



THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY

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

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE

by
Warren Hope

[The opening paragraphs of an article carried in The Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter]
(Summer 1978, Vol. 14, No. 3)

Professors of English first reacted to the theory that Shakespeare's works were written by the 17th Earl of Oxford with silence, then with ridicule ("The man who hatched that scheme was a Looney — ha, ha.") and, most recently, with attacks: they charge, for instance, that to believe a nobleman wrote the plays and poems is anti-democratic.

Professor J. Mitchell Morse, in the first chapter of his enlightening and entertaining book, *Prejudice and Literature* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976, p. 7; originally published as "Race, Class, and Metaphor" in *College English*, February 1974, p. 547) recklessly charges that belief in the Oxford theory is an irresponsibility based on the maliciously mistaken belief that literary culture is literally a matter of "cultural heritage," a matter of blood and genes, rather than a matter of "attainment."

I believe Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, wrote the works of Shakespeare (or Shake-speare) — the plays and poems for too long misattributed to William Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, the man Henry James considered to be "the biggest and most successful fraud ever practiced on a patient world." I am also a democrat. These positions are not contradictory.

[Mr. Hope then effectively summarizes major facts which have convinced scholars that Will. Shakspeare of Stratford did not write the works of Shakespeare and that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, did].

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE CONTINUED

by
Gordon Cyr

We have had considerable reader response to Warren Hope's article published in our last Newsletter (which) was originally intended as a contribution to *College English*, officially described in its letterhead as "an Official Journal of the National Council of Teachers of English."

...we print below both *College English* editor Richard Ohmann's letter of rejection (complete with revealing footnote) and Warren Hope's response, which, in our opinion, is unanswerable.

Dear Contributor:

We are sorry that we cannot use your manuscript in *COLLEGE ENGLISH*, and we are returning it herewith.

Thank you for letting us consider it. Please try us again when you have something that might be suitable for *COLLEGE ENGLISH*.

Richard Ohmann

Dear Professor Hope:

We see this note not primarily as a response to what was after all of a kind of an aside to Morse's article (and that article is now almost four years old), but as an attempt to reopen the Shakespeare authorship controversy, after it has been virtually dead within the academy for many decades. It's possible that the controversy should be reopened, but if so, it will need to be reopened with new evidence, or with a full scale argument showing why the establishment has erred in dismissing the existing evidence.

R.O.

Dear Professor Ohmann:

Thank you for considering for publication and commenting on my note, Prejudice and Shakespeare. I'd like to respond to the objections to it which you raise. Of course, I intended to open the Shakspeare-Oxford debate "within the academy." (We really can't speak of reopening a debate which has never been held. If you can direct me to the writings of any academician which show the facts of the Oxford case to be false, or the reasoning applied to those facts faulty, I'd appreciate that information. So far as I have been able to determine, the Oxford argument has been ignored, ridiculed, and attacked, but never answered.) But I would argue that airing the debate, in brief, was the only fair way to respond to Professor Morse.

I also realize that Professor Morse's false description of the motives of Oxfordians represents little more than an aside. But that aside is of importance for his entire theme: because of his professional prejudice he falsely assigns class prejudice to others — including me. This brings us to your suggestion that there is a need for a "full-scale argument showing why the establishment has erred in dismissing the existing evidence." Surely Professor Morse's book provides the answer: prejudice, as defined by Skeat, "a prejudgment, an ill opinion formed beforehand." Professor Morse elaborates:

In attitude and belief it is not necessarily a matter of being wrong about matters of fact - i.e., of being uninformed or misinformed or simply fallible; it is rather a matter of being infallible; of being unable to conceive that any other attitude or belief is possible except as an aberration or a perversity.

The establishment has not so much erred in dismissing that existing evidence as it has, by and large, pretended that the evidence does not exist. If you would be interested in an article — a full-scale argument — examining the treatment of the Oxford argument by academicians and the academic press, please let me know. I'd be happy to prepare one for you.

I see no need for new evidence until "the academy" deals with the evidence which has been gathered over the past sixty years. Nonetheless, I mention two recent works which contain such evidence in my note.

I recognize and in my note state that Professor Morse's article appeared in College English almost four years ago. But the false charge he made then was recently reissued in book form. That is what I wished to answer. I turned to your pages for the opportunity to answer because the statement first appeared in them. But is timeliness to the point? What was timely about Professor Morse's unsupported accusation four years ago? What compelled him to beat a theoretical horse which "has been virtually dead within the academy for decades" with the stick of class prejudice?

Warren Hope

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE

Dear Mr. Ogburn:

April 11, 1990

I have read your book *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. It is brilliant, fascinating, informative, and marvelously written, a joy to read. Never again will I think the Stratford man wrote the works of Shakespeare.

I am the person who was interviewed in Palm Beach's "Shiny Sheet" refuting the premise of the Oxford-Shakespeare Society. My viewpoint was totally normal, given my biased and dishonest establishment education. I read Shakespeare's plays for four years of high school, and also in college for a BA in French. I have a Masters in English, and a Ph. D. in Comparative Literature, which includes a course on scholarly methods of Renaissance Research (with Prof. William Ringler at the University of Chicago) that concentrated on textual analysis of the First Folio edition.

Never in all my years of English courses was I exposed to these contrarian views. Whenever the subject of an alternative to Shakespeare's authorship of the works came up, all my professors in all my different schools declared the idea to be hog wash.

Let's face it, academic freedom is a joke. My experience in academia necessarily taught me that speech is tightly regulated in the university, but I always thought the totalitarianism was confined to political matters. I never dreamed that the lies, cover-ups and exclusions extended to the teaching of 16th c. literature! It is a crime that the establishment can so mislead its trusting students. You have done a real service to scholarship in general by exposing the workings of the groves of academe.

I have sent your book to two people, one of whom is the headmaster, and occasional teacher of English literature, at Nichols School, in Buffalo, N.Y., an excellent prep school. I have also recommended it to the person in charge of coordinating English curriculum in Palm Beach County schools. Your side needs to be heard, and I will do my best from now on to spread the word.

I am currently writing about St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), and she is extremely well documented. 450 of

her letters survive, scores of letters written by luminaries of her day to her survive, and scores of her contemporaries left written accounts of her life (thanks to the legalistic canonization proceedings). A biography written by one of the foremost scholars of the day, was published 10 years after her death. How this contrasts with Shakespeare!

Thank you for writing a wonderful, entertaining, and important book which has taught me facts and probabilities I should have known in high school, and has provided me with endless conversational material!

Sylvia S. Genske

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE

Dear Mr. Ogburn:

June 4, 1985

I have just read your absolutely masterful and convincing book proving beyond the shadow of a doubt, to my way of thinking, that the Shakespeare of Stratford did not write the works attributed to him.

I would never have known of your book, had it not been for a column in the Richmond News Leader — by M. J. Sobran, I believe — asserting flatly that you had proved your case. It is astounding to me that your book has not been widely reviewed ... Is this explicable on the basis that the academic Camorra [Italian criminal association, grew ail-powerful through intimidation] has intimidated the media? I find that hard to believe, and yet I can think of no other explanation...

The late Louis B. Wright [one-time Director of the Folger Library] was a good friend of mine, and I am appalled at the methods that he used to squelch all dissenters. I never discussed this matter with him, and truth to tell, I never doubted that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare's plays until I read your book. Louis Wright was such a charming fellow when discussing other matters that I have difficulty taking in his bigotry in this matter, and his unpardonable sneers at all dissenters to Holy Writ, as he saw it. His attitude was, however, exactly in line with that of the Harvardians who almost came down with apoplexy when the Harvard Magazine dared to publish your article. A comment, that, on "academic freedom!"

Virginius Dabney

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE

Mr. R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., Editor

March 11, 1987

Dear Bob:

What could The American Spectator do to burst spectacularly upon the international scene? Is there some shot in the arm that would put the name of your great magazine on everyone's lips? Is there a story waiting to be told which would divert the world's thoughtful readers from the dreary recital of Irangate blunders? Yes!

It is the story of the true author of the plays and sonnets now attributed to a man from Stratford-on-Avon who is called Shakespeare.

This story has been told in the most convincing fashion by Charlton Ogburn in a book whose publication was made possible by my great friend Phil Weld (with whom I sailed across the Atlantic in '79). The book is *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*.

When Phil Weld induced the Harvard Magazine some years ago to run an article on this subject, the Harvard University faculty was so outraged by such heresy that it tried to have the editor of the magazine fired! Burning him at the stake would have been a welcome alternative.

Again to show you how The Establishment regards any effort to question the authorship of the plays and sonnets: The Folger Shakespeare Library recently turned down \$10,000, and possibly double that amount, rather than use its good offices to bring about a trial before an objective, competent panel of judges between *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* and any comparable work the orthodox establishment would care to put up against it.

Your first reaction may be that this is all old hat; that nobody cares about it anyhow. But a lot of intelligent people do care - and care a lot. One of these is Clare Booth Luce. She and I have been striving diligently to bring Ogburn's masterpiece before a larger public. I venture to say that Clare would be glad to write a lead story - not too long - that would be a sensational scoop for The American Spectator . . .

Allerton Cushman

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE

"Against funding odds" by Joseph Sobran
(Washington Times 11/20/90)

Why am I for the free market? I'll tell you why I'm for the free market. Only I shy away from calling it "the free market," because to most people that connotes financial activity, for which I have little taste and less talent.

Consider this. A few days ago, Washington lost its most generous patron of the arts, David Lloyd Kreeger, who died of cancer at age 81. Among his countless benefactions, Mr. Kreeger (whom I never met) subsidized the cause of Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, who he was convinced wrote the works we call William Shakespeare's. Toward the goal of winning the world over to this view (which I share), Mr. Kreeger sponsored debates in this country and England.

Now this cause is without the patronage it desperately needs. But that would be only a misfortune, not an injustice, except that the conventional view is effectively subsidized by the state. Public schools and publicly funded universities unanimously teach the impressionable young that "Shakespeare" was the familiar man from Stratford.

Because these institutions of learning are paid for with tax dollars, it's hard for the Oxfordian view to compete. And Oxfordians are of course taxed to propagate a cultural dogma we think mistaken. If we want to correct that dogma, we have to do so out of our own pockets. And the passing of Mr. Kreeger deprives us of our single deepest pocket.

The Oxfordian view is making headway, even on its small resources, just because of its inherent power. But it does labor under heavy material handicaps, which are aggravated by the circumstance that the Stratford view enjoys the status of an established religion, with the favor of the state behind it.

Don't get me wrong. The traditional view would be dominant in any case. But the funding of higher education out of tax money gives it a near monopoly of access. It's preached to captive audiences. Those who profess it can do research on sabbaticals. The impression is created that dissidents don't matter, that there is something eccentric about rejecting the official view.

The best Shakespeare scholar I have ever known is an Oxfordian - a free-lance scholar with no credentials in the field. Peter X took up the subject five years ago, quit his job, and devoted full time to it until he had not only mastered all the important material relating to the lives of the Earl of Oxford and the Stratford man, but had made new discoveries of his own.

Peter has written a book, for which he hasn't found a publisher; and he has projected another book, on Shakespeare's sonnets, which he reasonably expects will face the same problem. Both books will contain breakthrough theses; the second will offer a remarkable solution to the vexed question of who the "rival poet" of the sonnets may have been.

Well, tough luck. Nobody is obliged to publish any book. That's how the market works sometimes, and its decisions aren't infallible.

What irks me about this though, is that so many inferior books on Shakespeare are published all the time. But they are written by Stratfordians, with all the proper credentials, who are wired into the tax economy in two ways: (1) They teach at state-funded college and universities; and (2) the publishers are state-funded university presses, which unlike the private publisher to whom my friend has applied, don't have to make a profit.

What's more, Peter can't get any sort of federal grant on which to write his big book. To his credit, he doesn't want one. But the money that we are told is supposed to assist the indigent writer or artist, lest John Keats die in obscurity again, is not necessarily reaching Keats, unless Keats happens to know the right people. Which isn't exactly the idea, is it?

I'm pretty confident that the Oxfordian view will prevail, and that Peter's books will not only be published but will create a sensation in the field. But these things will happen against the odds, odds that have been made longer than they should have been by the structure of tax subsidies. Thus may publicly funded education retard the advancement of knowledge.

PREJUDICE AND SHAKESPEARE

Mr. Michael Levitas, The New York Times Book Review

July 9, 1985

Dear Mr. Levitas:

A letter from Steven Everson in the Letters Column of the Times Book Review (7/7/85) referred to a June 23, 1985 "Editors' Note" acknowledging that the Times "had erred in assigning the review" of his book to Hoyt Purvis. May I respectfully submit that Charlton Ogburn is entitled to a similar acknowledgment for your error in assigning the review (12/9/84) of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare, The Myth and The Reality* to Robert Giroux. If Mr. Purvis's unrevealed association with Senator Fulbright is disqualifying, Mr. Giroux's unrevealed - certainly to the readers and possibly to the editors - self-documented hostility to Mr. Ogburn's thesis as to the Shakespeare authorship controversy and the disastrous consequences his reputation as a Shakespearean scholar would suffer were that thesis to prevail, must disqualify Mr. Giroux.

Let me concede that it is not inconceivable for a partisan to write a responsibly informative and intellectually provocative review of a book by a member of the opposition, provided that partisanship is noted or acknowledged and is not governed by the need of the reviewer to protect his or her own reputation as a scholar and author.

