result of the research which led to the present volume. All of it confirms the initial identification. It would seem fair to say that at last the picture, pieced together from a thousand fragments, each of which fits perfectly beside its neighbors, is now in all essentials complete. In particular the central mystery – why the author of the plays was forced to accept anonymity – is finally explained.

However, the main problem to which this work addresses itself is not the identity of the author, though that is fully established, but the infinitely more extensive and complicated matter of how his personality is revealed in the poems and plays, and how the meaning of innumerable passages – indeed, of whole plays and of the entire sonnet-sequence – which scholars have been content to pass over as enigmatic, is to be found in the dramatist's life and character and those of his renowned contemporaries.

It has been necessary for the writers of this work to reconstruct an era: an era we rightly think of as a Golden Age. Insofar as this has involved them in research so extended that it seemed at times they would never emerge from it, no apology is required. But the time has come when readers are asked also to involve themselves in this undertaking. And at this stage an apology is, indeed, due. Not – in the words of Mr. Snagsby – to put too fine a point on it, the results of this research are of large dimensions. The explanation is that nothing of smaller scope than this book seems to have been possible.

The author of the Shakespearean dramas and the great age in which he lived fitted like hand and glove. Each took character from the other; and to understand the one you must understand the companion-piece. The dramas themselves are rich and complex as are few other works of human artistry: the bafflement of generations of scholars bears witness to that. Many of them are three plays in one, each veridical on its own level, as will be shown. Finally, the personality of the creator is no less profound, manifold, and fascinating than the plays. There are, thus, three elements to be examined: the man, the works, and the times; and the relations of each element to the other two have required exploration. The task of bringing to light all that has been obscured beneath the accumulated sedimentation of three centuries' neglect and misunderstanding is not one of a month or of a year. It was not intended by the man responsible for the initial concealment that the work should be done at all. The poet masked behind the name, "Shakespeare," though like Ariel he commanded the spirits of the air, was helpless, as may now be seen, against those earthly powers whose high interests demanded that his authorship of the poems and dramas be unknown. There has, thus, been more than the accident of neglect to be overcome. There has been the studied purpose of those in a position to enforce their will against the dramatist both during his lifetime and after his death.

The author of *King Henry the Fifth* himself, seeking to "cram within this wooden O the very casques that did affright the air at Agincourt," could not have felt one-tenth so abashed as have the writers of this volume who, doubting that justice could ever be done in the compass of a single book to this most strange and exciting story in all the literary history of the English-speaking world, have yet "dared on this unworthy scaffold to bring forth so great an object." The book, then, is not a large one. These matters are relative. It is a small one. And it is for this that apologies are owed.

To whom is it addressed? It is believed that all readers of Shakespeare will find that the story of the author's life will open up new worlds, as it has to those who have recorded it here. Surely some of the Shakespearean scholars will be sufficiently pure in heart to accept the revelation of the truth, painful wrench though the readjustment may at first be. To these, in a gesture of comradeship and a common, inspiring purpose, this study is offered; and to the coming generation as well, in the hope that its members will carry the work of exploration farther and find much to add which is illuminating.

And there is one other to whom it is addressed in dedication. There is the poet who, with the freedom from the limitations of the factual that rewards the artist for his anguish and toil, was able to frame his own dying plea for recognition and the immortality of his good name, for which his spirit yearned, in poignant lines to the friend surviving him:

O God, Horatio! what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me.  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story.

Perhaps it will not be taken as an impertinence if the writers of this account think of it as offering some amends, however inadequate, to the tragic, sublime, and superlatively human figure of Edward de Vere himself.

Our world is full of tumult. The man of the Renaissance "would not" – to speak in Conrad's phrase – "understand the watchwords of our day, would gaze with amazed eyes at the engines of our strife." By contrast with our century, we may look back upon the period to which Edward de Vere gave the loftiest

expression in the products of his heart and mind and in himself as a man, as "small time." So be it:

... but in that small most greatly liv'd  
This Star of England.

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## Shakespeare's Astronomy

by

Peter R. Moore

Despite a few references to astrology, Shakespeare seems to have had little interest in physics or mathematics (in contrast, for instance, to John Donne). However he did write one well known passage on astronomy, spoken by Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida (I, iii, 85-91):

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this center	85
Observe degree, priority, and place,	
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,	
Office, and custom, in all line of order:	
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol	
In noble eminence enthron'd and spher'd	90
Amidst the other; ...	

Most annotated editions of Troilus and Cressida assert that this passage shows that Shakespeare believed in the ancient Ptolemaic theory of the heavens, in which the stationary Earth is orbited by the sun and the planets. The basis for this assertion is the final phrase of line 85 ("this center"), which places the Earth amid the other celestial bodies. But a few observers, including Charlton Ogburn, argue that lines 89-91 support the Copernican theory (announced in 1543) that the immobile sun is circled by the Earth and the other planets.

In fact, Ulysses' statement cannot be reconciled with either theory; lines 89-91 are at variance with Ptolemy, while line 85 contradicts Copernicus. Also, the sun ("Sol") is called a planet, literally meaning 'wanderer,' which further disagrees with Copernicus. Actually, wise Ulysses is describing the compromise between Ptolemy and Copernicus that was devised by the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe in the 1580s. In Tycho's system the Earth is the fixed center (consistent with line 85), about which the sun orbits (consistent with the word "planet" in line 89), while the remaining planets circle round the sun (consistent with lines 89-91).

It may seem a pity to deny the possibility that Shakespeare was advanced enough to support Copernicus, but it must be remembered that there were several very real objections to the Copernican theory that were not solved until Kepler and Galileo modified that theory in the early seventeenth century.

When and how Shakespeare came to know Tycho's planetary system is hard to say. The theory originated in 1583 and was published in 1588 in a limited edition that Tycho sent to friends and correspondents. The work in question, The Second Volume About Recent Appearances in the Celestial World, was finally offered to the public in 1603. However in 1588 another astronomer, Reymer Baer, published a similar theory, and Tycho, always a wrangler, charged Baer with theft. Also, in 1598 Tycho published a short work describing his famous instruments and his leading discoveries. Actually it was unnecessary for Shakespeare to have read any of these books as Tycho was the most famous astronomer of his day (King James of Scotland visited him in 1590), and he had correspondents in England and other countries, so Shakespeare could have learned of Tycho's system any time after 1583. It is interesting to note that the Earl of Oxford may have met Tycho Brahe as both were in Venice in mid-to-late 1575.

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"Who, as between Edward, 17th Earl of Oxford and William Shakespere of Stratford upon Avon, is more likely to have written the works of William Shakespeare?"

This is the question which three Law Lords will answer at the "Trial" which will take place in the Middle Temple in London on November 26, 1988, co-sponsored by The De Vere Society and The International Shakespeare Globe Center.

August 5th '88

Dear Charlton:

Here are some points about the Trial which I think are worth stressing:

(i) All three Law Lords were given copies of TMWS in April, and will have had seven and a half months (over 30 weeks) in which to read it. I spoke to Mr. Wanamaker yesterday and he said that it was unthinkable that the Judges will not have read the book (and read it thoroughly) before November 26th. He is in regular touch with the legal people taking part and assures me that they are well aware of what happened in Washington and are agreed on the need to obviate a repetition of the fiasco that the Justices' summing up represented.

(As distinguished from the Washington, D.C. Sept. 18, 1987 "Trial") all the Justices, . . . will be able to draw on the insights into the problem they will have attained by reading TMWS. This factor alone would surely warrant our participation. Those Law Lords are going to be asking some very pertinent questions on the day, and as I say, they will have the knowledge wherewith to detect the old litany of lies habitually retailed by the Stratfordolaters. Moreover, Charlton, those same Law Lords will know (know even now) that your book will have come out in England the previous week in a form which makes it widely available to the general public and with what can only be described as a fanfare of publicity. Hence they will know that they cannot afford to ignore the arguments in your book in the hope that this sort of deception would work, because if they did, there would be an awful lot of people asking an awful lot of difficult questions. Oxfordianism will as it were be out of the bag, and they will have to respect that fact. They won't want blokes on the street thinking "But hasn't he read The Mystery of William Shakespeare?"

(ii) Now as to the Barristers. Their role too is completely different from in Washington. Firstly, they will have juniors to do research work for them, and secondly their absolute authority is diluted by the presence of the expert witnesses, whose job, it seems to me, is to keep the Barrister on the length of rein which they think fit, as well as to supply him with whatever information they think to be most important. Hence it is very unlikely that they day will be won by clever talking. (Incidentally, if it is to won by such, then we have by far the better man in Lord Alexander.)

Lord Alexander's manner is apparently deceptive. While jovial and jokey off the job, he is known to be dedicated to each case he takes up. He is not used to losing cases, and that is why he is the most highly paid Bamster in the country. It's also worth remembering that he seized at the opportunity of representing Oxford, and that Kreeger was impressed by his knowledge of the subject when he met him in Washington some while back now. What we must do is ensure that he has all the material he needs at his fingertips. I shall send him a copy of E.T. Clark's "Hidden Allusions." I think it's a very good idea to send him "The Apotheosis of Shakspere." You need to tell him what the principal arguments in the case are, or which arguments in your experientia will win the day . . . Alexander will welcome a barrage of information and instruction on the subject.

Warmest regards,

Charles Vere

(A formal Banquet and Ball at the Arts Club in Mayfair that night will be sponsored by the De Vere Society to celebrate the "Trial," Charlton Ogburn and the publication of The Mysterious William Shakespeare in England.

Ticket inquiries for the "Trial": Sarah Dance, The International Shakespeare Globe Center, Bankside, Southwark, London, SE1 9EB.

Tickets for Banquet and Ball: Count Anthony Von Ost, The De Vete Society, Hertford College, Oxford, OX1 3BW England. (Single ticket 55.75 pounds; 2 tickets 99.75 pounds payable in pounds sterling, by check or International Money Order).

In the last paragraph of his letter, Lord Vere expressed a sentiment and plaudit with which all S.O.S. Members are in deep-felt agreement:

Finally, and most importantly, I was shocked and dismayed to hear about your further suffering with this wretched abscess. Any words of consolation I might offer can only seem inadequate. But my thoughts are with you at this horrible hour, Charlton, and I fervently hope that the knowledge of the recognition and glory which awaits you will pull you through. The Gods must sense just how sweet this future moment will be for you to make this present one so bitter.

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"Shakspere . . . merely a 'man-player' and a 'deserving man'!"\*

Let us now turn to an undoubted allusion to Shakspere the player, made by one whose family had been long associated with him, and who must have known him well. In 1635 Cuthbert Burbage, son of James, and brother of Richard the famous actor, addressed a petition, on behalf of himself "and Winifred his brother's wife, and William his son," to the Earl of Pembroke, the survivor of the "Incomparable Pair" to whom the Folio was dedicated, and then Lord Chamberlain. I do not find the petition in Ingleby's *Century of Praise* or in the lately published *Praise of Shakespeare*, but it is given *in extenso* by the industrious Halliwell-Phillipps (I.291). Cuthbert Burbage recites that his father "was the first builder of playhouses, and was himself in his younger years a player," that he built his first playhouse on leased land, and had a lawsuit with his landlord, "and by his death the like troubles fell on us his sons; we then bethought us of altering from thence, and at like expense built the Globe . . . and to ourselves we joined *those deserving men*, Shakspere, Hemmings, Condall, Phillips and others, partners in the profits of that they call the House," of which the petitioners were lessees. He adds that when he and his brother took possession of the Blackfriars (which his father had "purchased at extreme rates") they "placed men players, which were Hemmings, Condall, Shakspere, etc.," as successors to the children of the Chapel. It does indeed seem strange, as Judge Webb remarks, that the proprietor of the playhouses which had been made famous by the production of the Shakespearean plays, should in 1635 – twelve years after the publication of the great Folio – describe their reputed author to the survivor of the Incomparable Pair as merely a "man-player" and a "deserving man"! Why did he not remind the Lord Chamberlain that this "deserving man" was the author of all these famous dramas? Was it because he was aware that the Earl of Pembroke "knew better than that"?

\**The Shakespeare Problem Restated* (p. 339) by G.G. Greenwood

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### Ben Jonson's "On Poet-Ape"

by

Peter R. Moore

In 1616 Ben Jonson published the first edition of his works, which included a collection of poems called "Epigrams." The fifty-sixth of this series is called "on Poet-Ape":

Poor Poet-Ape, that would be thought our chief,  
 Whose works are e'en the trippery of wit,  
 From brokage is become so bold a thlef,  
 As we, the robb'd, leave rage, and pity it,  
 At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean,  
 Buy the reversion of old plays; now grown,  
 To a little wealth, and credit in the scene,  
 He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own:  
 And, told of this, he slights it. Tut, such crimes  
 The sluggish gaping auditor devours;  
 He marks not whose 'twas first: and after-times  
 May judge it to be his, as well as ours.  
 Fool! as it half eyes will not know a fleece  
 From locks of wool, or shreds from the whole piece?

This poem has occasioned a certain amount of comment, but none of Jonson's modern editors are willing to suggest the identity of the subject.\* There is a tradition that Poet-Ape was Shakespeare, presumably owing to Ben's well known habit of taking potshots at the Bard. However, Jonson's criticism of Shakespeare is pretty well summed up in his comment to William Drummond "that Shakespeare wanted art," which is to say that Shakespeare didn't follow the rules and regulations of drama as they were conceived by Jonson. But none of Ben's complaints against Shakespeare bear any similarity to the sins that he charges against Poet-Ape.

A much more likely suspect is Thomas Dekker who, along with John Marston, engaged Ben in the 1600-01 Poetomachia of War of the Poets. All three playwrights were establishing their careers around the turn of the century, often working in collaboration with each other or with other writers, when Jonson (for reasons now unknown) decided that Marston and Dekker were mocking him. Jonson apparently aimed some shafts at the other two in *Cynthia's Revels* of 1600, and then heard that they were planning retaliation. So Jonson rushed out *The Poetaster* of 1601, a savage and explicit attack on Marston and especially Dekker. The latter had apparently been working on a tragicomedy set in the reign of William II, to which he added (perhaps with help from Marston) a major subplot in which Jonson is effectively and amusingly satirized. Dekker's and Marston's revenge was performed by the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1601 and was published under Dekker's name as *Satiro-mastix* or *The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet* in 1602. And, aside from a much later statement by Jonson that on some unspecified date "he beat Marston, and took his pistol from him," those are the basic facts of Poetomachia.

In *The Poetaster* Jonson is represented by Horace (Ben's favorite classical Poet), while Marston and Dekker are respectively caricatured in the roles of Crispinus and Demetrius Fannius. Dekker used the same names in *Satiro-mastix*, with Crispinus and Fannius undoing the would-be Horace.

The prologue to *The Poetaster* uses the phrases "no poet apes,/That come with basilisk's eyes" and "illiterate apes" when discussing Jonson's foes. Dekker's play gives Horace (Jonson) the following passage (II, ii, 38-43): "as for Crispinus (Marston) that Crispin-asse and Fannius (Dekker) his Play-dresser ... as for these Twynnes, these Poet-apes." Also in *Satiro-mastix* (V, ii, 339), Crispinus (Marston) says sarcastically to Horace (Jonson): "All Poets shall be Poet-Apes but you." *The Poetaster* puns on Dekker's name, i.e., dekker equals dresser" several times (III, I and V, i). Dekker puts the same epithet in Horace's (Jonson's) mouth in *Satiro-mastix* (II, ii, 39) and also has Horace refer to him as an "arrogating puffed" (I, ii, 155); 'to arrogate' means, of course, to take what you are not entitled to. Jonson calls Dekker and Marston "plagiary" several times in *The Poetaster* (IV, i, and V, i). After *Satiro-mastix* came out, Jonson added an "Apologetical Dialogue" to the end of *The Poetaster* in which, speaking as himself rather than as Horace, he attacked Marston and Dekker for "thefts, notable/As ocean-piracies, or highway-stands." And now back to "On Poet-Ape."

The datable events that scholars have found in Jonson's "Epigram's" are from 1595 to 1609, while *Satiro-mastix* repeatedly depicts Jonson as a maker of nasty epigrams, so dating considerations are consistent with seeing "On Poet-Ape" as a slap at Dekker.

Poet-Ape is denounced with the words "frippery" (i.e., rags or cast-off clothing), "shitts" (i.e., women's slips), "shreds," and "the whole piece (of cloth)", which words are in accord with Ben's

\* I consulted five annotated editions of Jonson's poetry, viz., Herford and Simpson, Newdigate, Johnston, Parfit, and Hunter as well as several recent books on Jonson.

characterization of Dekker as a dresser of plays. Also, the Dictionary of National Biography states that a contemporary wrote the words "marchan-tailor" next to Dekker's name in a copy of one of his works, though Dekker has no other known connection with the Merchant Tailors' Company.

The foregoing identification of Dekker as Poet-Ape cannot be called airtight, but I feel that it is a prima facie case, unless some flaw can be found in it, or unless a better candidate is put forward.

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### "THE OXFORDIAN POSITION"

(The following article appeared in "Gathering" (April 1988), a publication of The Literary Guild of the University of Cincinnati, under the heading, "The first of all literary problems" - Ralph Waldo Emerson," together with articles written by two U.C. Professors of English, entitled "The Stratfordian Position" and "Bacon and Shakespeare: the Question of Authorship").

Following the only contemporaneous mention of the death of the man tradition has established as the author of the most popular and acclaimed plays and poems at that time - a routine entry on April 25, 1616, "Will. Shakespeare, Gent.," in the Burial Registry of the Stratford Trinity Church - there was, for at least four years, a complete and unparalleled absence of any known eulogy or any other mention anywhere of his or William Shakespeare's death.

Had he been publicly known during his lifetime as that author, such a complete blackout contravenes all human experience since antiquity, particularly in the "copiously elegiac" and "well-documented" English Renaissance. It premises an incredible and self-imposed collective silence by family, friends, poets, playwrights, and thousands of others throughout England and the continent. Moreover, no then-living member of his family, including his granddaughter, Lady Bernard, who survived him by 50 years, and his son-in-law and co-executor, who noted in his diary the literary achievements of some of his patients, and no then-resident of Stratford either before or after his death, is ever known to have identified Will. Shakespeare as the great dramatist, William Shakespeare.

Such an unthinkable, singular and total eclipse cannot be attributed to happenstance or indifference. The sole rational explanation is that his identity was intentionally and effectively concealed during the lifetime of whoever was the author. Since there was such a concealment, that identity must be detected by evaluating evidence pertaining to any person of that period who might qualify.

A host of scholars for over 200 years meticulously canvassed all archives which potentially could document the biography of the Stratford man and/or "William Shakespeare." As a result, there is no acceptable evidence, including as to his attendance at school, that the Stratford man ever did or could write anything other than his signature, or ever read, owned, or bought a book, which does not entirely rely on the bootstrap assumption that he wrote the works.

Since the plays and poems reveal encyclopedic erudition and lore encompassing classics, contemporary languages and literature, verbal resources, the whole body of logical-rhetorical knowledge, foreign countries, aristocratic sports, ornithology, horticulture, music, military and naval experience, et al., orthodox biographers, by assuming the Stratford man wrote the works, and on no other corroborating probative evidence, have endowed the Stratford man with these attainments.