I will not burden this letter or impose too greatly on your time by spelling out the many misrepresentations, distortions and omissions in that review. I will focus on but one of his patently unwarranted and if not deliberately, then inexcusably, misleading allegations. He wrote:

"(Oxford) died in . . . 1604, before many of Shakespeare's greatest plays were written - but this does not deter Mr. Ogburn in the least."

On page 382 of his book Mr. Ogburn, under the heading "The Question of De Vere's [Oxford's] Dates," wrote:

"The truth is, proof is wholly lacking that any of Shakespeare's plays were written after 1604 . . ."

There follows eight pages exclusively devoted to corroborating the absence of such proof and Mr. Ogburn in many other instances throughout the book provides additional evidence for that proposition. Now please note. Mr. Giroux was not disparaging any opinion or deduction or conclusion advanced by Mr. Ogburn as to the dates the plays were written but was informing his readers that Mr. Ogburn was not only not deterred but not deterred "in the least" - paid no attention to an established fact as to those dates of which Mr. Ogburn, as far as the reader could infer, was aware and did not dispute. A fact, moreover, which, if true, would indisputably completely destroy Mr. Ogburn's thesis. By such accusation, Mr. Giroux is not just labeling Mr. Ogburn as irrational and untrustworthy, but falsely proving he is. Mr. Giroux either did not read the book he reviewed or allowed his concealed partisanship to suppress adherence to the canons of criticism and thereby exposed his disqualification as an acceptable reviewer.

In his review Mr. Giroux assured his readers that he had read the book "with an open . . . mind." It may be that when the Times printed that review its editors did not know that such an assurance was flagrantly disarming and deceitful but those editors now know.

In closing, I must be candid. If the Times does not accord Mr. Ogburn the same acknowledgment it accorded Mr. Everson, the decision was dictated by subjective considerations and not objective standards.

Morse Johnson

Dear Mr. Johnson:

If memory serves, either Mr. Ogburn or those allied with his views, have had their objections published in the Letter Space of the Book Review.

I do not agree that Mr. Giroux's association with Shakespeare can be compared with the circumstances that dictated an Editor's Note concerning the review for Steve Emerson's book.

Thank you for writing.

Mitchel Levitas

Dear Mr. Levitas:

I much appreciate your courteous response to my charge that the assignment to Robert Giroux of Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* was in error, particularly since I found I had misspelled your first and Mr. Emerson's last names. My apologies. It would appear, however, that you were not aware of the evidence on which I based my allegation of Mr. Giroux's "self-documented hostility" to Mr. Ogburn's thesis. Mr.

Ogburn had proposed to Mr. Giroux, prior to the publication of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, that both select a panel of three persons of distinguished intellect and objectivity to judge whether that book or a book chosen by Mr. Giroux made the more convincing case.

In rejecting that proposal, Mr. Giroux wrote that the judges' views "would fail to convince you even if they unanimously agreed with me, or me if they agreed with you" (Underscoring supplied). As you know, in his review Mr. Giroux reported he had read *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* with "an open . . . mind."

While I have no intention of involving you in an unending exchange of letters, nor have I ever fancied myself as an irresistible force able to move an immovable object, I felt impelled to bring this proof of Mr. Giroux's "self-documented hostility" to your attention.

Morse Johnson

Editor, Shakespeare Oxford Society

It has come to my attention recently that, due to the swift progress of public awareness about the Shakespeare authorship question, we are in need of an informal association for academic folks prepared to critically examine the Stratford legend from the vantage point of contemporary scholarship. Personally, as a graduate student who believes in academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas inside and outside the classroom, I would feel much more secure if such an organization existed.

Furthermore, it seems to me that only half the battle has been won by those who have nurtured the Oxfordian case over the past seventy years since Looney's book. We have brought the question to the point where no previously uncommitted reader can fail, when confronted with the evidence in Mr. Ogburn's book, for example, to realize that something is rotten in Stratford.

This situation poses exciting possibilities, but also difficult problems which can only be addressed through thoughtful collective action. The "information gap" in the academic world is enormous. My experience teaches me that many Stratfordians are so deeply entrenched in tall tales of their own creation, that it's going to take a considerable effort to break the disinformation spell. The most troubling aspect of this situation is that these people are the teachers of tomorrow's teachers, and unless some effective counter-pressure is exerted soon, an entire new generation of scholars will be effectively discouraged from considering the Oxfordian "heresy", as it is termed. I believe such an effort is already well underway.

It is also my fond belief, however, that many readers of this quixotic journal know college teachers or students who might be interested in a committee of correspondence on this timely subject. If so, I would be most pleased to receive news from the hinterlands. All such correspondence will, of course, remain confidential.

Roger Stritmatter

20 Day Avenue, Northampton, Mass. 01060

Editor, The Sacramento Bee:

The Bee is to be commended for printing Don Oldenburg's article ("Was Shakespeare legit?", Scene, Jan. 18) on the Shakespeare authorship controversy, particularly since the Bee — in company with a growing number of major metropolitan newspapers — has consistently viewed the ongoing dispute in its proper perspective: as "news that stays news."

Naturally, given space limitations, Mr. Oldenburg couldn't print Oxfordian Peter Moore's specific objections (published in a recent Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter) to Prof. Ward Elliott's computer study of Shakespeare, which supposedly eliminates the 17th Earl of Oxford from contention for the "Bard's" honors.

Here is just one of the problems. In ascertaining whether William Shakspeare of Stratford, the Earl of Oxford or someone else wrote Shakespeare, Elliott and his research assistants made the use of exclamation points (!) one of their stylistic tests. Well, the young Earl of Oxford, who was soon to fall mysteriously silent as a poet (later to become "Shake-speare," we would say), completed his youthful poems well before the exclamation point became a standard printer's device.

Moreover, Elliott evidently fed, not Shakespeare's 1623 First Folio, but the 1974 "Riverside Shakespeare" into his computer. This text is a somewhat modernized, somewhat Elizabethanized hybrid, to put it briefly. However, the texts of Oxford and the other "failed" contenders were apparently drawn from a wildly variable mix of early manuscripts, printed Elizabethan editions and unscholarly (by today's standards) Victorian poetry

anthologies. The analytical hazards will be readily apparent. Incidentally, Mr. Moore reports Prof. Elliott's remark to him that the "exclamation point" standard was one of Claremont McKenna College's "best" tests!

Computers have no sense of style, no poetical "ear," no ability to test how different poems compare when written for different audiences (Queen Elizabeth's court? Private or public London theatergoers?) and purposes. Evidently, Prof. Elliott has treated Shakespeare's work, not as a living entity created by a human being with an evolving career, but as an inert, static mass completely "out of joint" with respect to time.

Let's test Shakespeare's identity with our own sensibilities instead. In "Hamlet" we hear the melancholy Dane remarking, "Frailty, thy name is woman!" Here is part of a poem by Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, upon that very theme:

*If woman could be fair and yet not fond,
Or that their love were firm, not fickle, still,
I would not marvel that they made men bond,
By service long to purchase their good will.
But when I see how frail those creatures are,
I muse that men forget themselves so far ...*

Let the reader find the complete text in Charlton Ogburn's "The Mysterious William Shakespeare," and, with poem in hand, sift through Shakespeare's plays for the real and telling resemblances. They are there, they cannot be deleted from a human being's "data base," and they give but one of the many indications that "Shake-speare" and Oxford were, literally, of one mind.

Tom Goff

RUTH LOYD MILLER
DISCUSSES THE DRAMATIST IN SERVICE OF THE deVERES
by
John Louthier

A fine autumn afternoon of a Saturday several months ago. Ruth Loyd Miller is chatting about the latest developments on the Oxford/'Shakespeare' front. From my home in Florida, I had phoned her in Louisiana. Early in the '70s, Mrs. Miller obtained copyrights needed to reprint the early poetic works of Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, and *'Shakespeare' Identified*, J. Thomas Looney's landmark book that made the initial effective claim for Oxford as author of the 'Shakespeare' oeuvre.

The conversation turns to the topic of 16th century playwright and fierce Catholic dissenter, John Bale, whose plays Oxfordians point to as having influenced Oxford's early dramaturgic efforts. The following dialogue, recreated from notes and supplementary indented materials, are true to both the spirit and the facts of the give and take between Mrs. Miller and me:

MRS. MILLER: Yes, Bale is important . . . extremely so . . . in the case for de Vere. My husband [Judge Minos D. Miller, Jr.] and I are hoping others will join in searching for more about Bale's link with Oxford and the 'Shakespeare' histories.

The Penguin Companion to English Literature by David Daiches, copyright 1971, p. 32: "Bale, John (1495-1563). Dramatist, antiquary and religious controversialist. Educated at a Carmelite convent in Norwich, and at Jesus College, Cambridge, where he took holy orders, he was converted to Protestantism and became the fiercest of anti-Catholic, anti-monastic controversialists."

JOHN LOUTHER: Well, I am interested.

MRS. M.: Good, The more the merrier! We only had done some basic research on Bale when we were in the final stages of getting *'Shakespeare' Identified* into print. However, we managed to get a last minute footnote on the subject included in Volume II [p. 469 ff., appended to the late Colonel Bernard Ward's piece, "Shakespeare and Elizabethan War Propaganda"].

J.L.: Yes.

Shakespeare: Twenty-Three Plays and Sonnets, by T. Marc Parrot, copyright 1938, p. 436: "[Henry VI] is in one sense at least an appeal to the poet's contemporaries to forget their private quarrels and to unite like Henry's band of brothers against the foreign foe . . . It is interesting to note . . . that revivals [of the 'Shakespeare' histories] in England coincide with periods when an appeal to patriotism on the stage was well-timed."

MRS. M.: You have to have sharp eyes. Typical footnote type. Isn't easy to read.

J.L.: The important thing is that it's there.

David Daiches: "Between 1537 and 1540 . . . [Bale's] troupe performed in various parts of England at

the request of Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's anticlerical advisor."

MRS. M.: You can see my footnote was a late addition.

J.L.: A little chill went through me when I read your line [p. 474], "It is not without significance that the earliest English political dramatist, John Bale, 'appears in the service of Oxford for whom he wrote a series of plays, intended for use as Reformation propaganda.'"

MRS. M.: For that, give credit to the book, *John Bale*, from the University of Illinois Press. Jesse Harris wrote it. Almost a half century ago. It's not easy to find. If your library can't locate it, I can arrange to send you a copy of mine.

J.L.: You are very kind. Thank you. I haven't found a great deal about Bale. Yet.

David Daiches: "Bale's importance in the evolution of English drama is that, unlike authors of courtly morality plays, he wrote for itinerant professional troupes, and brought a degree of literary sophistication to popular entertainment. By emphasizing topical allusion, he contributed to the secularization of moralities and interludes."

MRS. M.: Check into *King John in Fact and Fiction* —

J.L.: Wallerstein's book?

MRS. M.: Yes, He wrote — as did Harris — that the primary source of the *King John* attributed to 'Shakespeare' was Bale's *Troublesome Raigne of King John*. There are others in the field who agree with Wallerstein on this point.

J.L.: And the difficulty in explaining how Shakespeare ever could have seen Bale's unpublished manuscript.

MRS. M.: Certainly. When the 17th Earl of Oxford became Cecil's ward, Cecil took possession of all the young noble's assets — which would include Bale's plays. Not only the ones de Vere the boy saw performed, but also the Bale manuscripts that were passed on to de Vere in the legacy from his father and grandfather. Queen Elizabeth's right-hand adviser — William Cecil — hardly could have disapproved of Bale's anti-Catholicism — which can be inferred from B.M. Landsdowne's work. He cites evidence that Cecil and Archbishop Matthew Parker had joined forces in searching out Bale's manuscripts. Bale had fled to the Low Countries. He was getting along in years . . . and he came back to England at about the time Archbishop Parker and Burghley were corresponding about gathering up the old playwright's works.

J.L.: The unpublished manuscripts?

MRS. M.: Any of the Bale material they could get their hands on. Especially plays commissioned by the deVeres and performed at their country estate.

J.L.: *The Impostures of Thomas A. Beckett* and . . . uh . . .

MRS. M.: — and *The Three Laws of Nature, Moses and Christ*. The subject matter of these plays —

J.L.: — shows up, as I recall your footnote, in dramas ascribed to William Shakespeare.

MRS. M.: That's right.

David Daiches: "[Bale's] polemical writings in English are scurrilous and venomous (Fuller called him 'bilibious Bale') and include *Brief Chronical Concerning John Oldcastle* (1544)."

J.L.: It seems as though *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, the anonymous play — let me start over. What I'm trying to say is that Charlton [Ogburn] makes a good point in theorizing that *Famous Victories* might've been an apprentice playwriting effort by Oxford. But would you agree that the old play could've come from the pen of John Bale?

MRS. M.: Go on, it's an interesting point.

J.L.: I know it's considered poorly written, but the man was experimenting with a new form. It seems sensible to assume his plays would contain echoes of the style and crudities that marked the kind of drama he's learned from.

MRS. M.: You're saying the gap is wide not only between the pre-Bale plays, but also between the Bale plays and those of the 17th Earl of Oxford era.

J.L.: I am indeed.

MRS. M.: Continue.