Marlowe and Bacon have found adherents, but Marlowe died too early and Bacon died too late. Some Baconians sadly discredited the search for an alternate candidate by resorting to absurd cryptograms and other word plays. In 1920, however, J. Thomas Looney documented a very strong case for Edward De Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica (15th ed., 1975) "became in the twentieth century, the strongest candidate proposed ... for the authorship of Shakespeare's plays. The Oxfordian theory ... rapidly gained adherents..." It has indeed been embraced by thousands, including hundreds of distinguished men and women of letters. The documented evidence

of the education, life, experiences, and culture of De Vere substantially conforms to what the works attributed to Shakespeare reveal.

Stratfordians assert that Oxford could not be the author since he died in 1604 and, in their opinion, some of the plays were written later. There is, however, no conclusive proof as to when any of the plays attributed to Shakespeare were written except, of course, a play had to have been written before it was ever published or performed. Stratfordian dating of the plays is based on the lifespan of the Stratford man. Oxfordians, using the lifespan of Oxford, can also introduce evidence indicating that some of the plays were written by the time the Stratford man arrived in London, when he was too inexperienced and immature to have written them. That Oxford's authorship of literary works was concealed is attested, inter alia, by George Puttenham in 1589:

And in her Majesty's time...Nobelman...have written excellently well as it would appear if their doings could be found out and made public with the rest, of which number is first that noble gentleman Edward, Earl of Oxford (Underlining supplied).

Morse Johnson

(I was not unaware of The Stratford Monument and The First Folio but the article, without such omission, exceeded the number of words limitation and, if challenged, was prepared to document that on informed and inquisitive scrutiny the Monument and Folio did not contain "corroborating probative evidence" for Shakspeare. At the end of the article there is a bibliographical reference to Charlton Ogburn's The Mysterious William Shakespeare).

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"Then he said to me, or rather sighed out the words: 'I hope you don't believe that Shakespeare wrote the plays. The evidence in fact does not stand independent scrutiny. He must be laughing up his sleeve in the next world, if in fact there is one, when he looks down and sees what in fact is going on at Stratford-on-Avon.'" (A Far Cry From Kensington (Houghton Mifflin, 1988) by Muriel Spark whom the "Times Literary Supplement" called "the best English novelist writing today" and was awarded in 1985 France's prestigious Prix Etranger.)

"And I personally have no doubt that as against the Stratfordian view, the case for Oxford comes out far ahead. In fact the congruence of evidence in the plays, poems and sonnets as compared with the events and experiences in De Vere's life is frequently startling, if not actually compelling, in establishing the Earl as the great Elizabethan bard." (Uncommon Letters To A Son (Vantage Press, 1965) by Arnold F. Emch, Harvard Ph. D., member of American Philosophical Ass'n. & American Ass'n. for the Advancement of Science and retired partner in Booz, Allen & Hamilton.)

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"It is chiefly literary amateurs - doctors, generals and lawyers - who have raised questions about the authenticity of Shakespeare's authorship."

(The above quotation in an article by Professor Godschalk, Department of English and Comparative Literature, University of Cincinnati, has prompted me to establish a continually updated list of the distinguished men and women who have made known their skepticism about or rejection of the Stratfordian attribution. It's circulation would be an effective, succinct and easy way of both attracting interest from the uninformed and uncommitted and expose the irresponsibility of traditional authorities who attempt to disparage all dissenters as unqualified or kooks or knee-jerk mavericks or snobs or sensationalists.)

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A current list (perhaps with some thumbnail biographical identity of the less prominent) can be annually mailed to each member, together with the current S.O.S. membership list. In preparing this tentative and hastily assembled list, I have, undoubtedly, inadvertently or unknowingly, omitted many others or have erroneously included some whose opinions cannot be probatively verified. Any additions and/or corrections at any time will be most helpful and appreciated).

### Doubted the Stratfordian Attribution

Edwin Bjorkman  
Justice Harry M. Blackmun  
Prof. Crane Brinton (Harvard)  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge  
Prof. Frederick Taber Cooper (Columbia)  
Charles DeGaulle  
Charles Dickens

Benjamin Disraeli  
Ralph Waldo Emerson  
Tyronne Guthrie  
James Russell Lowell  
Prof. William Lyons Phelps (Yale)  
Justice Robert Paul Stevens  
Prof. Hugh Trevor-Roper (Oxford)

### Rejected the Stratfordian Attribution

Delia Bacon  
Otto von Bismarck  
John Bright  
John Buchan  
Charles Chaplin  
Daphne Du Maurier  
W.H. Furness  
Henry James  
Prof. Abel LeFranc (College de France)

Maxwell Perkins  
Lord Palmerston  
J. Enoch Powell  
Prof. A.W. Titherly (Liverpool)  
Muriel Spark  
Mark Twain  
Day Thorpe  
Walt Whitman  
John Greenleaf Whittier

### Oxfordians

Percy Allen  
Katherine Assante  
Charles W. Barrell  
Hamilton Basso  
Richard Bentley  
Marjorie Bowen  
Gelett Burgess  
Francis Carmody  
Prof. David Cavers (Harvard Law)  
Eva Turner Clark  
Virginius Dabney  
Senator Paul Douglas  
Cyrus Durgin  
Prof. William Y. Elliot (Harvard)  
Arnold J. Emch  
Clifton Fadiman  
Sol. Feinstone  
Prof. Ernest Ferlita (Loyola)  
William Plumer Fowler  
Sigmund Freud  
Daniel Frohman  
John Gaisworthy

George G. Greenwood  
Prof. Nathaniel Holmes (Harvard Law)  
Prof. Louis Halle (Ecole de Hautes Etudes)  
Leslie Howard  
Herbert N. Kenny  
David Lloyd Kreeger  
Lewis H. Lapham  
Prof. W. Barton Leach (Harvard Law)  
J. Thomas Looney  
Clare Booth Luce  
Judge Minos & Ruth Loyd Miller  
William McAfee  
David McCullough  
Paul Nitze  
Dorothy & Charlton Ogburn Sr. & Jr.  
Canon Gerald H. Rendall  
Peter Samartino  
Lincoln Schuster  
Joseph Sobran  
B.M. Ward  
Philip Weld

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## JOIN SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY AND RECEIVE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The purpose of the Shakespeare Oxford Society is to document and establish Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) as the universally recognized author of the works of William Shakespeare. Each Newsletter carries articles which impart a wide range of information and commentary which the editor considers relevant to that purpose. Some articles will inevitably contain opinions, deductions and evidence which some S.O.S. members believe to be invalid, inaccurate, irrelevant or irrational. The Newsletter is always open to letters of dissent and correction.

Student \$7.50	Annual Dues Regular \$15.00	Sustaining \$50.00 or more
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The Shakespeare Oxford Society does not have any paid staff and cannot rely on one volunteer to handle all communications and process all functions. As a result, the following three addresses should be used as of April 1, 1988 for the respective purposes as indicated:

1. First-time renewal membership dues and any outright tax deductible contributions to:  
Shakespeare Oxford Society  
P.O. Box 147  
Clarksville, Maryland 20129
2. Requests for information about memberships to:  
Stephanie Caruana  
Box 913, RR1  
Napanoch, New York 12458
3. Articles, Letters To The Editor and any other materials submitted for publication in the Newsletter to:  
Morse Johnson, Editor  
Suite No. 819  
105 West 4th St.  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

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### REMINDER

Festival and Annual Meeting Nov. 18-20  
Richmond Marriott, 500 East Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23219  
Special rates for Members-\$59.00 single and double

- Nov. 18: 6-11 PM Royal Elizabethan Dinner & Premiere of Horestes (\$25.00)  
Must Pre-Register by Oct. 1
- Nov. 19: 8 AM-5 PM S.O.S. Meeting, Speakers, Research Seminars (\$25.00)  
Mail Reservations and Payments to:  
Shakespeare Oxford Society, c/o Stephanie Caruana, Secretary  
Box 913, RR 1, Napanoch, N.Y. 12548 (914/647-3608)
- Nov. 20 & 21: Performances of Horestes (\$12.00). Call Leslie Dressler for Reservations (804/321-2532).



Morse Johnson, Editor  
105 West 4th Street, Suite #819, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: A TALE OF SILENCES WHICH RESOUND AND RECORDS WHICH HAVE VANISHED

"It is a blank negation everywhere."

(The following is an excerpt from "Shakespeare: A Missing Author" by J. Thomas Looney first published in the News-Letter of The Shakespeare Fellowship (Ameoan Branch - Feb. 1941) and carried in part in the S.O.S. Newsletter (Spring 1977).

When *Venus and Adonis* was published William Shakspeare was a young man of twenty-nine. To have worked himself by that age into such a society, and to have acquired the literary and social culture shown by the poem and its dedication -- much of which could not have been learned from books -- to have produced so lengthy and elaborately finished a poem and carried through its publication, he must have had his feet firmly on the social ladder in his early twenties, at the latest. As, then, he lived to the age of fifty-two, and the chief business of his life would be to produce this literature and meet the social obligations which it would entail, we may say that the whole of that effective part of a man's lifetime which fixes permanently his place amongst his fellows would be passed in the open light of royal and aristocratic favor.

If, moreover, one with such commonplace beginnings as are shown by the early Stretford records had, merely by his acting and playwriting, won for himself access to the foremost company of actors, without a trace of youthful apprenticeship or experience in an interior troupe, and used the position so rapidly gained to place himself immediately into intimate relationships with the people round the throne, he must have possessed, not only extraordinary intellectual powers, but wonderful initiative, enterprise, ambition, personal address and social tact. His aims must have been settled early, and his efforts to realize them direct and resolute. This was not the kind of man to allow himself to be pushed into the background, and, following a public vocation, he could not easily have been hidden. However rapid the ascent it could only have been accomplished by stages and through the active interest of suitable intermediaries.