J.L.: I'll bet the idea exists in some book, an essay, somewhere . . . that *Famous Victories* might actually have been written by Bale . . . and that young Oxford — like so many neophyte writers — appropriated some of it and gloriously transformed it in his own plays. Which leads me to wonder about another dog-eared, belabored topic: the nexus of Bale's *Oldcastle* with the inspired *Oldcastle/Falstaff* of the 'Shakespeare' plays. Was it merely a case of Oxford recycling the name and part of the personal history of Bale's character? Did Oxford consider it such a time-fogged, forgotten identification ([in *Famous Victories*] "a small role in a poor play unworthy of notice," according to Isaac Azimov) that he felt safe in borrowing it? In the process, discovering a

few personality clues for transmogrifying the *bona fide* Oldcastle into the cowardly, "fat-witted" knight — so enchanting in invention to playgoers and in name so objectionable to the real Oldcastle's distaff descendants, the Cobhams, that *I Henry IV* by "Shakespeare" wasn't on the boards by long before pressure caused the Oldcastle character to be redubbed Falstaff.

MRS. M.: Well! You've got some very good questions. It's an area we should explore more. Much more. Keep digging.

"And I think we cannot simply attribute the blank record to accident."

Occasionally I run across telling passages in Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* which I have not recalled and consider should be emphasized by reiteration (at pp 182-183):

Some years ago, *Life* magazine's editorialist, John K. Jessup, writing under the heading "Fresh Troops Join the Battle of the Bard," observed that the case for Oxford "has increasingly responsible support." He went on to say, however, that "it involves an assumed conspiracy to perpetuate his pseudonymity." And he added that scholars find this conspiracy "hard . . . to take." He went on to say, as I have reported, that "Against this need to assume a conspiracy, the Oxford case has one great offsetting advantage," the advantage being that "unlike Shaksper's, Oxford's known life is that of a man who could easily have written the plays."

Mr. Jessup's editorial was that rarity, a commentary on the Shakespeare controversy by a journalist who is, on the whole, informed and fair in his appraisal. But it gave further currency to a widely held misconception central to the problem of the authorship. The case for Oxford (as for any other pseudonymous author) does not "assume a conspiracy." It takes cognizance of a fact. The fact is that every contemporary document that might have related authorship of Shakespeare's plays and poems to an identifiable human being subsequently disappeared. Every last scrap of paper that would have told who Shakespeare was — whether the Stratford man or any other — simply vanished; like the papers that would have shown whether Shaksper went to school; like the papers that would have told what his activities in the theatre were, if any; like the papers to which he set his hand in his business dealings in Stratford: all vanished. Whatever view of the authorship one may take, orthodox or otherwise, one must accept the absence of all contemporary documentation establishing Shakespeare's identity and explain why it should have disappeared. This is not to assume anything but to acknowledge the actuality and build upon it. And I think we cannot simply attribute the blank record to accident. For a body of work as superior as Shakespeare's, it is simply not conceivable that every reference during the author's life, and evidently for some years thereafter, which linked the work to a flesh-and-blood author, including everything in the author's own words, written or quoted, should have passed into limbo by chance. Chance is not so purposeful. Elizabethan writers of far less stature than the author of Shakespeare's works have been found unmistakably associated with their products by concrete references that have not had to be unearthed through the exhaustive searches over years by legions of investigators.

To me there can be but one explanation for the emptyhandedness of generations of scholars after lifelong quests. Someone saw to it that those quests would be fruitless. A conspiracy was not necessary. Autocratic societies are run not by conspiracies but under central direction. And Elizabethan society was autocratic. Even less than on the other side of the iron curtain today, where typewriters and copying machines are available to *samizdat* publishers, was proscribed information likely to get on the record.

"And I think we cannot simply attribute the blank record to accident."

by

Morse Johnson

The poet and dramatist Michael Drayton was born in 1563 (d. 1631) in Warwickshire nearby Stratford and while he lived in London during his adult life repeatedly returned to Warwickshire for lengthy visits. Will. Shaksper was born in 1564 (d. 1616) in Stratford and while he lived in London during many years of his adult life repeatedly returned to Stratford for lengthy visits. Both of their fathers were butchers.

Cornell University Professor of English and one-time Director of The Folger Library, Joseph Quincy Adams, in his *A Life of Shakespeare* (Students' Edition, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1923) reports that Drayton "must have seen much of his old friend and fellow playwright, Shakespeare (in Stratford)." While Drayton might have

seen Will. Shakspeare at various times in Stratford, there are no facts revealing that they were friends. Drayton, also, is never known to have associated with the poet and dramatist "William Shakespeare" and, as far as we know, did not mention his name until 1627 when he wrote, without any implication of friendship, a brief tribute in verse to his famous contemporary.

Sir Henry and Lady Rainsford lived in Clifford Chambers nearby Stratford and both were known to have an absorbing interest in literature. Professor Adams points out that they enjoyed entertaining men of letters and that Drayton was a frequent visitor in Clifford Chambers which he labeled, "the Muses' quiet port." He is, however, compelled to imply that the Rainsfords never recorded any reference to Shakspeare.

Stratfordian biographers when confronted with adverse evidence as a rule omit or adroitly camouflage it. In this particular instance, however, Professor Adams unwittingly discloses evidence which makes his implication even more embarrassing:

We have, however, besides the frequent presence of Drayton at Clifford Chambers, further reason to suppose that Shakespeare [i.e., Shakspeare] was known to the Rainsfords. They were on terms of the closest friendship with the Combes and other families with which Shakespeare [i.e., Shakspeare] associated. And John Hall [Shakspeare's son-in-law] was their family physician, often ministering to the health of both Sir Henry and Lady Rainsford; on one occasion, we know, they called him to treat the poet Drayton, at the time a guest in their home. It is inconceivable that in a small community, and with so many friends in common, the Rainsfords, with their special interest in literature, should not be familiar with the most distinguished poet of the age, then living close at hand.

Those facts put a spotlight on the uniqueness of the Stratfordian attribution: Had the Rainsfords documented their friend Shakspeare as "Shakespeare," the case for the Stratfordian attribution would have been hard to refute; that they never even mentioned his name, in my opinion, conclusively nullifies that attribution.

On the other hand, the Professor does, typically, resort to camouflaging embarrassing evidence when he postulates a scenario for Shakspeare's burial:

No account of the funeral has come down to us; yet I think we can have little difficulty in imagining the scene. To the tolling of "the surly, sullen bell" the body was borne from New Place to the church, followed by the mourning family. The immediate relatives included the widow, Mrs. William Shakespeare - unless, indeed, by illness she was confined to her bed; his eldest daughter, Susanna, with her husband, the physician, Mr. Hall, and their little daughter Elizabeth, aged eight; Judith, with her husband Thomas Quincy; the poet's sister, Mrs. Joan Hart, in widow's weeds, with her three sons aged respectively eight, eleven and sixteen; and, finally Thomas Greene, the poet's cousin. Among those gathered at the church we should certainly expect to see Hamnet Sadler and his wife Judith, Julius Shaw, Henry Walker and his little son William, Anthony Nash, John Nash, William Reynolds, Thomas Combe, and possibly, Sir Henry and Lady Rainsford. And the people of the town, no doubt, came in full force to do honor to Stratford's most distinguished citizen (emphasis added).

Professor Adams was well aware of but omits the fact that not one of Shakspeare's relatives or one of the persons then living in Stratford is ever known to have identified Shakspeare as "Shakespeare" - not even the well-educated Dr. Hall (d. 1635), and Co-Executor of his father-in-law's will, who kept a diary in which he noted the literary accomplishments of some of his patients, including Drayton - "an excellent poet."

It is possible that in the "dark backward and abysm" of antiquity "seven cities claimed Homer dead, through which the living Homer begged his bread," but it is beyond the bounds of possibilities that in the "full daylight of the English Renaissance (and) the well-documented reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I," "William Shakespeare" was born, lived and buried in Stratford without any contemporary resident in Stratford and its environs ever claiming that he did.

"And I think we cannot simply attribute the blank record to accident."

Dear Barbara Tuchman:

April 11, 1986

I am impelled to once again respectfully bring to your attention evidence which bears definitively on the identity of William Shakespeare, as set forth in the attached "The Strange Silence Following the Death of Shakespeare."

In your most gracious reply (12/9/81) to my previous communication, you wrote:

I find it more natural that Shakespeare was a real if barely known person than that the Earl of Oxford and all who knew him should have cooperated in a totally unexplained charade.

In all deference, which proposition do you find is more "natural" or, if you please, to quote from a phrase in your *Practicing History*, having reference to Stratford's Shakspeare's authorship, "closer to 'how it really was' and to a proper understanding of cause and effect":

A. The person who was the dramatist and poet William Shakespeare was, during his lifetime, known as such to all persons who came in direct or indirect contact with him but then at his death and for years thereafter all such persons in Stratford, London and elsewhere, for no apparent reason and in what had to be voluntary and unviolated cooperation, made no record or memorial of any kind of the fact that he had died.

B. The identity of the person who was the dramatist and poet William Shakespeare during his lifetime was for social and political reasons, which have been rationally deduced by qualified scholars and for which there is some corroborating contemporary evidence, camouflaged and concealed under sanctions enforced by Court officials and such reasons and sanctions were still operative at his death and for years thereafter.

If this imposition on your time and good will is an irritant rather than a stimulant, please feel under no obligation to respond. Obviously, I hope that such is not the case.

Morse Johnson

ADDENDA

*Barbara Tuchman is on target when she predicates that Shakspeare was a "barely known person" but thereby impulsively contradicts traditional scholars who are her authoritative sources.

*In a letter to Professor E.A.J. Honigman, who reviewed *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* in The New York Review of Books, I wrote:

Since, as you acknowledge, (Shakespeare's) contemporaries knew him "as preeminent, a nonpareil," it is inconceivable that there would have been such thunderous silence [at his death] unless there had been and still was an intentional, concerted and enforced concealment during his lifetime.

The Professor replied:

As you know, I don't claim that 'Stratfordians' can solve all the puzzles. The silence that followed William Shakespeare's death in 1616 is puzzling, but perhaps can be explained as follows. (1) He had retired from the literary scene, and was living in seclusion [?] at some distance from London in 1616. (2) When other writers heard of his death, one would expect them to take note of it. But just at this time Jonson's *Works* were published (in 1616); there must have been talk of a similar 'collected works' volume for Shakespeare, which was published "at last" (L. Digges) in 1623, after negotiations that dragged out over several years. So I assume that writers of "tributes to Shakespeare" were told to hold on - their verses could be printed in the Folio. No one, I suppose, imagined that the Folio would take another seven years to produce.

The puzzle-enforced pretexts of Stratfordians are occasionally ridiculous.

NOTICES

* The Annual Dinner (\$30.00) in celebration of Edward deVere's birthday will be held on the evening of Friday, April 26, 1991 at the Harvard Faculty Club in Cambridge, Mass. Charles Vere, Earl of Burford will be the speaker. Shake-speare's *Twelfth Night* with words and music by Edward deVere and directed by Charles Boyle will be performed in Lesley College, Cambridge on the night of Saturday, April 27, 1991.

* The talk by Charles Vere, Earl of Burford, at The Folger Shakespeare Library at 8 P.M. on April 24, 1991 is only open to members of The Friends of Folger Library. May I suggest, however, that anyone who wants to attend should call The Folger and inquire whether that limitation might be revised (202-544-4600).

* On February 7, 1991 the Palm Beach Chapter of The Shakespeare Oxford Society presented a 30 minute lecture on the Oxfordian allusions in *Hamlet* preceding the showing of the new Zeffirelli-directed film - *Hamlet*. It was well publicized and very successful. This coupling of the lecture with the movie is the first such experiment and will be repeated in other localities throughout the country.

* Apparently some book stores have erroneously reported that Charlton Ogburn's, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, is no longer available. It is now published by EPM Publications, 1003 Turkey Run Road, Maclean, VA., 22201, (800-389-2339): \$25.00 plus \$3.00 postage.

* The 1991 Annual Meeting of The Shakespeare Oxford Society will be held on Friday, Oct. 25 to Sunday Oct. 27 at the Brazilian Court Hotel in Palm Beach, Florida.

The conference committee is composed of Mrs. Ronald L. Davies, chairman, Ronald Davies, Mr. and Mrs.

Norman Robson, Mrs. A. Bruton Strange, Mrs. Florence Koch, Mrs. Bernard Curry, Rolf Kaltenborn, Charles Galland, and John Louthier.

Any person interested in presenting a paper at that Meeting should notify Mr. John Louthier, Chairman of the Research Committee (125 Caryl Way, Oldsmar, Fl. 34677) as soon as possible. Time allotted for each presentation will be 20 minutes with 10 minutes for questions. Each person submitting to the Committee should send a summary of no more than 100 words to Mr. Louthier, deadline July 25, 1991. If chosen, the presenter should bring a typed copy of his or her presentation at the meeting for inclusion in the Shakespeare Oxford Society Annual.

JOIN SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY AND RECEIVE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The purpose of The Shakespeare Oxford Society is to document and establish Edward de Vere, the 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 corroborating 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.