The question before us, then, is whether these published pretensions and necessary implications of his connection with the literature can be subjected to an effective test...

The Shakespeare question, on the side from which we are now viewing it, is therefore one which is specially open to the test of historical research; and no workers have been more thorough in their investigations, or more unsparing to themselves, than those who, during many years, have hunted for particulars relating to William Shakspeare of Stratford. Additional details may yet come to light, but sufficient has already been made out to pronounce quite definitely upon the general result of all this research work.

The first fact which stands out boldly is the complete absence of even the slightest relevant link between William Shakspeare's sordid beginnings at Stratford, traceable right up to the time when he was a married man with three children, and the exalted social and cultural intimacies of his early twenties implied in the publication of the first Shakespeare poems. In those days even scholars from the universities could, as writers, only penetrate the outer fringe of that uppermost circle by means of aristocratic patronage, graciously bestowed and paid for by public literary compliments. Shakespeare reaches its centre without academic send-off and by a single stride, without leaving traces of an upward struggle or of assistance from any aristocrat or other likely helper. The supposed achievement, under any circumstances, is highly improbable; without record of stages and means it may be confidently regarded as impossible.

What is true of his reaching these heights is even more emphatically true of his keeping them. The records for all the years which lie between *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and the latest date ever suggested for his final retirement to Stratford (1612) -- the most eventful years in the history of the English drama --

have been ruthlessly searched in one supreme quest: to find out more about William Shakspeare, with what result?

We now know that he sold some malt to one Philip Rogers, lent his customer two shillings, and afterwards prosecuted him for repayment; that when he died he left only his "second best bed" ... to the woman whom he married under unsavoury compulsion; and that, through years of affluence, he neglected to pay a shepherd a debt of two pounds incurred by his wife in days of poverty...

These, and other irrelevancies relating to houses, lands, fithes and false claims respecting his coat-of-arms, have, with infinite pains, been dug up, to teach the humblest of us how unfortunate it may prove to excite the curiosity of posterity; but in no single instance during the many years of his supposed fame do we find in his private records traces of a personal friendship with an aristocrat.

This is extraordinary from every point of view; for, even in the capacity of mask for another man, marks of such contacts might be looked for, since the person engaged for one purpose might very well have been employed on other business. This is not an unlikely explanation of the fact that after the time of his final retirement to Stratford the Earl of Rutland's secretary coupled the name of "Shakespeare" with that of Burbage in respect to a quite irrelevant cash payment ... but not even a trifle like this has, directly or indirectly, connected him with an aristocrat during all the years of his reputed immersion in literature and high class friendships. If ever he lived in touch with such people the meetings must have been jealously guarded and their traces carefully covered.

During these years he was evidently kept generally out of sight, in as yet undiscovered quarters. Brief glimpses of semi-clandestine lodgment is all that we can catch of him in London; for there, even the tax gatherers, who wanted him, went wrong by a matter of years as to where he could be found -- the very years during which, on orthodox assumptions, he was living in a blaze of royal favor. On the other hand, Thomas Greene, a lawyer, resided in his Stratford house, and along with Shakspeare's brother Gilbert, seems to have attended to any important business there; so that no one, either in Stratford or elsewhere, ever received a note from his hand, and no business of his in town has left a specimen of his signature. Even his Stratford domiciliation, so much more traceable than anything found in London, is not without its strangely elusive phases.

As might have been foreseen, the lesson of the special research directed towards him personally has been amply borne out by more recent enquiries directed from the other side: that is into the lives and correspondence of the aristocrats themselves, particularly those who, by name were implicated in Shakespeare publications. Up to the present none of these labours has yielded the slightest fruit. Not a single document has shown any aristocrat at all interested in the person of William Shakspeare. None wrote to him, received a letter from him, or so much as mentioned him in private correspondence. It is blank negation everywhere.

The distinctive way in which "Shakespeare" has selected the third Earl of Southampton for immortality, in connection with his great poems -- and also, it is believed, in the Sonnets -- has naturally focussed attention upon that nobleman; and what is probably an exhaustive investigation has been made into his life and correspondence. In Mrs. Stowe's biography of him the materials collected fill two very substantial volumes; but, at the close of a long task... the biographer has to admit failure so far as her main object was concerned. She has not discovered those traces of Shakspeare that she hoped to find: which she undoubtedly would have found had Shakspeare been the writer of all the "Shakespeare" poetry dedicated and addressed to Southampton.

A similar unrelieved failure has attended such enquiries as have been made into the affairs of the brother Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery... Indications of a warm practical interest in other men of letters, like Ben Johnson, exist; but not a trace of lifetime contact with Shakspeare has been found.

It cannot, of course, be claimed that all possible sources of information have now been exhausted; but the presumption against anything turning up to show us William Shakspeare in the presence of an aristocrat amounts to a practical certainty. One delusion that modern research has positively shattered for all time is that he enjoyed frequent and easy access to the nobility and the undisguised favour of royalty, whilst living, as a popular journalist has claimed, "as well known in London as the Globe Theatre." Such a life and such publicity are however the necessary implications of the literature.

We have therefore an irreconcilable conflict between the authorship pretensions and the findings of modern research: a proof that this man was the personal centre of a cunning scheme for deceiving people respecting the source of these great works. We speak of deception, of course, without implication

of censure; for one way of concealing authorship seems as legitimate as another. The method in this case has proved more effective than an avowed anonymity would have been; and, if the writer had decided definitely upon his own self-effacement, it is certainly preferable that the works should have been preserved in this way than lost to mankind forever. As, however, Shakspeare was not the author he must have been used as a cover for someone else; and until that man is discovered and ecknowledged, the works are anonymous, and the writer of them is still missing.

"... the silence defies all excuses."

(The following are excerpts from "Stratford and the Sidney Circle" by Russel Pope, Shakespeare Authorship Roundtable, and published in The Shakespeare Newsletter of Summer 1988)\*

In David Lloyd's *Statemen and Favorites of England* (1665), Fulke Greville is credited with this statement:

"that he be known to posterity under no other notions than of Shakespeere's and Ben Johnson's Master - and Philip Sidney's friend."

Fulke Greville was Philip Sidney's closest friend, a relationship that began et school and continued through to Sidney's death in 1588. Greville was equally close to the famous sister, Mary Sidney<sup>1</sup>, who was arguably the greatest patron of literature in the country. The Sidney family was at the center of the literary and theatricel wond and their extended family of Dudleys and Herberts controlled the theatres through State Offices from 1574 to 1642. No other family hed such en unbroken run of good fortune in those years, largely because of their closeness to both Queen Elizabeth and King James to whom they were almost a surrogate family.

The archives of the Dudley/Sidney/Herberts are among the most complete of any family in their ere. There are a vast number of documents that meticulously record their lives, through household accounts to State Papers and a large number of letters from, to and about them all. But never once does anyone ever mention "Shakespeare" the writer or Shakespeare the man. On both subjects there is an eerie silence, especially from Fulke Greville, whose life bridged both Stratford and the literary world end to whom is attributed the cryptic remark about being Shakespeare's master.

The Grevilles were the Lords of the Manor in Werwickshire, second only to the Earl of Warwick, Ambrose Dudley. In 1608 Greville became Recorder of Stratford-on-Avon, a post he kept until 1628. Fulke Greville was also en accomplished writer of poems and plays end it is not esking too much to assume that he of all people knew of Will Shaksper and his literary achievements. After all, Sheksper was a wealthy man in Stratford and his dealings in land speculation must have come to Greville's notice in his official capacity as Recorder. Surely Fulke Greville would have known whether or not his local Shaksper was the famous playwright and poet.

If Greville regarded his relationship to Shakespeare as one of the crowning gloriee of his life why did he not comment on the great man's death in 1616? It has always seemed euspicious to Anti-Stratfordians that Shaksper's death should have been met with such total silence from all quarters but in Greville's case the silence defies all excuses. . .

The monument to William Shakespeare in Trinity Church at Stratford was sculpted by one Gerherd Jansen, one of a family of sculptors whose studio was in Southwark, not fer from the Globe Theatre. The Jensen family, like all the artists of the period, needed patronage to survive end for most of their careers they were supported by the Earl of Rutland. Their work adorns all the Rutland tombs and they were beholden to this family as completely as any artists to a patron. The link to the Sidney family is through the Earl of Rutland's wife, none other than Elizabeth Sidney, the daughter of Philip Sidney. She was praised by Ben Jonson as a brilliant poet and her husband was an evid fan of the theatres, like his close friend Henry Wriothesly, to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Repe of Lucrece*. The Earl of Rutland was a student at the University of Padue, where two of his classmates were e *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestem*. Given these very obvious links between Shakespeare and the Sidneys it

seems very reasonable to assume that the monument at Stratford was erected at the request of the Sidney family. As each of these links becomes apparent the silence of the Sidney family archives becomes ever louder.

1. Later in the article Mr. Pope points out that the First Folio (1623) was dedicated to two sons of Mary Sidney who by then had become powerful men and one of whom was Lord Chamberlain who exercised almost complete control over the theatres.

\* [The Shakspeare Newsletter (1217 Ashland Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60202) has been published since 1951. Its publisher is the distinguished, erudite, and good-humored Stratfordian, Louis Marder. An entire page of each issue is generously sponsored by S.O.S. member Russell des Cognets. In the Summer issue that page carries "The Apotheosis of William Shakespeare" by Charlton Ogburn. There are 4 issues annually (12" x 9"). Annual subscription \$12.00]

"... unfortunately missing for the most important years of Shakespearean history..."

Of Shakspeare's six purported signatures, all derive from the last four years of his life, none from the years of his alleged literary activity, none arising in a literary connection. Nothing in his hand other than the signatures on his will has been found in Stratford. His having (as we read) dwelt for two decades in London while maintaining a family and conducting business in Stratford would have necessitated much correspondence between the two centers. As we have seen, New Place remained in the hands of his descendants for more than a half century after his death, by which time three folio editions of Shakespeare's collected plays had been published and his immortality been ensured. Would not a note or two in Shakspeare's hand have been saved had any existed, and were he the dramatist? Papers bearing the signatures or marks of those with whom he did business *have* survived.

The suspicion voices itself that the papers on which Shakspeare had set his hand in Stratford were made to disappear because they showed the great writer signing with a mark - just as the records of the Stratford Grammar School in his early years would have disappeared because they showed he did not attend it, just as "the volumes of the Lord Chamberlain's Warrants," which "supply much information concerning plays and players," Charlotte C. Stopes writes, are "unfortunately missing for the most important years of Shakespearean history," because they would have showed how little consequential a figure Shakspeare cut in the company. Charles W. Barreil reports that the official books of Edmund Lyney and Sir George Buck, Masters of the Revels under Elizabeth and James respectively, "(together with all office records of the Lord Chamberlain who supervised the Masters of the Revels in those times) have hopelessly vanished. With them have disappeared the voluminous and detailed correspondence and memoranda covering the origin, selection, licensing, casting, mounting, cosfuming, rehearsal and finished production of literally scores of plays, including Shakespeare's." It is, as he sums it up, "a great mystery." (*The Mysterious William Shakespeare* by Charlton Ogburn)

"...one source of information...being..entirely absent."

... (the allusions to Shakespeare) consist almost entirely to slight references to his published works, and having no bearing of importance on his career. Nor, indeed, have we extended material of any kind to aid us in this investigation; one source of information, which is abundant to most of his contemporaries, being in his case entirely absent. Neither as addressed to him by others, nor by him to others, do any commendatory verses exist in connection with any of his or other men's works published in his lifetime - a notable fact, in whatever way it may be explained. Nor can he be traced in any personal contact beyond a very limited circle, although the *fanciful might-have-beens* so largely indulged in by his biographers might at first lead us to an opposite conclusion!" (emphasis added).

(*Life and Works of William Shakespeare* by F. G. Fleay)

.....

"... utter silence ..."

The literary figures of Shakespeare's time - all but Ben Jonson, writing years later - testified to their view of "Shakespeare's" corporeal existence by their utter silence respecting it, and among these are many to whom the Shakespeare of conventional biography would have been a familiar figure. Eight years after the last indication can be found of Shakespeare's residing in London, John Webster and Thomas Heywood made passing references to Shakespeare as a writer but not as a recognizable human being, and three years later Francis Beaumont spoke of him in a way to undermine the conventional biographee altogether. Of their fellow playwrights, however - Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe, John Lyly, George Peele, Christopher Marlowe, Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, George Chapman, Thomas Middleton - none so far as we know, ever uttered the name Shakespeare. Among the scores of other contemporary writers, the half dozen or so who did mention it, to our knowledge, attributed no human identity to it. Those literary men and patrons of the theater who would have known the stock figure of Shakespearean orthodoxy either put no credence in it if they had heard of it all, or were at marvellous pains to dissemble with us. (*The Mysterious William Shakespeare* by Charlton Ogburn)

"... (the name) of Shakspeare is not met with in any part of the manuscript."

Philip Henslowe was in partnership with Edward Alleyn the famous actor... in considerable theatrical speculations...

His so-called *Diary* (is) a large folio manuscript volume, containing valuable information concerning theatrical affairs. Mr. Furness... in his new *Variorum Hamlet* (Vol. II) (reports): "(In that *Diary*) the names of nearly all the dramatic poets of the age are to be frequently found (and) we might certainly count on finding that of Shakespeare, but the shadow in which Shakespeare's early life was spent envelopes him here too, and his name, as Collier says, is not met with in any part of the manuscript." And again: "Recollecting that the names of nearly all the other play-poets of the time occur, we cannot but wonder that that of Shakspeare is not met with in any part of the manuscript. The notices of Ben Jonson, Dekker, Chettle, Marston, Wilson, Drayton, Monday, Heywood, Middleton, Porter, Hathaway, Rankins, Webster, Day, Rowley, Haughton, etc. are frequent because they were all writers for Henslowe's theater, but we must wait at all events for the discovery of some other similar record, before we can produce corresponding memoranda regarding Shaksper and his productions."

Now here is another most remarkable phenomenon. Here is a manuscript book, dating from 1591 to 1609, which embraces the period of Shakespeare's greatest activity; and in it we find mention of practically all the dramatic writers of that day with any claims to distinction - men whom Henslowe had employed to write plays for his theatre; yet nowhere is the name of Shakespeare to be found among them, or, indeed, at all. Yet if Shakspeare the player had been a dramatist, surely Henslowe would have employed him also, like the others, for reward in that behalf! It is strange indeed, on the hypothesis of his being a successful playwright, as well as an actor, that the old manager should not so much as mention his name in all this large manuscript volume! Nevertheless it is quietly assumed by the Stratfordian editors that Shakspeare commenced his career as a dramatist by writing plays for this very Henslowe who so completely ignores his existence. Thus we have an entry in the *Diary*: "R'd at titus and ondronicus the 23 of Jenewary (1593) (three pounds eight shillings);" which means that this sum represented the theatre receipts for the first presentation of the tragedy which Henslowe marks as new. Now mark the Stratfordian argument! *Titus Andronicus* is included in the Folio, therefore it was written by Shakespeare, who is identical with Shakspeare the actor. From this, says Mr. Halliwell-Phillips (Vol. 1, p. 97), "it appears that Shakespeare up to this period had written all his dramas for Henslowe, and that they were acted under the sanction of that manager by the various companies performing from 1592 to 1594 at the Rose Theatre and Newington Butts. The acting copies of *Titus Andronicus* and the three parts of *Henry VI* must, of course, have been afterwards transferred by Henslowe to the Lord Chamberlain's company"! In similar strain writes Mr. Lee, "The Rose Theatre was doubtless the earliest scene of Shakespeare's pronounced successes alike as actor and dramatist"! (*The Shakespeare Problem Restated* by G. G. Greenwood)

Editor's Note: In his *Shakespeare's Lives*, Dr. S. Schoenbaum characterizes Henslowe's *Diary* as "the most valuable single document to the early stage" and as "the most precious of Elizabethan playhouse documents." His readers, however, are not apprised of the fact that his biographee is not mentioned!

"... there is not one mention of such a poet as William Shakespeare ..."

... Edward Alleyne, the actor who stands pre-eminent among his fellows as being of a higher caste than the ordinary player, and who was not only an actor but a theatrical proprietor, and the founder of Dulwich College, left papers and memoirs which were published in 1841 and 1843, and which "contain the names of all the notable actors and play-poets of Shakspeare's time, as well as of every person who helped, directly or indirectly, or who paid out money, or received money, in connection with the production of the many plays at the Blackfriars Theatre, the Fortune, and other theatres. His accounts were very minutely stated, and a careful perusal of the two volumes shows that there is not one mention of such a poet as William Shakspeare in his list of actors, poets and theatrical comrades!"

It may be urged that, whether mentioned or not, there was undoubtedly an actor called William Shaksper or Shakspeare. That is true enough, and as he did not play with Alleyne, and if his top performance was the ghost in *Hamlet*, it is not, perhaps, very remarkable that Alleyne did not make mention of him. But if he had indeed been the great and successful dramatist, the man whom Ben Jonson intended to eulogize as "not of an age but for all time," then surely it would, in any case but "Shakespeare's," be thought extraordinary that Alleyne, like Henslowe, entirely ignores his existence! (*The Shakespeare Problem Restated* by G. G. Greenwood)

"... a total blackout ..."

Following the only contemporaneous mention of the death of the man tradition has established as the author of the most popular and acclaimed plays and poems at that time - a routine entry on April 25, 1616, "Will. Shakspeare, Gent.," in the Burial Registry of the Stratford Trinity Church - there was, for at least four years, a complete and unparalleled absence of any known eulogy or any other mention by anyone, anywhere, of his or William Shakespeare's death. Such a total blackout contravenes all human experience since antiquity and cannot be attributed to happenstance or indifference in the "copiously elegiac" and "well documented" English Renaissance. Will. Shakspeare is assumed to have been buried under a gravemarker on which is inscribed a doggerel cursing anyone who "MOVES MY BONES." Unlike all the other gravemarkers in the same general location, including members of his family, his gravemarker is nameless.

At some unknown [why?] time in the early 1620s, a monument to "Shakepeare" was installed nearby but not contiguous to that gravemarker. The epitaph inscribed on that monument does not identify "Shakspeare" as either a playwright or an actor and reads in part:

"... DEATH HATH PLAST

WITH IN THIS MONUMENT SHAKSPEARE ...

... WHOSE NAME DOTTH DECK Y<sup>S</sup> (THIS) TOMBE."

Why would those who were responsible for the monument choose, and accept the composition of, an epitaphist who apparently did not know William Shakespeare was a playwright, did not know that Will. Shakspeare was interred nearby and did not know the monument was not big enough to contain the remains of an adult?

"...such documents are always 'to be' and never 'are' discovered."