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The Shakespeare Oxford Society was founded and incorporated in 1957 in the State of New York and is chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state as a non-profit educational organization. Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The Shakespeare Oxford Society IRS number is 13,6105314. The New York tax number is: 07182



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

Morse Johnson, Editor

UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT JUSTICES AND THE SHAKESPEARE AUTHORSHIP QUESTION

On September 25, 1987 in Washington, D.C., U.S. Supreme Court Justices Brennan, Blackmun and Stevens heard a debate on the controversial authorship of the works of William Shakespeare. According to a typical and misleading headline, their decision was - "Shakespeare wrote Shakespeara". In fact, however, the Justices, with varying degrees of conviction, only held that there was no "clear and convincing evidence" conclusively proving that the famous plays were actually written by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. While the Justices did not find that Will. Shakspeare did not write those works, they also did not specifically find that he did.

"...(Justice Blackmun) said, Oxford is a more persuasive figure than any of the others who have been proposed. It was, said Blackmun, a matter for historians, rather than the courts. The case that is, is not closed." (L.A. Times).

" 'There is a lingering doubt,' (Justice Stevens) said, 'And if it was not Shakespeare who was the author, there is a high probability it was De Vere.' (L.A. Times).

On May 14, 1991, Justice Stevens mailed a copy of his talk [14 pages] at Wilkes University to Charlton Ogburn who summarized that talk under the following headline:

A Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Addresses The Shakespeare Controversy

Justice John Paul Stevens in his Max Rosenn Lecture of 30 April 1991 at Wilkes University at Wilkes-Barre, Pa., has made what will surely prove to be an historic contribution to an understanding of the authorship of "perhaps the most stimulating and exciting works in the English language," as he calls them. Entitling his talk *The Shakespeare Canon of Statutory Construction*, he states at the start: "Judge Max Rosenn is a literate and just man, learned in both the dull and fascinating aspects of the administration of justice. This school bears the name of an English politician who did not hesitate to challenge orthodox views. For these reasons, I have decided that this lecture should include a mixture of comments on two apparently unrelated subjects: first, on the unorthodox view that Edward De Vere, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, is the true author of the Shakespeare Canon and second, the utility of certain canons of statutory construction." Shakespeare's plays being divided into five acts, he divides these canons into five Acts viz.: (Act I) Read the statute; (Act II) Read the entire statute; (Act III) Read the statute in its contemporary context; (Act IV), Consult the legislative history; and (Act V), Use a little common sense.

Drawing astutely on Shakespeare's plays for illustrative passages, Mr. Justice Stevens shows how the two sides to the authorship controversy have argued their cases in the light of the five canons. The lecture is nothing less than a tour de force, a brilliant address to the jury marking a telling and irreversible step toward the achievement of "truth and justice" in the establishment of Shakespeare's identity. It is difficult to see how anyone could read it without an appreciation of the legitimacy of Oxford's candidacy for Shakespeare's honors, as the following Act IV illustrates:

Since ambiguity persists, we must turn to the fourth canon of statutory construction. If you are desperate, or even if you just believe it may shed some light on the issue, consult the legislative history.

The study of legislative history is itself a debatable and complex subject, including subtopics such as the respective importance of committee reports, debates on the floor of Congress, and the fact that a proposed bill that would have unambiguously resolved the point at issue was not enacted. It also requires an ability to discount comments manufactured by staff members to appease lobbyists who were unable to persuade legislators to conform the statutory text to their clients' interests. As Chief Justice Rehnquist observed in a dissenting opinion a few years ago:

The effort to determine congressional intent here might better be entrusted to a detective than to a judge ... While I agree with the court that the phrase 'any other final action' may not by itself be 'ambiguous,' I think that what we know of the matter makes Congress' additions to §307(b) (1) in the Clean Air Act Technical and Conforming Amendments of 1977 no less curious than was the incident in the Silver Blaze of the dog that did nothing in the nighttime.*

For present purposes, I shall confine my analysis of the Fourth Canon to the Sherlock Holmes' principle that sometimes the fact that a watchdog did not bark may provide a significant clue about the identity of a murderous intruder. The Court is sometimes skeptical about the meaning of a statute that appears to make a major change in the law when the legislative history reveals a deafening silence about any such intent.

This concern directs our attention to three items of legislative history that arguably constitute significant silence. First, where is Shakespeare's library? He must have been a voracious reader and, at least after he achieved success, could certainly have afforded to have his own library. Of course, he may have had a large library that disappeared centuries ago, but it is nevertheless of interest that there is no mention of any library, or of any books at all, in his will, and no evidence that his house in Stratford ever contained a library. Second, his son-in-law's detailed medical journals describing his treatment of numerous patients can be examined today at one of the museums in Stratford-on-Avon. Those journals contain no mention of the doctor's illustrious father-in-law. Finally--and this is the fact that is most puzzling to me although it is discounted by historians far more learned than I--is the seven-year period of silence that followed Shakespeare's death in 1616. Until the First Folio was published in 1623, there seems to have been no public comment in any part of England on the passing of the greatest literary genius in the country's history. Perhaps he did not merit a crypt in Westminster Abbey, or a eulogy penned by King James, but it does seem odd that not even a cocker spaniel or a dachshund made any noise at all when he passed from the scene.

*HARRISON V. PPG INDUSTRIES, INC., 446 U.S. 576, 595-596 (1980)

(In the next Newsletter, I will notify members of how they can secure copies of Justice Stevens' Talk.)

FOOLED BY A FOLIO

BARD THOU NEVER WERT

Joseph Sobran*

(National Review 4/29/91)

The "William Shakespeare" we know is both fact and artifact, a composition of nineteenth-century scholarship and sentiment. No serious biography of him was undertaken until nearly two hundred years after his death, when Shakespeare studies became a heavy industry, inseparable from Bardolatry.

But the biographers never really caught their men. The portrait that emerged from research was unsatisfying. Maybe it was just the skimpiness of the records, but nothing in the new data reflected a literary life or personality -- just a businessman.

Inevitably, skepticism arose. Was Will, Shakspera of Stratford-upon-Avon (hereafter referred to as Shakspeare) even the author of "Shakespeare's" plays? Was he perhaps a front man for the real author? The facts could bear that hypothesis. But then who was the real author?

Francis Bacon? That was the most popular alternative to the Stratfordian orthodoxy. But the Baconian theory was tin-eared and cranky. Sensitive skeptics, such as Henry James, Walt Whitman and Mark Twain, found Bacon and Shakspeare equally unbelievable.

The furious authorship controversy had finally died down by 1920 with the Stratfordians holding the academic high ground, when an English schoolmaster named John Thomas Looney hit upon the most plausible candidate to displace Shakspeare, for those who still cared to: Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604). More recently, Oxford's case has been upheld by Charlton Ogburn, Jr., who has propelled the long-dormant authorship question onto prime-time TV and before a panel of U.S. Supreme Court Justices. Even professional Shakespearians have begun to treat the issue with a certain respect.

The Oxfordians are still a long way from prevailing, but their fortunes have improved vastly since the nadir of 1943, when their chief spokesman, Percy Allen, went flaky on them in his old age and nearly demolished the cause for all time: he published a book transcribing his conversations with Oxford, Shakspeare and Bacon at a

*Mr. Sobran's, NR's Critic-at-Large, is a syndicated columnist

series of seances: Literati hooted.

At any rate, no other great author's claimed authorship of masterpieces has ever been seriously disputed. Nobody who knows the facts of Milton's life, for example, can doubt that he wrote *Paradise Lost*. But Shakspeare is a wreith. The name "Shakespeare" appears on some early quarto editions of the plays and poems, and the great Folio of 1623 testifies to Shakspeare's authorship. But what if there were deliberate deceptions? The works bearing that name lack the internal evidence of the little personal touches, details, and associations that usually connect an author with his work, whether or not he is conscious of them.

Shakspeare's life, as conventionally told, is full of strange silences at nearly every point when we would expect to hear from him. He never replies to public attacks and needlings. He never acknowledges public praise or reciprocates it. He writes no eulogies for Spenser, Queen Elizabeth, Prince Henry, or other distinguished contemporaries who pre-decease him. He apparently doesn't complain when his plays are pirated, or even when his name is put on published plays he obviously didn't write. He doesn't write the dedication to his own Sonnets; someone else supplies the prefatory epistle to *Troilus and Cressida*. He vanishes from the London records for eight years after 1604, when he should have been at the height of his fame in the city. No friend, acquaintance, or hanger-on has recorded a single bon mot remark, or opinion from his lips, not even in the First Folio, where he seems to be remembered fondly. (Legends of his roistering with Ben Jonson at the Mermaid arose much later.) Outside his published works, he says nothing; and his taciturnity is strongly at odds with the impression the works themselves leave, of a ready wit and irrepressibly generous eloquence.

Even stranger is London's silence at his death. Only a month earlier, young Francis Beaumont had died, receiving the tribute of verses by his fellow poets and burial in Westminster Abbey. Yet when Shakspeare died in April 1616 there is not one syllable of recorded reaction.

Why not? "Shakespeare's" plays were performed constantly; his name was commercially valuable; seven years later his collected works would be published in a volume of unprecedented opulence, with panegyrics likening him to Aeschylus and Sophocles. If Shakespeare was known to be the real author of the works bearing his name, it's unthinkable that his death should fail to occasion an outpouring of praise and grief. Instead - no mention.

Conventional scholarship has tried to ignore such puzzles. Shakspeare "biographies" parlay a handful of business and legal records into four-hundred-page guesses, straining to connect his life with the plays and poems. They always founder on the profound inconsistency between the voluble genius we encounter in the works and the tight-lipped burgher we find in the records. The two can't be unified.

And Oxford? A renowned courtier, athlete, poet, playwright, and patron. No plays have survived with his name on them, but Francis Meres (1598) lists him "among the best for comedy," and George Puttenham (1589) tells us Oxford would have been even more famous if he had written under his own name.

Oxford's path crosses "Shakespeare's" in numerous ways. Dozens of incidents in the plays seem to echo incidents in his turbulent life: the Gad's Hill robbery, the Montague-Capulet feud, the stabbing of Polonius, incarcerations in the Tower of London, Timon's bankruptcy, Hamlet's capture by pirates in the Channel, and many others.

As a young man, Oxford visited Europe for over a year, spending much of his time in Venice and other northern Italian cities where so many of the plays are set. This could explain "Shakespeare's" seeming familiarity with actual sites in Venice. The name of Kate the Shrew's father, Baptista Minola, seems to conflate the names of two Italians Oxford did business with, Baptista Nigrone and Pasquino Spinola. Contrary to many a footnote to *The Winter's Tale*, the painter Giulio Romano was a sculptor as well; Oxford would be more likely to know this than Shakspeare.

It's common knowledge that "Shakespeare" drew heavily on the classical and Biblical translations of Arthur Golding. As it happens, Golding was the uncle and tutor of the precocious boy Edward de Vere and dedicated a book to him. The great Lord Burghley, Oxford's father-in-law, strikingly resembles Polonius in his inveterate scheming, spying and garrulous moralizing. The early Sonnets urging the young men to marry are usually thought to have been addressed to the Earl of Southampton: at the probable time of their composition, the early 1590s, there was a proposal on foot that Southampton should marry Oxford's daughter Elizabeth - a match he backed out of. The Folio is dedicated to the Herbert brothers, the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, both close friends of Oxford; Montgomery was Oxford's son-in-law. Oxford also wrote prefaces to two books whose influence is visible in *Hamlet*, Castiglione's *The Courtier* and Thomas Bedingfield's translation of *Cardanus Comfort*. At the very least, there seems to be some mysterious link between Oxford and "Shakespeare."

Consider the Sonnets. Shakspeare biographers have never been able to integrate them convincingly into Shakspeare's life; they never seem to touch the known facts. But they make much more sense as a guarded revelation of Oxford's life. The sonneteer continually refers to his age, lameness, lost friends, and impending death; he jokes that he lies to his mistress about his age. Shakspeare would have been, by conventional dating, about thirty; Oxford was 14 years older. The latest of the Sonnets is usually assigned to 1603, the year before Oxford's death. And why were the Sonnets published (in 1609) with an obscure dedication, not by the poet, but by the publisher, who seems to take it upon himself to dedicate the book on the poet's behalf? And why is the poet referred to as "ever-living" - the sort of phrase you use of a man who is already dead? Shakspeare was 45 and going strong, by all indications; Oxford had been dead for five years. (A 1607 tribute to "Shakespeare," by one William Barkstead, speaks of him in the past tense: "His song was worthy merit." It's also interesting that the so-called "apocryphal" plays bearing "Shakespeare's name" - *The Puritan*, *The London Prodigal*, and others - began appearing the year after Oxford died.)

The preface to the 1609 quarto of *Troilus and Cressida* is similarly coy and cryptic. The playwright is referred to only as "this author" (though the name "William Shakespeare" appears on the title page), and the reader is advised that "when he is gone, and his comedies out of sale, you will scramble for them" - In other words, buy them now, while you can. Again, why didn't "this author" speak for himself? Why all the mystery about this supposedly active playwright of the public theater? It seems a little presumptuous to speak of a 45-year-old man as soon to be "gone"! (I speak as a 45-year-old man.)

Conventional scholarship has never been able to answer these questions. Assume that "Shakespeare" was really Oxford, though, and it all makes sense: a dead author's identity, perhaps known to the cognoscenti but publicly unmentionable, is being dealt with delicately without being quite acknowledged.