...in *The Times* of December 27th, 1905, two columns are taken up by an article by Mr. Sidney Lee headed "A Discovery about Shakespeare." Among the documents preserved at Belvoir Castle is an account of the household expenses of Francis sixth Earl of Rutland, wherein has been found an entry



showing that in March, 1613, the sum of forty-four shillings was paid to "Mr. Shakespeare" (how the name is spelled in the original entry I do not know) for work about my Lorde's impresso," and a like sum to his fellow player Richard Burbage (who was, as everybody knows, a painter as well as an actor) "for paynting and making it." An "impresso" or, more correctly, "impresa," was, we are told, "a hieroglyphical or pictorial design (in miniature) which suggested some markedly characteristic quality or experience of the person for whom it was devised, while three or four words of slightly epigrammatic flavour were appended," as a motto, "to drive the application home." Shakspeare is designated as "Mr." because he had "with great difficulty," as Mr. Lee says and by not a few false pretences, as he might have added, obtained a coat-of-arms from the Heralds' College, but both he and Burbage received the same remuneration. This, it is to be noted, was in 1613, when Shakspeare, as Mr. Lee tells us, had "retired from the great work of his life." Not much to show here that he was recognized as the "great dramatist" and immortal poet! Incidentally, Mr. Lee mentions that the fifth Earl of Rutland married Sir Philip Sidney's daughter, Elizabeth, who "in her father's spirit assiduously cultivated the society of men of letters. She bought and read their books and welcomed them to her table." Ben Jonson "was often her guest, and with him and with the poet and dramatist, Francis Beaumont, she regularly corresponded." Strange, is it not, that there should be no correspondence between this cultured lady and the great poet and dramatist, "Mr. Shakspeare," who was employed (for the reward of forty-four shillings) "about my Lorde's impresso" at Belvoir Castle! Why did he never correspond with the patrons of literature and art in his time? "It may well be" says Mr. Lee, "that documents which are yet to be discovered will set Shakespeare also among the poets who shared the hospitality of Sidney's daughter at Belvoir"! A consummation devoutly to be wished certainly; but such documents are always "to be" and never "are" discovered. What is shown is that Shakspeare and Dick Burbage are employed for a not excessive remuneration to do some fanciful work for the Earl of Rutland; and no doubt they went home rejoicing. Somehow I cannot think that "Shakespeare" would have made any charge for work of this kind! (*The Shakespeare Problem Restated* by G.G. Greenwood)

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### Neglected Praise of the Earl of Oxford

by

Peter A. Moore

Edward de Vere earned considerable praise, as well as some criticism, during his lifetime, but the several tributes to him after his death are in some ways more interesting, as his power and patronage were no longer in operation.

George Chapman, who is not known as one of Oxford's proteges and who never dedicated anything to him, nevertheless highly commended Oxford in his play *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois* (published in 1613). But Chapman had more to say about Oxford. In 1609 there appeared Chapman's *Twelve Books of the Iliads*, which included dedicatory sonnets to sixteen lords, ladies, and knights. Among these was Oxford's then twenty-two year old daughter Susan, Countess of Montgomery, whose sonnet is followed by this postscript:

By the long-since admirer of your matchless Father's virtues; and now of your excellent Ladyship's, Geo. Chapman.\*

None of the other sonnets, with their various prescripts and postscripts, makes any mention of the parents of the subject; even the sonnet to the Earl of Salisbury neglects his illustrious father. Chapman's 1941 editor, Phyllis B. Bartlett says in a footnote that Chapman's praise of Oxford "appeared as an after-thought on an extra leaf," which should be rephrased as 'Chapman felt it important to add an extra page to his book.'

Dr. Bartlett also slips when she confesses her inability to determine the "friend" that Chapman says has also praised the Countess of Montgomery; the obvious answer is Ben Jonson in his Epigram CIV. However, Dr. Bartlett compensates by pointing out an anomaly in Chapman's poem "Pro Vere," which begins:



All my yeeres comforts, fall in Showres of Teares,  
That this full Spring of Man, this VERE of VERES  
.....

Famine should barre my Fruites, whose Bountie breeds them,  
The faithlesse World love to devoure who feedes them.

This poem was written in 1622 to celebrate General Sir Horatio Vere, Oxford's first cousin, and, as Dr. Bartlett points out, one or more couplets have clearly been omitted after line 2. The gap may be accidental, but when the only discontinuity in the poems that Chapman published comes after praise of the Veres and is followed by a comment on the world's ingratitude, one suspects censorship. Our British colleagues might find it worthwhile to see if the manuscript of "Pro Vere" can be found.

The unreliable, late seventeenth century gossip monger John Aubrey is best known to Oxfordians for a minor piece of smut that he related about Oxford (which is nothing compared to the filth he retails concerning Sir Thomas More and Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, both being persons of exemplary virtue). However, one paragraph later, we find Aubrey referring to Edward de Vere as "the great Earle of Oxford." So Aubrey joins King James and Francis Osborne (both contemporaries of Oxford) in describing the late 17th Earl with the epithet "great."

But Aubrey has more to say. His life of Sir Charles Danvers says that the latter's "familiar acquaintance(s) were the Earl of Oxon; Sir Francis and Sir Horatio Vere; Sir Walter Raleigh, etc. - the Heroes of those times." Aubrey's life of Raleigh states that "He was a second to the Earle of Oxford in a Duell. Was acquainted and accepted with all the Hero's of our Nation in his time."

Aubrey's last item requires a slight digression. There is an article in *Notes and Queries* of October 1978 called "Raleigh, Sidney, Oxford, and the Catholics, 1579" by D. C. Peck, which I have not seen cited in Oxfordian literature and which contains information of interest. It seems that Raleigh was a member of the Catholic courtier circle to which Oxford belonged at the time of his famous quarrel with Philip Sidney. When Oxford broke with that group in late 1580, there occurred a notorious exchange of charges between him and his former friends, one of whom, Charles Arundell, said that he and Raleigh were employed by Oxford to carry his challenge to Sidney. There are two other accounts of the proposed duel; one says that Oxford challenged Sidney, while the other has it that Sidney challenged Oxford. It seems likely enough that each issued a challenge more or less simultaneously. At any rate, for once there is corroboration for one of Aubrey's anecdotes.

A further digression is needed to consider what Raleigh was doing in Catholic circles. Raleigh's parents were staunch Protestants who suffered for their faith, he fought for the Huguenots in the 1570s, and he left the Court in 1580 to fight Catholicism in Ireland. Peck plausibly suggests that Raleigh may have been motivated by opportunism, but another historian (whose name I have regrettably lost) speculates that Raleigh was a spy employed by Burghley or Walsingham. Both motives may, of course, have been in operation.

But, to conclude, John Aubrey's charge of flatulence is so near to the hearts of many Stratfordians that I am inclined to say, let them have it; but then they must also grant that Aubrey called Oxford "great" and a "Hero."

*"The Works of George Chapman, Poems and Minor Translations, Chatto and Windus, London, 1904, page 201.*  
.....

"If we accept Oxford as 'Shakespeare,' most of the mysteries vanish."

(Excerpts from "Shakespeare Authorship Theories," an article in *Grolier Encyclopedia* (1950) by Louis P. Benezet, President, The Shakespeare Fellowship of America, Inc.)

William Shakespeare of Stratford is the only famous author ever considered by distinguished thinkers to have been incapable of writing the works attributed to him.

He is the only great Elizabethan author not claimed as a former student by any school or college. His

only unquestioned handwriting (six very different signatures) is that of a barely literate man. His will is a rambling document, showing failing memory, with tumbling emendations, consistent with his forgetful testimony in the 1612 deposition . . .

No Shakespeare is mentioned either as dramatist or actor in Henslowe's *Diary* (1591-1609), which names the players of six companies ("Shakespeare's" included) and practically all the other dramatists of the time. The name is missing from the rolls of players who toured to 46 English towns in the 1590's.\*

About 1623 Jonson wrote of a "sweet swan of Avon," and unknown persons erected in the Stratford church a monument inscribed in Latin to a "Nastor in judgement, Socrates in wisdom, Vergil in art." Otherwise no one would ever have connected the Stratford Shakespeare with the plays and poems. For neither in the traditions of his youth nor in the record of his drab, money-grubbing existence in Stratford after 1604 is there a hint that he could write a play or a poem. Said Emerson, "I cannot marry this man's life to his verse."

The Shakespearean plays indicate that the author was an aristocrat, at home in castle, palace, and court. Some 312 scenes were laid in haunts of nobility and gentry, 4 in middle class homes, and only 2 in hovels of the poor. He was a scholar who wrote idiomatic French and Italian and quoted Latin and Greek writers then untranslated into English. He was a traveler who knew France and Italy. Caroline Spurgeon, in *Shakespeare's Imagery*, 1935, listed the author's interests, from the figures of speech and allusions found in the plays: classical mythology, 260; sports and games (all aristocratic, e.g. bowling, tennis, hawking, and riding to hounds), 196; war and weapons, 192; seas and ships, 172; law, 124; drama, 74; and many in music and horticulture. The Sonnets show: law, 40; horticulture, 40; classical mythology, 28; war and weapons, 23; astronomy, 21; feudal chivalry, 18; ships and the sea, 17; painting, 17; healing and cures, 17; and hawking and riding, 8. Inanimate things often mentioned are glass, mirrors, jewels, and clocks, all restricted in Elizabethan times to homes of the aristocracy. The author has the aristocrats' scorn of money and little understanding of the working classes, who are not represented in any of the plays by a single dignified character. They are "chaff and bran," "crows and daws," "greasy mechanics" with "sweaty nightcaps" and "stinking breath."