A few difficulties remain:

- *Why should Oxford's identity have to be concealed, even years after his death?* It would have been scandalous for a great lord to be involved in the public theater. The scandal would presumably have disturbed his family (especially his powerful in-laws) more than Oxford himself.

- *Doesn't the date of *The Tempest* (which seems to echo an account of a 1609 shipwreck in Bermuda) rule out Oxford's authorship?* We don't know when *The Tempest* was written but it could as easily recall a 1595 shipwreck in Bermuda, involving a fleet in which Oxford had once owned an interest.

- *Doesn't Robert Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit* (1592) contain a personal attack on "Shakespeare," the "Upstart crow"?* If so, the attack could allude to either Shakspeare of Stratford or "Shakespeare" the playwright (whose name never appeared on a published play, by the way, until 1598). But the very obliqueness of the attack should caution us against accepting the simple conventional interpretation. There is a mystery here, as there is everywhere we expect to hear from "Shakespeare" in his own person.

- *Were Ben Jonson and the others lying in their *Folio*?* They were sustaining a necessary fiction. Even at that, much of what they said is evasive or demonstrably untrue. "Shakespeare" is praised only as a writer, we learn next to nothing of him as a man.

Prick Up Your Ears

Another order of evidence can be found in Oxford's surviving letters. William Plumer Fowler has made a remarkable compilation of parallels of phrase between "Shakespeare" and Oxford.

[Space limitation compelled the editor to delete 14 samples of William Plumer Fowler's remarkable compilation of parallels of phrase between "Shakespeare" and Oxford.]

The ear that is intimate with "Shakespeare" may prick up at familiar tricks of phrase, syntax, and metaphor in other Oxfordisms: "Yet am I as one who has long besieged a fort, and not able to compass the end or reap the fruit of his travail ... having passed the pikes of so many adversaries ... knit in alliance ... feir conditioned ... to take advantage of any prosperous gale, or with anchor to ride till the storm be overpast ... most earnestly to crave both your opinion and counsel ... their nearer consanguinity ... perverse and impudent dealing ... inclined and effected to me ... employed for the better achieving ... to bear and support them with patience ... salve so great an inconvenience ... the best expectation of my tedious suit ... to illuster yourself with the ornaments of virtue ... otherwise affaired with the business of the commonwealth ... intercepted by these unlooked-for troubles ... being thus disfurnished and unprovided ..."

Even so short a list offers telling and distinctive subtleties: the reedy imagery (often military or maritime), the free coinages, the interchanging of parts of speech, the fondness for the gerund, the exuberant

redundancies, the moral themes and attitudes, the rhythms, the intensifiers, the energetic variety, the sheer authority of expression. This isn't the voice of Spenser, or Marlowe, or Jonson, or Generic Elizabethan. It's the voice of "Shakespeare."

All this is likely to be very upsetting to anyone who cherishes "Shakespeare." For to love "Shakespeare" is to have formed a certain mental image of the author: the genius of modest origins, the man of Stratford whose second-best bed is as much a part of his lore as "Friends, Romans, countrymen" - a dear democratic myth, really. And to be told that "he" was really some nobleman - one of the "wolfish eels," as Whitman shrewdly suspected, the spirit of whose works is "non-acceptable to democracy" - well, really! But there it is, confirmed from every angle.

How is it, we may ask, that the elusively omniscient genius of classroom legend, this nobody/Everyman of allegedly "universal sympathies," should view life so constantly from the angle of the ruling class of his day? If he's the Stratfordian commoner, it's certainly odd that nearly all of his common characters are one-dimensional buffoons, viewed with kindly humor but no deep interest. His kings and lords, on the other hand, are highly individuated.

No Traitor to His Class

If we see things aright, we realize that Oxford subtly reveals himself in these plays by assuming the perspective of his class. After all, you tend to see members of your own class as individuals, and those of other classes primarily as types. Those Marxist critics who accuse "Shakespeare" of being a reactionary bourgeois don't know the half of it. The real "Shakespeare" displays an unwaveringly feudal conservatism that makes Russell Kirk look like Robespierre. If the common people amuse him as individuals, they horrify him as a mob. But by no means does he hate them; he simply doesn't feel that strongly about them.

Consider Dogberry, the officious malaprop-prone magistrate whose blundering catches the villains in *Much Ado*. Oxford - "Shakespeare" views this fool indulgently, as a harmless prop of social order. Contrast Mr. Bumble - exactly the same social type, except that Dickens hates him. The difference is that Dickens had been at his mercy, and knew what a maddening petty tyrant he could be; an experience Oxford's high birth had spared him.

For some reason, Oxford seems to have withdrawn from Elizabeth's court, where he had known both glory and disgrace, and spent his later years happily slumming in the popular theater. His plays are full of lords who leave the court, either to adopt a simpler life or to assume humble disguises. And it was in the theater that Oxford obscured his own lordship, and achieved his majesty.

THE CARDIFF GIANT, SHAKESPEARE AND "MODERN SCHOLARSHIP"

by

Richard C. Horne, Jr.

(One-time President of the Shakespeare Oxford Society)

Ever since 1623, when the First Folio of Shakespeare's Plays was published, with rather ambiguous and equivocal implications in the prefatory poems and introduction, that the Author had a Stratford Monument, which Time would dissolve, and a reference to him as Swen of Avon by Ben Jonson, in his eloquent tribute to my Beloved, The Author, the impression was created, and, I think, intentionally so, in the minds of some of the public, that the Poet to whom all scenes of Europe homage owe, and the Stratford householder, with a similar, though not identical name, were one and the same. This impression after many years ripened into an assumption, and later crystallized, or petrified, into a belief, a dogma, an article of faith, a quasi-religion with its own priest-hood and hierarchy, who style themselves Literary Critics or Shakespearean Authorities. They have an unshakable conviction of their own infallibility and omniscience on the subject of authorship, and not only regard, but proclaim in their writings, others who doubt the soundness of their revelation, as not only fools and knaves, but mentally unstable to the point of certifiable insanity.

I suggest that the allusions, ambiguities, and equivocations in the First Folio in 1623, laid the foundations for a gigantic hoax which, though its perpetrators could have hardly expected it to last for centuries, has done so, though it has no more validity than the Piltdown Man, the Cardiff Giant, or the Kensington Stone. People having been once taken in by a hoax, seem to respond to non-believers or would-be exposers in the same way, whether it be now, or fifty, or a hundred years ago.

In the interest of brevity I am going to presuppose some of you know something of the Cardiff Giant Hoax

in 1869-70. Dr. Andrew White, the first president of Cornell University, and later Minister to Russia, and Ambassador to Germany, pronounced it a clumsy fake the first time he saw it. Later, a friend surreptitiously chipped off a small fragment and gave it to White, who analyzed it and found it to be gypsum. No one would listen to him, and he tells of this in "The Cardiff Giant: A Chapter in the History of Human Folly" in his *Autobiography* (The Century Co., 1904), from which I have taken a few excerpts:

"Therefore it was that, in spite of all scientific reasons to the contrary, the work was very generally accepted as a petrified human being of colossal size, and became known as the Cardiff Giant ... The current of belief ran more and more strongly, and soon embraced a large number of really thoughtful people ... At no period of my life have I ever been more discouraged as regards the possibility of making right reason prevail among men. As a refrain to every argument there seemed to go jeering and sneering through my brain Schiller's famous line: 'Against stupidity the gods themselves fight in vain.' ... There seemed no possibility even of *suspending* the judgment of this great majority who saw the statue. As a rule, they insisted upon believing it a 'petrified giant', and those who did not, dwelt upon its perfections as an ancient statue ... There was evidently 'a joy in believing' in the marvel, and this was increased by the peculiarly American superstition that the correctness of a belief is decided by the number of people who can be induced to adopt — that truth is a matter of majorities. The current of credulity seemed irresistible ... Proofs of this swindle began to mature. But skepticism was not well received. Vested interests had accrued. A considerable number of people, most of them very good people, had taken stock in the new enterprise, and anything which discredited it was unwelcome to them. It was not at all that these excellent people wished to countenance an imposture, but it had become so entwined with their beliefs and their interests that at last they came to abhor any doubts regarding it. Against this tide of truth, the good people who had pinned their faith in the statue — those who had vested interests in it, and those who had resolutely given solemn opinions in favor of it — struggled for a time desperately. A writer in the *Syracuse Journal* expressed a sort of regretful wonder and shame that 'the public are asked to overthrow the sworn testimony of sustained witnesses corroborated by the highest scientific authority' — the only sworn witness being Farmer Newell, whose testimony was not at all conclusive, and the highest scientific authority being an eminent local dentist who, early in life, had given popular chemical lectures, and who had now invested money in the enterprise."

Recent orthodox writers who seem to labor under an irresistible compulsion to defend the Stratford Attribution at all costs, and at all times, despite the results of discoveries and investigations in the past fifty years, are all prone to tell each other and the groundlings, that *Modern Scholarship* shows thus and so, and that's an end to it. Just how "modern" is this scholarship which has revealed so much comfort to, and strengthened the faith of, its devotees and disciples, who are troubled by the inroads of the Anti-Stratfordian Heretics? Even a casual scrutiny or dissection of these books, which the schools, colleges and libraries stack on their shelves in ever increasing numbers, shows that they turn out to be nothing more or less than quotes or paraphrases from Mr. J. M. Robertson's "The Baconian Heresy Refuted" (1913); a tome of 660 pages.

Editor's Addendum

In his *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford University Press, N.Y. - 1970) Dr. S. Schoenbaum pontificated (p. 561): In the ripeness of time other, more elaborate, assaults upon the infidels would be attempted by the orthodox; J. M. Robertson's massive *Baconian Heresy* (1913), for example. They would all prove unavailing, for the flimsy structures of the anti-Stratfordian arguments rest on granitic foundations of an *idée fixe*, and with obsession there is no quarreling. The heretics have all along sought not dialogue but converts.

THE LOST CHRONICLE OF EDWARD DE VERE

by

Andrew Field

(Penguin Books, Ltd., £13.99)

In considering fiction based on historical documentation, the first critical question to be asked is: does it persuade without deforming the record unreasonably? In the case of *The Lost Chronicle of Edward de Vere* one has to accept the fact that Andrew Field was so presumptuous as to write in the first person as Shakespeare himself. If that pretense can be accepted by an indulgent reader, the accuracy of the history presents no problem. It is sound enough — more plausible, certainly, than the Stratford legend. As George

Greenwood noted long ago: "Is not every life of [the traditional] Shakespeare for the most part built upon hypotheses, and rather a work of imagination than a true biography?" Field's book, while a work of the imagination, derives its inspiration from a credible biographical and historical foundation.

The second question concerns style. While Field's prose is scarcely Elizabethan, it does convey an authentic flavor of the times, translated for contemporary readers unfamiliar with the complex structures of Elizabethan writing. So whether or not the author gets constructions and punctuation authentically placed or recounts Oxford's life in just the way each reader might prefer, his book should be counted a modest success on both these counts.

There is, however, a basic question involved in such an enterprise which may have no final answer. Would Oxfordians rather have this tale to be recounted candidly as a fictional reconstruction, or presented as history with the conjectures - "it seems," "perhaps," "could have been" - knitting the unknown to the known and leaving the digestion of them to the reader's credulity? Oxfordians find both methods distasteful in Stratfordian writing. The honest and forthright presentation one finds in Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* is rare indeed.

At the beginning of the *Chronicle* the Earl of Oxford is suffering from the plague and hoping he has a "pestilential minor" form of which will permit him time and life enough to complete his memoir. The frank insights into his problems are often more rueful than tragic, and his recounting of the other people who messed up his life comes across as fate as well as bitter memory. A believable personality does emerge from the reminiscence. The extravagant tales - his father's encounter with the French boer, the stuffed whale at Gray's Inn Revels, travel accounts from his year on the continent, and the disastrous theatrical mock-battle at Warwick castle - all carry the conviction of the author's knowledge of the period, and summaries of national and international politics of the time, as they affected the Earl, give the wider background.

Some of the colorful imaginative descriptions such as Burghley's catching Edward in amorous play with young Anne and the Queen calling Philip Sidney by the pet name, "puppy", supplement the documented facts with the ticklish conjectures which ring true to the spirit of Oxford's life as we understand it.

Often-told tales, if they are good ones, have their place. The *Chronicle* may be a rather outrageous undertaking - but this reader really enjoyed it.

Isabel Holden

VERO NIHIL VERIUS

O, every word always revealed your name,
The very fairest verities that time averred.
And yet a witless bumpkin claimed your fame,
While you in your own virtue were interred.
Once ranked the highest of all titled ones,
In eyes that hued a multi-levelled mind;
Of princes and of passions and of sons,
You sung in authored works ones left unsigned.
Now handed down through our destructive days,
To critics with their automatic pens,
To overprivileged academic joys,
Conditioned, static, stupid, frightened men.
But this is ever veritably true:
No one could be a greater truth than you.

Sam Cherubin

In a letter (5-21-91) to Charlton Ogburn, Oxfordian Professor Louis J. Halle (Ecole de Hautes Etudes) quoted the following from *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1970) by Thomas S. Kuhn:

Copernicanism made few converts for almost a century after Copernicus' death. Newton's work was not

generally accepted, particularly on the Continent, for more than half of century after the *Principia* appeared. Priestley never accepted the oxygen theory, nor Lord Kelvin the electromagnetic theory, and so on. The difficulties of conversion have often been noted by scientists themselves. Darwin, in a particularly perceptive passage at the end of his *Origin of Species*, wrote: 'Although I am fully convinced of the truth of the views given in this volume..., I by no means expect to convince experienced naturalists whose minds are stocked with a multitude of facts all viewed, during a long course of years, from a point of view directly opposite to mine...[B]ut I look with confidence to the future, - to young and rising naturalists, who will be able to view both sides of the question with impartiality.' And Max Planck, surveying his own career in the *Scientific Autobiography*, sadly remarked that 'a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.'

To the Editor

March 20, 1991

While the Society newsletters have always been enjoyable and interesting, the most recent (Winter, 1991) was a remarkable insight into academia and wherever else dogma involves a personal interest.

I have only been a member of this excellent organization for a year or so, although my interest was first sparked when the Journal of the American Bar Association, first published a series of articles in 1959 and 1960 exploring the authorship question - supposedly - under the legal rules of evidence. Of course, it was Charlton Ogburn's book that started what is now - in slow motion - the collapse of a house of cards. The record of this is the stuff of good drama in itself and I hope some gifted writer makes the effort.

Thank you for your very high quality publication.

Sincerely,
Warren W. Wyneken

NOTE: The ABA articles were published in book form and I procured several copies, contributing them to the library of a nearby university. There was no response which I attributed to oversight. About 15 years later, I visited the university library. Examining the shelves and card catalogue, I found nothing. Your guess is probably the same as mine as to the fate of those books.

WWW

Jon Benson Jr. interviews Professor Cavaliero Academico

(Editor's Note: Our reporter-at-large, Jon Benson, Jr., recently spoke to Cavaliero Academico, a noted Shakespearean scholar, in his home in the Texas Panhandle, on the subject of his recent conversion to Oxfordianism.)

Benson: Dr. Cavaliero, its been rumored that you and some of your colleagues at the University of Texas have been getting a bit soft recently on the subject of who Shakespeare was, even spreading wild rumors that the whole Stratford story is a joke which, while it's funny, has gone just a bit too far. perhaps you could explain to our readers why you have gone from calling Mr. Ogburn a "raving lunatic", to praising his work as the greatest detective story in the history of western literature, all in the last six months.

Academico: Well Ben, I guess you'd just call it common sense. We here in Texas have never hankered much after the Ivy League. We like our heroes trimmed down to size — with human faults and aspirations. We are what we are and the Earl of Oxford was who he was — a regular fella who was just a mite too big for his aristocratic britches.

Benson: Are you making a literary allusion to the fact that the Earl of Oxford claimed to be Yahweh in his letter to William Cecil?

Academico: What? I hadn't heard that. Arrogant guy, wasn't he? No, I just mean all those stupid jokes in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, made at the expense of Dr. Caus, the Windsor court physician who nursed Edward

through his adolescent illnesses and then got thanked with lines like: "Vere is dat knave Rugby?"
Benson: You don't believe that Shakspere just made that up? A joke, sort of?

Academico: As I said, in Texas we know what an Armadillo tastes like. I told my students things like that for thirty years, and then one day one of them raised his hand in class and said: "Why are there over 270 references to letters in Shakespeare's plays but not a single extant letter written by the man?"

"Gosh," I said, "circumstances?"

"What about the Earl of Oxford?" he asked.

"Ya," I said, "Looney thought it was him. Battey thought it was Bacon. Ha he."

Academico: Well, I laughed about it then — but you know it really got me started thinking. I'm not too old to learn some new tricks. Why, then Samuel Schoenbaum started saying that there are all kinds of reasons why the poems and plays ascribed to Shakespeare could have been written by more than one person. Gosh, I thought, if Schoenbaum is waffling, Charles Vere is speaking at the Folger, the game must really be up. I mean, it may take another fifty years or so, but as Bob Dylan says, "something is happening here, and you don't know what it is, do you, Dr. Jones?" So...I started studying the Shakespeare allusion books. I don't want to say too much about this now, since I'm preparing an article for publication on this subject. But let me tell you something, Mr. Ben-son, it was an eye-opener.

Benson: For instance?

Academico: Well, for instance *Return from Parnassus*: "Sweet Mr. Shakespeare — I keep his study in my picture et the court!" Well, if Mr. Shakespeare was so sweet all the time, how did he go about writing his *Hamlet* — or *Lear*, for instance? And if his portreit was so popular among his contemporaries, why does the picture in the First Folio look like a harlequin with a head floating six inches from the top of his shoulders, a pastiche pair of crosswired eyes, and a doublet seen in the parallax of a rear view mirror of a speeding Chevy Nova?

Even the Stratfordians have started to realize that something is amiss in the artistic conventions of the First Folio. According to Leah Marcus — though she's a bit shy about admitting it, and squirrels it away in a footnote, Droeshout really messed up on the First Folio portrait. According to Marcus, Droeshout was conspiring with Shakespeare's "complicity in the humanist enterprise" — just to put future readers off the scent of his track and make him universal — no author at all. "Look not on this picture, but this book," and all that Jonson stuff. Sometimes I think academic scholars don't know who is wagging the tail on the dog they're talking about.

Benson: He put a seacoast on Bohemia!

Academico: Ya, and he wanted art! — proof that he just sat by the banks of the Avon river dangling his feet in the river while he absorbed the wild wood notes of warbling aviens, as Milton said.

Benson: Isn't Milton a sound authority?

Academico: Oh, the best, the choicest one of all. My books say that he was the first one to realize just how native our author was. Being a God-fearing man Milton was, of course, incapable of irony.

Benson: Isn't Oxfordianism just a secular religion which relies on circumstantial evidence to support preposterous conjectures which can't ever be proven?

Academico: Proof is not the issue; the issue is whether one expects an intelligible relation between an author — insofar as his life can be biographically ascertained outside of his literary corpus — and his writing. If one compares the Stratford to the Oxfordian theory from the assumption that such a relationship should exist, there is no contest in deciding which story possesses a greater claim to authenticity. The Stratfordian story relies on the iconographic representations of an official state-religion — the monument at Stratford, and the First Folio

— construed in the most literal sense, to support an account which is otherwise devoid of psychological and historical plausibility. By contrast, there is a unity in the Oxfordian proofs which transcends these institutional monuments, pointing to a higher order of intelligibility which satisfies, point by point, the manifold objections which have been raised for over two hundred years against the Stratford theory.

Benson: If that is true, what is impeding the development of broader awareness regarding the plausibility of the Oxfordian theory?

Academico: Oh, Mr. Benson, you really are curious aren't you? Look — its true that I've had tenure for twenty-five years now, but in cases like this one, retroactive measures are mandated by the high standards of professionalism in the academic world. You're asking me to speculate on the causes of a cultural myopia which is, frankly, endemic in the English speaking world. This culture wants a petty bourgeois author who was happy all his life — born poor, died rich and in between, in his walnut shell rounded by a little sleep, he wrote just great. Just for fun, just for money, just for the sheer heck of it: a pure unadulterated English genius.

Benson: Whereas our man was known as a "diablo incarnato".

Academico: Exactly.

To the Editor

March 20, 1991

I wonder if any Oxfordian knows whether the handwriting discussed in *The Annotator* by Alan Keen and Roger Lubbock (New York: Macmillan, 1954) has ever been compared with the handwriting of Edward Vere.

The full title of the book is *The Annotator: The Pursuit of an Elizabethan Reader of Halle's Chronicle Involving some Surmises About the Early Life of William Shakespeare*. The writers claim that a great many marginal notes in the so-called "Newport copy of Halle's Chronicle" were quite possibly written by the boy Shakespeare. Keen seems not so keen on the idea, but Lubbock postulates a whole series of events with geneological tables to prove that the marginalia is exactly the kind that Shakespeare would have made in writing his early history plays. The book was owned by a Rychard Newport and dated by him (on later pages than those with annotations) 1565. (The book was printed in 1550). The annotations run to 3,600 words, "extracting the pith and pattern of Halle's history." Besides the name of Newport and the date 1565, "then the name 'Edward' (apparently an Elizabethan schoolboy or child), once in ink and once picked out with a pin." Besides 406 marginal notes with no indication of authorship, the annotator "has also drawn one pointing finger, seventeen crosses and one 'doodle,' which might represent a man's head." This seems to be a pretty good representation of Bardolph and is opposite the account of the battle of Agincourt, in which Bardolph dies.

I cannot seem to find out where this treasure now resides, and perhaps further investigation of it in the last 35 years has made it seem questionable. If it has not been discredited, some emergetic Oxfordian should try to get a zerox of the marginalia and compare the writing with De Vere's. The writers of the book make no comment as to the possible identity of the Elizabethan schoolboy who pricked out the name "Edward."

Happy scouting to all,

Winifred L. Frazer

Dear Mr. Johnson,

You cannot imagine how happy I was to find your letter along with the copy of the Society's Newsletter in my mailbox. I have already sent a check for dues to Mr. Crichton in New York.

I particularly enjoyed the article by Joseph Sobran reprinted in the Newsletter. It was another article written by Mr. Sobran several years ago that first introduced me to the authorship question, and subsequent articles by him that led me to buy Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* and William P. Fowler's *Shakespeare Revealed In Oxford's Letters*. Obviously, I owe him a great debt of gratitude.

Although he is correct in claiming that tax monies are used to underwrite the specious orthodox story, I have found my job as a public school teacher (I teach Spanish) to be an ideal position from which to undermine that nonsense. I never lose an opportunity to talk about Oxford with my students and colleagues,

especially those who teach English. Photocopies of an article about the true Shakespeare given to only two or three other teachers seem eventually to find their way into the hands of every faculty member. I have even had articles I started circulating returned to me marked "FYI — thought you'd find this interesting, John!" The Newsletter will give me a lot more ammunition for my little campaign.

Thank you for your prompt and kind response to my inquiry.

Sincerely yours,

John Grimes

SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY

1991 ANNUAL MEETING - OCTOBER 25, 26 & 27 1991

Brazillien Court, 301 Australian Ave., Palm Beach, Fla. 33480

(Room Reservations: 800-552-0335 - Single: \$65 Double: \$89)

Friday (Oct. 25)	11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Registration	
		Board Meeting	
	12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.	Luncheon Buffet - Greetings from Dr. Peter Sammartino, Founder and President of the Palm Beach Chapter	\$15.00
	4:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Greetings from S.O.S. President Elizabeth Sears, and Board Chairman John Price	
	4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Scholar's Program (Lectures limited to 20 min. with 10 min. for Q and A's) #1, #2, and #3	
	7:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Get together on Patio (Cash bar)	
Saturday (Oct. 26th)	8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Banquet - Speaker Charles Vere, program of Elizabethan music with dancing	\$25.00
	8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet in Private Dining Room	\$10.25
	9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Annual General Meeting - Reports	
	10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Elections and Results	
	10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Scholar's Program (#4 and #5)	
	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Luncheon - Charlton Ogburn, speaker	\$21.00
	3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Scholars Program (#6, #7, and #8)	
	4:30 p.m.	Board Meeting	
	4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Free time for non board members	
	7:45 p.m.	Courtyard - Reception Buffet and a reading of John Nassivere's play (recently rewritten) "All the Queen's Men"	\$20.00
Sunday (Oct. 27)	8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	\$7.00
	9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Scholars Program (#9, #10, and #11)	
	10:30 a.m. - 12 Noon	Board Meeting	
	12:30 - 1:30 p.m.	Luncheon	\$17.00
	2 p.m. to end	A special surprise (In the hotel and without cost)	

Registration fee \$25 - payable on or before October 25, 1991

Some meals may be optional - but information must be received before October 1, 1991 (Complete information and program will be sent to all Members under separate cover.)

Total package (includes 6 meals and reception buffet plus fee) - \$140.25

Special discount price \$120.00 (for current members)

*** Bulletin ***

Any person interested in presenting a paper at this meeting should notify Mr. and Mrs. Norman Robson (736 Waterway Dr., N. Palm Beach, FL 33408). Each person submitting a presentation should send a summary of no more than 100 words by July 25, 1991. If chosen, the presenter should bring a typed copy of said to the meeting for inclusion in the Shakespeare Oxford Society Annual.

THE MAN WHO WAS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Peter Sammartino

(Advertisement N.Y. Review of Books 5/30/91)

The question of who wrote Shakespeare's plays and sonnets is probably the most baffling question of Western culture. There have been a number of important and well-written books bearing on Edward de Vere, the seventeenth earl of Oxford, as the real Shakespeare. All have been meticulously written and are, in fact, legal briefs for the Oxfordian authorship. Necessarily, they have to be very detailed. *The Man Who Was William Shakespeare* is intended as a simplified version of the argument, to serve as an introduction to the question of Oxfordian versus Stratfordian authorship.

The question of the true authorship of Shakespeare's works is the greatest detective story in all of literature. In this volume, Sammartino tells the story simply, in abbreviated form, so that the general reader can understand it. He illuminates how the myth got started, why it was necessary to create a myth, why it took hold, and why it is so difficult to dislodge it. Supporting his arguments are parallels between Oxford's life and elements in the plays, and parallels between Oxford's poetry and that attributed to Shakespeare. Readers can continue their study of the authorship issue by consulting the more detailed volumes mentioned at the end of the book. \$14.50

About the Author: Peter Sammartino received his doctorate from New York University and then studied at the University of Paris. He has received eight honorary degrees, and has been decorated by seven countries. He and his wife Sylvia founded what is now Fairleigh Dickinson University in 1942, and he served as president for twenty-five years. He has written twenty-four books.