Shakespeare was familiar with Cambridge University slang, knew 137 technical musical terms and the vernacular of the camp and the quarterdeck. He was close to Southampton in 1590-94, and in 1623 Pembroke and Montgomery backed the publishing of his plays, to which the author had paid no heed. Yet Mrs. Stopes, Southampton's biographer failed to find one mention of the Stratford man in her thirteen-year search through the family papers.\* Also, money presents to writers Daniell, Browne, Jonson, and Massinger are listed in the accounts of Pembroke and Montgomery, but not a penny to Shakespeare.\* Pembroke wrote a touching tribute in 1618, to the dead Burbage, but ignored the passing, in 1616, of the Stratford man.\* So did the whole English nation, though they buried Beaumont and Spenser in Westminster Abbey.\*

The Stratford story has been challenged by such historians as Gervinus, Hallam, Parkman, Sir Josiah Wedgwood, and Sir Geoffrey Callender; by Cardinal Newman, Bismarck, Palmerston, and Bright; poets, Coleridge, Whitman, Whittier, Lowell, and Holmes; jurists Lord Campbell, Lord Penzance, Sir George Greenwood; prose writers Dickens, Mark Twain, Henry James, Galsworthy, Kipling, Carolyn Wells, Oliver Herford, and Gelett Burgess; philosophers Emerson, Spencer, Schlegel, and Freud; heads of English colleges Gilbert Slater, G. H. Rendall, and Sir Montague Butler.

The 18th century doubters had no rival candidate but, by 1850, admirers of Francis Bacon suggested him as the only Elizabethan with the mental equipment to have written the plays. Many converts were made, but supporters could not quite carry their point. . . .

The strongest "heretic" case has been made for Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford (1550-1604). It was first advanced by a veteran English Shakespeare teacher, J. Thomas Looney, strongly supported by Galsworthy, Slater of Oxford, and Rendall of Liverpool University, and in America by Eva Turner Clark and Charles Wisner Barrell.

Once it was possible to quash the Oxford claims by citing *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, and *Winter's Tale*, all written, according to Forman's *Diary*, long after Oxford's death. But Tannenbaum identified the Forman references as Collier forgeries, and the *Cambridge History of English Literature* acknowledges that the date of composition of no single Shakespearean play is known. The old "Table of Dates" of the dramas is thoroughly discredited, with play after play retreating to an earlier period than had been thought possible. Gone are the *Ur-Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and the other plays which the Stratford man

was said to have rewritten and made into his own. The scholarly work of Greg, Sykes, Alexander, Cairncross, and Hart has recently proved that the "bad quartos" and other rough "sources" are really shorthand or memory "stealths" from the original Shakespearean plays. As the piracies date from 1589 to 1593, the dates of the original must go back to the 1586-90 period, too early for the Stratford youth to have written them. Oxford died in 1604, and Cairncross insists that *The Tempest* is the only play written after that date.

After his bankruptcy in 1584, Oxford was given a pension of 1000 pounds per year by the Queen. Slater suggests that he may have used this to support two companies of players. He had the reputation of being the finest writer of comedies at the court, and had been the Maecenas behind such writers as Golding, Churchyard, Lyly, Munday, Greene, Nashe, Watson, and Day. Spenser hails him as one "most dear" to the muses. The historians Hallam and Marriott write enthusiastically of the effect of the chronicle plays, the work of a group dominated by a master mind, a series unique in literary history, in solidifying the English people in their war effort.

As a child, Oxford was a prodigy, tutored by learned men at the home of Burghley (later his father-in-law). He received an A. B. at Cambridge at fifteen and an M.A. at Oxford at sixteen. A versatile genius, he was a poet, law student, tournament winner, musical composer, dramatist, amateur actor, soldier, justice of the peace, sea captain in the Armada battle, traveler in France and Germany, and resident of Italy for over a year. . .

Among Elizabethans Webbe says of Oxford that "in the rare devices of poetry he may challenge to himself the title of the most excellent among the rest." *The Art of English Poesie* states that as poets and poetry "are become subjects to scorn and derision," many of the nobility have suffered their work to be published anonymously, but there are many excellent writers among the courtiers, "as it would appear if their doings could be found out and made public with the rest, of which number is first that noble gentleman, Edward, Earl of Oxford." Peacham, in *The Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, listing the great poets [then deceased] of Elizabeth's reign, which he said was a Golden Age, unlikely to be matched in any succeeding century, named Oxford first, but did not mention Shakespeare.\* Only a few poems, all youthful efforts, have come down under Oxford's signature; yet some of them have drawn warm praise from Courthope, professor of poetry at Oxford, and Sir Sidney Lee. . .

Frenk Harris argues strongly that Romeo, Hamlet, Jeques, Biron and Benedick are all impersonations of the dramatist himself. Oxford supporters had picked the same characters as striking portraits of de Vere. Oxford's life fits remarkably into the Shakespearean creative background. Listed among his possessions are many books named by orthodox authorities as Shakespeare source material, e.g., Golding's translations, *Plutarch's Lives*, the Geneva Bible, and Cardan's *Comforte* (the basis of Hamlet's philosophy).

Saintsbury of Edinburgh University confessed that in spite of the "many concrete hints" in the sonnets as to the author's personality, everyone has utterly failed to connect them with any incident in the Stratford man's life. However, with the known facts of Oxford's career they fit amazingly. He had an illegitimate son (Sonnets 36 and 71) and a brunette mistress. The Queen gave him a diamond-studded tablet (122), he acted before the public (110), wounds lamed him for life (37,89), etc. If we accept Oxford as "Shakespeare," most of the mysteries vanish.

\*See William Shakespeare: *A Tale of Silences Which Resound and Documents Which Have Vanished*, supra pp. 1-7.

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### "Bard on Trial Again, And Again He Wins"

At this time we do not have the materials - transcripts, et al. - to provide an informative commentary on the Mock Court in the Middle Temple Hall in London on Nov. 26, 1988 in which three Law Lords held that the "most likely author" of the works of William Shakespeare was Will. Shakspeare not Edward de Vere.

The N.Y. Times account, however, reports a comment by Jeffrey Archer which reveals and underscores the inherent handicap with which Oxfordians are confronted in such a mock trial:

"I can't see how, after hearing the evidence, it could have come out the other way (emphasis added).

In the very limited time allotted each side, of a certainty, all the germane evidence and deductions therefrom could not conceivably be effectively presented and analyzed. When coupled with over 300 years of the prevailing traditional attribution, the persistent disparagement of all dissenters therefrom and the comprehensive suppression of and inattention to dissent by most of the influential men and women in the literary and academic worlds, no person otherwise uninformed would be able to responsibly evaluate both anti-Stratfordian and Oxfordian contentions by relying only on incomplete evidence and truncated arguments.

\*Headline in the N.Y. Times (11/27/88).

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#### Orson Welles is Added to the List of Prominent Persons who Became Oxfordians

(S.O.S. member John Osburn in forwarding the following quotation from the text of *Persona Grata* (Allen Wingate Ltd. London, 1953) by Kenneth Tynan notes that, "Tynan's account of (Welles) statement is somewhat mocking and one can only wonder what was deleted by the elipsis. But it seems a straightforward enough statement to put Welles in the Oxfordian column. So far as I know, Welles's remark has not previously been noted in literature on the authorship question.")

"... what does (Welles) read most? 'You'll think me pompous, but P. G. Wodehouse. Imagine it! A benign comic artist in the twentieth century! Nothing about personal imitations, the stuff Benchley and Dorothy Parker wrote about - simply a perfect, impersonal benevolent style!' Shakespeare: 'I think Oxford wrote Shakespeare. If you don't agree, there are some awful funny coincidences to explain away ...' 'Welles's conversation has the enlivening sciolism of Ripley's *Believe it or Not*. His library of snap judgement is magnificently catalogued."

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#### Letters to other Editors

(In his letter to Charlton Ogburn, S.O.S. member John Cusick suggested that, "It all members of S.O.S. were to write letters to their editors hanging the inspiration on some book (as the following letter to The Arizona Republic) E. de V. could be brought to the attention of millions.")

Editor: In the Travel section of your Aug. 14 paper, Andree Knox writes of the many attractions of Denmark and mentions Kronborg Castle, "... which Shakespeare used as a setting for Hamlet, though he never saw it."

If it is accepted that the money-lender and grain merchant from Stratford produced the Shakespeare canon (his name was Shaxper), it is true that the author had never seen it. But modern scholarly research is pointing to Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, as being the "only begetter" of the plays, poems and sonnets. De Vere's uncle had been Queen Elizabeth's ambassador to Denmark, and it is probable that the earl visited him there. At any rate, he had a ready reference for data on the customs and practices of the Danish court.

(By coincidence, S.O.S. member Thomas A. Gott submitted a copy of the following letter to the Editor of The Sacramento Bee with a note attached which said in part, "This letter is far too long, but in this political year, I did, I think, have the wit to 'package' enough of it in 'thirty-second bites.' I have picked up the Fraser book; it is a monstrosity, but much of it falls, not within the realm of honest misrepresentation of evidence, but of lies and damned lies.")

Editor: John Gross's New York Times review of Russell Fraser's "Young Shakespeare" (Encore, Oct. 30) poses more questions than it answers about the world's premier playwright; but much of his first paragraph makes good sense. It is worthwhile to point out that all we know about "Shakespeare" (Gross really means William Shakspeare of Stratford) amounts to "a few key facts, the rough outlines of his

career, a haphazard collection of minor detail." Leave out the word "key," change "of his career" to "of a career," and what we have left is a pretty fair summation of our knowledge about the Stratfordian, for whom there is no genuine evidence upon which to build a career as poet or playwright, at least at present.