At your Bookseller or order direct from Cornwall Books, 440 Forsgate Drive, Cranbury, N.J. 08512. Payment by check, Visa or Master Card, N.J. residents add \$1.02 tax.

JOIN SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY AND RECEIVE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The purpose of The Shakespeare Oxford Society is to document and establish Edward de Vere, the 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 corroborating 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.

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2. Submit materials for publication in the Newsletter to:
Morse Johnson
Suite #819, 105 West 4th St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

The Shakespeare Oxford Society was founded and incorporated in 1957 in the State of New York and is chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state as a non-profit educational organization. Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The Shakespeare Oxford Society IRS number is 13,6105314. The New York tax number is: 07182



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

Morse Johnson, Editor

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

REVIEWING PALLADIS TAMIA

Francis Meres (1565-1647) is an indispensable prop of "orthodox" Shakespearean theory, as the author of *Palladis Tamia* (1598), which introduced William Shakespeare to his contemporaries as the "most excellent" of playwrights, allotting to him a dozen dramas formerly known as Edward Oxenford's.¹

Some light may yet be shed upon this revisionist work by fresh consideration of Meres's life at Cambridge and in London. From Kirton, Lincolnshire, he entered Pembroke College, Cambridge, when Gabriel Harvey was a fellow in rhetoric there. Meres, 21 in 1586, was probably contemporary at Cambridge with Christopher Marlowe, then 22, and Thomas Nashe, 19; though, unlike those two, Meres was a serious divinity student. That year 1586 was when the Earl of Oxford, newly empowered to produce propaganda plays, would be expanding his atelier, a workshop of several resident playmakers. The Earl persuaded first Marlowe, and then Nashe, to join "the University Wits" in London. Young Meres stayed at his studies until he had M.A.s from both Cambridge and Oxford Universities. A decade later, Meres was living in Botoiph Lane, London, when one of his sermon's was printed: *God's Arithmetic* (1597).

In the last quarter of 1598, *Palladis Tamia* appeared, with Meres's name as author. In the same year, three other books were published which were also credited to him. Unlike *Palladis Tamia*, Meres's other titles reflected his career interest, in religion. They were all translations from Spanish works by a Catholic mystic, Luis de Granada, adapted for Protestant use: *Granadas devotion* (1598), *The Sinners Guyde* (1598), and *Granadas Spirituall and heavenlie exercises* (1598).² That Meres was able to shepherd the touchy Granada volumes through the press without arousing opposition suggests that someone had arranged for clearance in advance from the Archbishop of Canterbury's office.

Following Meres's outburst of publication, his name is not seen again on a title page. Granada would surface later, however, when Thomas Lodge, after his conversion, had *The flowers of Lodowicke of Granado* (1601).³ Francis Meres by 1602 was rector of the country parish of Wing in Rutland (then in the diocese of Peterborough) where he had a school.⁴ His 82-year life, except for the Cambridge and London years in his youth, seems to have been spent unremarkably, in the Northern Midlands.

Palladis Tamia was the second of three volumes in a series called *Wit's Commonwealth*, which was conceived and published by Nicholas Ling, a literary man of London, a bookseller since 1579. Ling designed the series as a set of "commonplace books" popular at the time, made up of quotables from classics and similar gleanings. Ling's first volume, *Politeuphonia*, was printed in October 1597, "compiled by Mr. John Bodenham." A third in the series came out in 1599: *The Theater of the Little World*, compiled by Robert Allott and dedicated to *Politeuphonia*'s Mr. Bodenham.⁵

Palladis Tamia, *Wit's Treasury*, *Being the Second Part of Wits Commonwealth* was entered on the Stationers' Register September 7 1598. Some 700 pages, it is "a volume of anecdotes, similes, and sayings." In 1634 it would be reprinted as a schoolbook, thus fixing Meres and William Shakespeare in the minds of future generations of English schoolboys. The title page of the textbook sanctioned its contents: "A Treasury of Divine, Moral, and Philosophical Similes and Sentences, Generally Useful."

The book's one famous chapter attempts a comprehensive survey of English poets as compared with classic authors, a chapter so unique amidst the rest, so exceptional an interruption of Nicholas Ling's ready made lists of similes and saws, that it has long invited speculation that it may not be the work of either Meres or Ling. The standout chapter's brief embellishments about contemporaries, especially playwrights, almost constituting personal messages, tempt attention toward Edward Oxenford. The text of this singular chapter exhibits so much knowledgeability, and such enthusiastic immersion in the playmakers' trade, as

would hardly be likely from a self-respecting and ambitious young clergyman.

Meres's by-line, however, with the M.A.s from the two Universities, served the turn. Perhaps his Granada project was some compensation for the camouflage his name provided.

Examples may be culled from *Palladis Tamia* suggesting the voice of the master of the atelier: -- intimate, chaffing words to Thomas Nashe about his *Isle of Dogs*, -- comments on Michael Drayton's upright virtue "almost miraculous among good wits," -- the casual insider mention of Anthony Munday as "our best plotter," -- a note George Peele died lately, "by the pox," -- and news that Shakespeare's unpublished sonnets were in circulation "among his private friends," -- finally, outrage at Gabriel Harvey's 1593 defamation of the deceased Robert Greene, despite the Archbishop of Canterbury's extant warning that the subject had already been too fully aired.⁶

The name of the Earl of Oxford is mentioned once, first in a long list of "the best for Comedy amongst us" including well-known writers from Oxford's workshop. It is a generous, almost indiscriminate outpouring, in which all friends are saluted, as it were. But the recurrent purpose is to establish the name of William Shakespeare as the superb exemplar of every kind of poetic drama. It constitutes the Earl of Oxford's public renunciation of contemporary literary reputation, bestowing it *in toto* upon Will, Oxford's longtime *factotum*.

Oxford named as "the best for comedy" by the writer who is introducing Shakespeare as the best for everything has caused real confusion. When *Palladis Tamia* appeared, Shakespeare, 34, was known only as the purported author of two recent poems, *Adonis* and *Lucrece*. But Oxford, 48, had been famous for 20 years or more as a provider of Court theatricals, which were also shown in public theaters. Most literate Elizabethans would understand that here at last the Earl of Oxford had authorized a public announcement of his pseudonym.

The 12 plays given to Shakespeare were selected from three dozen or more then extant. From *Palladis Tamia*:

"As the soule of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras: so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous & hony-tongued Shakespeare . . .

As Plautus and Seneca are counted the best for Comedy & Tragedy among the Latines: so Shakespeare among ye English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for Comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Loves labors lost*, his *Love labours wonne*, his *Midsummers night dream* & his *Merchant of Venice*; for Tragedy his *Richard the 2*, *Richard the 3*, *Henry the 4*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus* & his *Romeo and Juliet*.

As Epius Stolo said, that the Muses would speake with Plautus tongue if they would speak Latin: so I say that the Muses would speak with Shakespeare's fine filed phrase, if they would speake English . . ."

All those plays were 15 or 20 years old; five had appeared in quarto in the past year: four tragedies and a comedy. Some would be kept in an "update before using" reservoir, Oxford working on them as long as he lived. Then in 1623 in the First Folio, all 36 plays of the Shakespeare canon would be released at once.

Palladis Tamia, licensed nine days after Lord Burghley's funeral, accomplished the old Counsellor's longstanding purpose, forcing Oxford into oblivion behind an alias. The poet had been too proud and too secure in royal favor to be coerced. When he took the final step, it was in fealty to Queen Elizabeth, lest her shining legend take some tarnish from his hand. Too much of his eventful Court career could be construed from the popular plays and poems, but no such threat was posed by a common gentleman with no access to the Royal Court, whose fame did not arise until the last decade of the Queen's long reign. At length, the transmuting effect on the works of Shakespeare was that they would be understood as entirely fictional, thereby submerging, until now, scores of pithy "abstracts and brief chronicles" of Elizabethan time.

Accordingly, some plays that betray the most (e.g. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Love's Labour's Won*, later called *All's Well that Ends Well*), are among the first to be foisted on the willing stand-in. He, by 1597, was spending much time in Stratford, refurbishing his manorial New Place.

The burden borne by Oxford's alias was in part familial and societal, but in the end his sacred honor must have been at stake: in 1588 during the Queen's arbitration of Burghley's campaign to silence Oxford,

the Earl would have had to swear to Burghley, in her presence, that he would renounce his noble name in favor of an alias. The evidence that he had loved the Queen was clear enough, through *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, the long poems and the sonnets, and in more plays than Burghley knew or understood. All that would be depersonalized by the alias, and leave intact the legend of the Virgin Queen.⁸

The title *Palladis Tamia* bears consideration. The earliest classic meaning of *palladium*, the basic Latin word, is a proper name, "the Palladium" given to a sacred statue of Pallas Athena, believed by the Trojans to have been cast to earth from heaven when their city was being founded. The ancient wooden relic was ceremonially preserved at Troy in the belief that the city could not fall as long as the statue was kept safe. It was stolen, by Ulysses and Diomedes, during the Trojan War, and smuggled off to Greece. At last account, it was in the Temple of Vesta at Rome.⁹

So the famous title bespeaks Pallas Athena, whose attribute, "the spear-shaker," gave the Earl of Oxford his pseudonym. It may be he saw his role as a kind of guardian icon, having advised the keepers of the citadel for 20 years with his plays, most of them subtly addressed to the Queen. But Burghley and his son saw him as a dangerous clown, who desecrated their holy place of business, that Vestal temple, the Court.

The idea of London as *Troynovant* (the new Troy) was a favorite of poets and classicists in Tudor times.¹⁰ Indeed, the book materializes an icon, the dramatist Shakespeare--out of the blue--just as the original came to Troy. Homer's Troy lasted 400 years; soon the book will be as old.

-Adapted from *Shakespeare's Double Image*
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NOTES:

1. Clark, Eva Turner, *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (1931) ed. & annot. by Ruth Loyd Miller (1975) Dating Oxford's early Court Revels.
2. Bennett, H.S. *English Books & Readers 1599 to 1603* (1965) p 135 has titles of 3 Granada works adapted by Francis Meres to conform to usage, all printed 1598. (Bennett cites Pollard & Redgrave *Short-title Catalogue of Books printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland 1475-1640*. Oxford 1964).
3. Bennett op. cit. p 135.
4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1949 "Meres, Francis," "Rutland."
5. Lee, Sidney. *Life of William Shakespeare* (1898) 1916 edn. p 360, n.2.
6. The Greene affair was a subject in Marprelate pamphlets by Harvey and Nashe; all the works of both were interdicted in 1599 by Canterbury.
7. Schoenbaum, S. *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*. Facsimile p 140.
8. The legend of the Virgin Queen was politically useful throughout the reign, as contrasted with Mary Stuart's reputation, in marriage plans, etc. Devotion to the Virgin Queen subtly filled a niche left vacant by the Old Religion's most beloved Saint, the Virgin Mary. See Yates, *Astraea* (1975).
9. White, John T. *Latin-English Dictionary* (1866) 1912 edit. "palladium." Ogburn, Charlton. *The Mysterious Wm. Shakespeare*. Definitive: alias, p 97.
10. Manley, Lawrence. *London in the Age of Shakespeare* (1986) p 242.

Jean Shepherd's *PALLADIS TAMIA* "disintegrated" Robert Giroux

Dear Mr. Giroux:

March 15, 1991

You will find on pp. 5-6 of the enclosed [Newsletter Volume 27, No.1] a reproduction of my correspondence with the New York Times relating to your review in the Times [12/9/84] of Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*.

Limitation of space required me to delete the following:

From your review of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*:

"... if Oxford's nobility was a 'must' in order to write of kingly matters, how does one account for

lowlife and earthy types like Doll Tearsheet, Juliet's nurse, Dogberry, Mistress Quickly, the Gravedigger, the Gate Porter, Costard, Bottom the Weaver, Caliban and so on and on."

From *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*:

Quoting Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper (p. 255):

"The independent, sub-noble world of artisans and craftsmen, if it exists for Shakespeare, exists only as his butt. Bottom, Quince, Snug, Dogberry and Verges--these poor imbeciles are used only to amuse the nobility by their clumsiness. Even the middle classes are scarcely better treated."

Quoting Walt Whitman (p. 255):

"(Shakespeare's) low characters, mechanics, even the loyal henchmen--all in themselves nothing--serve as capital foils to the aristocracy. The comedies (exquisite as they certainly are) bringing in admirably portray'd common characters, have the unmistakable hue of plays, portraits, made for the divertissement only of the elite of the castle, and from its point of view."

Quoting Prince Otto von Bismarck (p.260):

"I would not understand how it were possible that a man, however gifted with intuition of genius, could have written what was attributed to Shakespeare, unless he had been in touch with the great affairs of state, behind the scenes of political life, and also intimate with all the social courtesies, and refinements of thought, which in Shakespeare's time were only met within the highest circles."

From your review of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*:

"Gabriel Harvey called Oxford 'a passing singular odd man; 'others found him spoiled, conceited, a fop and a cad.'"