It is also true that "since we have his works" (that is, those of the actual playwright), "we know an immense amount. The problem is how to put the two kinds of knowledge together." It is a problem, certainly, as the distinguished British historian, H.R. Trevor-Roper (e.k.a. Lord Dacre of Glanton), acknowledged recently. In a talk upon that very theme before the de Vere Society of Oxford University, Trevor-Roper states his belief that "the only rational course" for the biographer is to "build up the life of Shakespeare (*sic*) exclusively from the evidence of William Shakespeare (*sic*) of Stratford-on-Avon, and we should deduce the character of the poet exclusively from the plays and poems...if there is a possibility that the two persons (Shakspere and Shakespeare) are separate, one must keep them separate until one has built up two separate persons, and then see whether in fact they come together. The difficulty is that they don't. At no point do they come together in a conclusive way"

Trevor-Roper went on to say that the poet and the Stratford grain-dealer "can be brought together...But this is not mandatory upon us, because the same evidence can be interpreted differently." While concluding tentatively in favor of the traditional candidate, the historian admitted that viable cases have been made for other contenders, and that "the best case, in my view, has been made for the seventeenth Earl of Oxford...There are numerous personal echoes in the plays compatible with Oxford in a way in which they are with nobody else."

Again, Mr. Gross is entirely right when stating that we know "an immense amount" about the author (whoever he was) from the plays. The great playwright (*pace* Mr. Fraser) knew Italy, particularly northern Italy, at first hand, as books and articles by Karl Elze, Gilbert Slater, and Sir Edward Sullivan attest; while the Earl of Oxford meets this requirement, Shakspere has left no evidence of travel beyond southeast England (though the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust proudly — and Irrelevantly — displays the 1613 passport of one Sir Edward Peyto). Oxford saw France, Germany and Italy, as did "William Shakespeare," and he made good use of the travels of others: the Earl was well acquainted with Roger Manners, fifth Earl of Rutland, who came back from Denmark just in time to have supplied Oxford with local color for the second edition of *Hamlet* (1604) which was missing in the first edition. How Shakspere would have come by this material, we are not told.

What are we given in Fraser's book (according to Mr. Gross) as evidence for Shakspere's candidacy? We are told that two people in Snitterfield ("Bardolph" and "Fluellen") figured later as names in the Shakespeare plays. Well, one Lord Bardolph is the second of two "Bardolphs" in *Henry IV, Part Two*, and he is historical: so whose name rubbed off on which character? And "Fluellen" was undoubtedly chosen by the writer of *Henry V* as a common enough name for the portrayal of a comic-heroic Welsh soldier, since a "Fluellen" is as likely to be Welsh as a "Murphy" is likely to be Irish. (The real-life prototype for Fluellen, though, was Sir Roger Williams — Lord Oxford's retainer, as scholar Ruth Loyd Miller points out.)

But two can play at the name game. When Oxford, writing under the pen name "William Shakespeare," needed to establish the sentries in *Hamlet's* opening as credible witnesses to the appearance of a ghost, he gave two of them the names of England's finest soldiers: the Earl's cousins Horace Vere ("Horatio") and Francis Vere ("Francisco") both had European reputations for leadership against the armies of Spain. Why Shakspere would have bothered about such subtleties, again we are not told.

Not one shred of evidence has ever been produced connecting Shakspere to the Stratford grammar school, where no list has been found including his name among those of the free scholars, according to Sir Sidney Lee. But the manhunt for "Shakspere" has turned up masses of information on other Elizabethan dramatists; we even know that John Webster was very, very probably trained at the excellent Merchant Taylor's School because of his father's connection with the parent company.

Shakspere has never been remotely connected with the 1575 festivities at Kenilworth; nor has Oxford, who was then on the Continent. But Oxford accompanied or entertained Queen Elizabeth on several of her royal progresses. Once, at Hinchinbrook (1564), Elizabeth was attending a play which contained material too offensively anti-Catholic for her to stomach, at least at that point in her career; she called for lights and stopped the performance. Playwright John Lyly's modern biographer was intrigued:

perhaps this incident could have inspired the "Mouse-trap" scene in *Hamlet*. Shakspeare was just an infant then; Oxford, however, was with the Queen, having followed her to Cambridge University, where he had been awarded a degree.

No one has explained how Shakspeare, a commoner, could have formed an intimate connection with the Earl of Southampton, let alone how he could have dared to refer to Southampton in *Sonnet 95* as a "mansion" or "habitation" of vice; but from Oxford, who felt an almost paternal warmth for the younger Earl (he had previously been trying to persuade Southampton to marry his daughter Elizabeth Vere), such a fatherly reproval would have been perfectly natural.

Robert Greene's "upstart crow" story (which has been exposed, by the way, as a forgery by fellow Elizabethan Henry Chettle) has been misinterpreted, often deliberately, for generations, as Oxfordian scholar Charlton Ogburn demonstrated in his 1984 book on the Shakespeare authorship controversy (*The Mysterious William Shakspeare*, Dodd, Mead & Co.); and anyone who can think that "Shakespeare" = Shakspeare = Shylock has not rightly read *The Merchant of Venice*, where the playwright, for all the sympathy and stature he gives to the wealthy but wronged Jewish moneylender Shylock, clearly sides with the freely spending Antonio, Bessanio and Portia. Such sentiments accord well with the life of Oxford, who lavished great sums on the theater and lodged a good many of the "University Wits."

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### "Who was Shakespeare, anyway? New play from Dorset fires up an age-old controversy"

The premiere of "All The Queen's Men" in the Dorset (Vt.) Festival Theater (Aug. 25-Sept. 4, 1988) was enthusiastically applauded by large audiences. It also inspired a number of pre-production commentaries and received rave reviews in the neighborhood media, both of which objectively summarized the background and history of the Shakespeare authorship question. It was written by John Nassivere, a playwright and the producing director of that theater, who has a Ph. D. from McGill University and was an assistant professor of literature at Columbia University. In a conversation with a reporter, Mr. Nessivera outlined his motivations:

"The play is a mystery. I started researching the play about two years ago because it struck me as possibly the greatest mystery in the world. The mystery is that William Shakespeare was a person, an author, about whom we know practically nothing. You literally can put the hard facts, the primary source information about this personage, on a 3 x 5 inch index card. It's estoundingly tiny, when you think about all that's been written about him.

The genesis of the play was my fascination with this author, perhaps the greatest author of the western world. There has been all this controversy. Long before this past fall, there appeared a feature article in the Smithsonian as well as a cover story on the front page of the New York Times. This past April, an article came out in the New Yorker. . . .

My play is a hypothetical situation. It is about this mystery, that we know so little about Shakespeare, and in the meantime, we know a lot about some people around him. It takes place in two periods, the past and the near future. . . .

But it does relate to a very real situation. People refer to the infighting of academia. Academia is riddled with it, a perfect breeding ground for mystery and intrigue, and power plays, really vicious power plays. I spent a good number of years in academia, and it is really sometimes truly scary, what goes on.

The fighting that is going on today is just loaded with intrigue, and power plays, and politicking, and all of that. And so is, of course, the story in the past - I'm dealing with the court in Elizabethan London, which was riddled with mystery and intrigue. The play is a mystery like that, a 3-D chess game. The two plots crisscross. . . .

It's autobiographical in the sense that I know firsthand what goes on behind the scenes. When I was getting my own doctorate, I suggested a topic that was unpopular. I proposed doing a dissertation on (Carl) Jung, and I was told that I would be thrown out. (Sigmund) Freud was ok. Freud is a welcome person in academia, and Jung is a person non grata. I wrote 'Phallacies,' a satire, about this."

In the play, six actors play double roles. Queen Elizabeth, Cecil, Walsingham and deVere have, as



counterparts, professors in a modern university and the daughter of the professor who is Cecil also plays the role of Anne de Vere. Will. Shakspeare is a befuddled actor and his counterpart plays a minor role in announcing what might be considered the prelude and postlude.

The Albany Sunday Times Union (8/21/88) observed:

"An academic turned practical theater man, Nassivera can see his play intriguing audiences, hopefully causing post-production arguments that will engender additional interest in the work."

There are, apparently, influential efforts underway to have "All the Queen's Men" produced in several of the larger and more prestigious theaters in the United States.

\*Headline in Bennington Vermont Banner (8/18/88)

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Knyvet, King of Cats

by

Benjamin R. Mollow

Charlton Ogburn has suggested in TMWS that one of the models for the murderous swordsman Tybalt, "King of Cats" in *Romeo and Juliet* may be the murderous swordsman Thomas Knyvet, the uncle of Anne Vavasor who injured Oxtord in a duel. The plausibility of this connection is by considering the possibility that Shakespeare's cat may be a *civet*, a word that may well have rhymed with *Knyvet* and in any case resembles it closely. In *As You Like It*, III. ii. 64, Touchstone says that "civet..is the very uncleanly flux of a cat." Also, the cat referred to in *King Lear*, III. iv. 110 is evidently a civet by many editors.

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#### Notices

\*An abridged paperback edition of Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* has been published in England with the title of *The Mystery of William Shakespeare* (Cardinal, Penguin Group 1988 - U.S. 7.99 pounds; Can. \$19.95). In his Foreward Lord Vere writes in part:

Ogburn has composed this book with masterful style. Both entertaining and scholarly, it never becomes a dry academic work, and will be stimulating to layman and scholar alike over the years to come. The book is staunchly constructed on the twin pillars of documentary and circumstantial evidence, and Mr. Ogburn always lets us know when he is introducing a hypothesis. What marks this book out above all, however, is its abiding impression of truth and integrity. Here are the fruits of a passionate intellectual crusade. Not once do we feel that the author is straining a point to bolster this theory. The theory grows out of the evidence and not the other way around.

In their inflexibility, scholars in ivory towers often acquire tunnel-vision and hence run the risk of perpetuating myths, albeit involuntary. Mr. Ogburn, on the other hand, gives us new eyes, and whole fields of Shakespearean scholarship now lie open for our beholding.

\*The next Newsletter will carry a full account of the most successful and well-attended Annual Meetings of the Members and the Trustees of The Shakespeare Oxtord Society held on Nov. 18-19, 1988 in Richmond, Va.

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