From *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*:

Quoting Gabriel Harvey's address to Oxford before the Queen (pp.596-597):

"Thy merit . . . is a wonder which reaches as far as the heavenly orbs . . . Mars will obey thee, Hermes will be thy messenger, Pallas striking her shield with her spear shaft will attend thee. For a long time past Phoebus Appollo has cultivated thy mind in the arts. . . witness how greatly thou does excel in letters . . . thou has drunk deep draughts not only of the Muses of France and Italy, but has learned the manners of many men . . . and the arts of foreign countries . . . neither in France, Italy nor Germany are any such cultivated and polished men."

From your review of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*:

"Mr. Ogburn . . . is unable to 'disintegrate' William Shakespeare [i.e., Will Shakspeare] or Frances Meres (whose) reaction to (Mr. Ogburn's) book might well be, 'But my dear sir, I know the work of both playwrights. Haven't you read my book [*Palladis Tamia*, 1598]'"

From an Oxfordian:

Mr. Giroux is unable to "disintegrate" Mr. Ogburn since in the only litigated case in which the authenticity of the Stratfordian has been directly at issue (*Re Hopkins' Will Trusts*, 3 All England Reports 46, 1964), Justice Wilberforce held that "the question of the authorship *cannot be considered closed*" (Emphasis added).

Mr. Giroux in his review has, in fact, unwittingly, "disintegrated" the authorship of Stratford's Shakspeare since, apparently, the only evidence he could find to verify it is Frances Meres's reference to "Shakespeare's" 12 plays and sonnets. A book claiming that Spenser--or Beaumont or Marlowe or Greene or Chettle or Drayton or Bacon or Jonson, et alia--was a pseudonym could be conclusively "disintegrated" by a knowledgeable reviewer in one short paragraph.

Morsa Johnson

STONEWALLING!

by Russell Des Cognets

In contemplating the "Stone-walling" by Stratfordian Orthodoxy during the 20th Century in general, and in the 1980's in particular, one is continually faced with the problem summed up in six words--What can Oxfordians do about it?

We no longer seem to be living in the modern, scientific age, but rather in an eerie, dim world of the Middle Ages and of Copernicus, whose "heresy" about where the "Center of things" was located took 200 years to trickle into the curricula of Europe's Catholic Universities!!! So far, J. Thomas Looney's "heresy" has been bubbling and boiling in Academia for 70 years and I do believe the meat is pretty well cooked, but when will it be served?? It will be served, I believe, when Stratfordian Orthodoxy makes this long-awaited, practical and fair announcement:

We can no longer ignore the scholars of talent and influence who dogmatically advocate the Stratfordian attribution and therefore we should ask the professors and students at our great Universities to objectively evaluate all the significant facts relevant to what Ralph Waldo Emerson called, "the first of all literary problems."

As we know the Folger in Washington and the Shakespeare Association of America in Nashville are the key citadels and fortresses of Stratfordianism in this country. The former has vast financial resources but the latter does not, or certainly much less. This knowledge leads one to the idea that any attempt at pressure to redress our real grievance should be applied to the S.A.A. which has about 700 college professors and the like.

Since the idea of action has been in my mind for a number of years, my first step was to begin an Oxford Program in Lou Marder's Shakespeare Newsletter; and my second step in 1985 was to *join* the S.A.A., one of whose Annual Meetings I have attended--the 1988 April Meeting in Boston. But my main thrust with S.A.A. has been through *letters* of request, --requests that the authorship question plays a role in their annual 3-4 day Meetings each April which have many seminars, symposiums, round-tables, etc. After making such Oxford request for *two* different Annual Meetings, what luck have I, an S.A.A. Member, had with the powers that be?? Less and none.

The correspondence between S.A.A. and myself over the last few years is very interesting reading of some 23 pages of exhibits--interesting, that is, if you like dictatorship and stone-walling!!

To get back to the opening question--what can we do about it?? Are there possibly some moves we *can* make?? Well let's see what suggestions our Editor and other Shakespeare Oxford Society Members can come up with.

Editor's amusing addendum:

WHO WROTE 'EDMUND IRONSIDE'? SHAKESPEARE (Christian Science Monitor Monthly, Apr. 1991)

"It is intriguing to think that in the late 1580s Shakespeare might have been writing tragedies about early English history before he wrote the early comedies considered to be his first plays." So says W. Nicholas Knight, who will present the case for such a tragedy --commonly considered of unknown authorship--as Shakespeare's first play in a paper before the World Congress of the International Shakespeare Association in Tokyo in August. The play is "Edmund Ironside," written in 1587-88 in a hand that appears to be identical to a known Shakespeare signature in a copy of "Archaionomia," reports Dr. Knight, professor of English at the University of Missouri-Rolla. He says there is evidence that Shakespeare used "Archaionomia," a book of ancient Anglo-Saxon laws and customs, as a source book for the play--which, like "Hamlet" and other Shakespeare plays, refers to a court case in which Shakespeare and his father were involved. Knight cites both his own research and that of Eric Sams, a British literary scholar, who found that "Ironside" contains more than 80 words identified by the Oxford English Dictionary as original Shakespeare words (underscoring added).

"SHAKESPEARE & CO."
REVIEWS OF CURRENT OXFORDIAN BOOKS
by
Tom Goff

As with the first of these reviews (SOS Newsletter, Summer 1990), I'd meant originally to evaluate here several of the latest Oxfordian books. However, partly for simple lack of time and space, partly by virtue of one book's special purpose and potential, I'll confine my remarks this issue to an appraisal of that volume: Peter Sammartino's greatly simplified rendition of the case for the Earl of Oxford as the world's foremost playwright, *The Man Who Was William Shakespeare*.

Peter Sammartino's *The Man Who Was William Shakespeare* (\$14.50 from Cornwall Books, 440 Forsgate Drive, Cranbury NJ 08512; 132 pg. illustr., with chronological table, bibliography and index) has instant claim to SOS members' attention, coming from the pen of a staunch Oxfordian of many years' standing: founder, former president, and now chancellor of Fairleigh Dickinson University. Prof. Sammartino is also a prolific author and therefore he may be relied upon to give useful insight regarding the problems the Oxford thesis must surmount in the tangled brakes of overgrown academic bowers (as an anecdote near the book's beginning reminds us).

With Oxfordians' respectful attention thus guaranteed him, Professor Sammartino doesn't relinquish his hold upon the reader: it is as if we are in the lecture hall with a forceful and communicative presence at the lectern. We are willing to hear what he has to say; and if our attention flags, it is only intermittently, for reasons which I will come to. My idea of Professor Sammartino as a powerful presence is more than mere impression: over the telephone--I'd phoned to chat briefly about the book and to convey my interest in reviewing it.--his voice transmits precision of mind and conviction. Having seen an Oxfordian letter of mine, he promptly and rightly corrected me on one point (the Stratford Shakespeare's possible relation to Oxford as a distantly matrimonial cousin may be argued from the evidence, but it is also conjectural.)

Sammartino's book can be used to meet distinct challenges not *quite* previously answered even by the best recent Oxfordian books, fine though they are. Faced with the length and detail of previous treatments of the Oxford case, including Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (previously reviewed in this column) and Ruth Loyd Miller's compilation of four pioneering Oxfordian volumes--all these works are demonstrably invaluable to the advanced, or keenly interested, highschool or college-entry student--the younger student may flinch upon first exposure. After all, the original instigators of the historical and literary controversy in question (Oxford, Burghley, Elizabeth, Leicester *et al.*) lived in an almost alien culture (though its universal human traits do surface upon closer view). Compounding the problem is Oxfordians' intent to topple a celebrated and almost unquestioned secular deity (St. Will of Stratford), whose fixity is about as formidable as a parent's in the adolescent mind. The decline of literacy in our public schools, too, makes Shakespeare's language almost impenetrable to the unaided student. Even the clarity and unfolding elegance of Charlton Ogburn's interpretation may be lost upon the developing mind. Finally, where the rising star of Oxford begins to supplant the god unknown of Stratford, the Bard's own gathering intelligibility brings some of his (at times) rigidly aristocratic assumptions and anti-democratic tenets perhaps unpleasantly to the foreground of his plays, as Mr. Ogburn has shown.

If we consider the student (and the mildly curious general reader) for whom Sammartino writes, the vocabulary and tone employed are usually quite appropriate. Here is a sample passage from the introductory chapter:

... [T]he question of who wrote Shakespeare's plays and sonnets is probably the most baffling question of Western culture. There have been a number of important and well-written tomes bearing on Edward de Vere, the seventeenth earl of Oxford as the real Shakespeare. All have been meticulously written and are, in fact, legal briefs for the Oxfordian authorship. Necessarily, they have to be very detailed.

I wanted to try to write a greatly simplified version, to serve perhaps as an introduction to the question. Readers can then continue their study of the authorship issue by consulting the more detailed volumes listed at the end of the book and alluded to in the book itself.

I had a further reason to write a book for college students and for high school seniors. Why shouldn't they have a right to know something about the Stratford myth...?... With no vested

interests to protect, students [, once exposed to the argument for de Vere,] are much more open-minded than those whose professional... interests are, perforce, cemented to the Stratfordians.

[Also]... as I speak to people in small social groups... they are fascinated by the Oxfordian case... When I explain that my purpose is not to tear [Shakespeare] down but to find out who he was, then most begin to listen... This little book is intended to give the [Oxford] story simply, in abbreviated form, so that the general reader can understand how the myth was created.

While epitomizing the Oxford thesis for students and lay readers, Sammartino has managed to "bound within a nutshell" some of the masses of evidence whose discussion, I thought, needed "infinite space." Actually, in its larger outline, *The Man Who Was William Shakespeare* is similar (though not slavishly) to earlier Oxfordian books. Sammartino's book sets out to dispose of the Great Pretender, Will Shakspeare; so his illustration of Shakspeare's scrawled signatures; graphs used by Ogburn and furnished by the Shakespeare his discussion of J.T. Looney's groundbreaking discoveries; his mention of the case for A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres as Oxford's handiwork--Sammartino's treatment of these and other matters will have a familiar "flow" to people already acquainted with the controversy, with the book's first few chapters demolishing Shakspeare, the later ones establishing Oxford. So far, this is to the good: the Summer 1989 issue of this Newsletter announced that "While the book does not break any new ground, it summarizes briefly the available scholarship on the Earl of Oxford... [as]... 'Shakespeare.'" We may give Prof. Sammartino due credit for having hewed to his premise, and having completed his task very well in the main.

The Man Who Was William Shakespeare does have very real weaknesses. Some are intrinsic to the problem: condensing so briefly the labor of several previous lifetimes and many volumes of evidence, while publicizing so unfamiliar an argument (to many)--one often suppressed in educational circles--means real struggle; and the marks of the struggle are evident in places. Sometimes explanations are truncated, where a minimal explanation would help the inexperienced student. So Sammartino writes that "The main trouble with [the Bacon] theory [of Shakespearean authorship] was that Bacon's style of writing was entirely different from that of Shakespeare." He doesn't quite say *how* the two styles differ. It might have been equally simple to say that Bacon's writing lacks Shakespeare's warmth and humanity. Again, Sammartino describes the reader's reaction upon first understanding the Shakespeare plays in the light of Oxford's authorship: "Suddenly, the whole world opens up for us. The emergence of England becomes a thrilling story. The brilliance of Elizabeth I, and her stature as a woman of feeling, can be better understood." Here, the uninstructed reader, scanning the penultimate phrase, might wonder, "Feeling upon what subject?" However, the young reader with moderate inferential skills is not thereby relieved of all the onus of comprehension.

There is a place in Oxford literature for books like Professor Sammartino's which skip lengthy and elaborate connectives, and his largely fills the need: his intention was to write nearly self-contained chapters. However--perhaps because of the tension between each succeeding chapter's forward flow and Sammartino's conflicting hope to write semi-independent chapters (possibly like the anthology chapters of the Miller's--the book's organization is awkward in places, sometimes within the chapter itself. So Sammartino's discussion of royal wardship (vital to understanding Oxford's partial self-portrayal as Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well*) strays a little from the purpose it derives from Joel Hurstfield's authoritative books on wardship, but Sammartino might profitably have skipped a little of Hurstfield's classification of man into three groups, and have concentrated upon the third group, the *bellatores*, whence Oxford came. More important, this passage comes near the beginning of the book; while excerpts from *All's Well* indicating how Oxford-Bertram felt about wardship are brought in only near the end, leaving the reader to jump the gap.

A more serious fault may pose an occasional problem for students previously unaware of the controversy's magnitude. Because Professor Sammartino is so manifestly forthright and honest in his commitment, he has obeyed celebrated composition teacher William Strunk's injunction to "Make definite assertions." He posits Oxford as Queen Elizabeth's lover and Southampton as Oxford's son, using, it is true, such phrases as "I am convinced" to identify speculation. The young student, however, needs to know that not all Oxfordians agree on these points; and that Stratfordians (however discredibly) have sometimes used these beliefs--not essential articles--to ridicule Oxfordians. Vulnerable youngsters will not wish to have similar assertions of theirs rebound to their embarrassment.

Nevertheless, despite these reservations, Professor Sammartino ultimately carries all before him. The breeziness and gusto of his simply worded volume, with its occasional colloquialisms, impart to the book a quality of fluent dictation, as if into a tape recorder, lending the work the strength of a personal testament. The illustrations are well chosen and generally easy on the eye. Sammartino has included, by his own description, "A Useful Chronological Table," a "Helpful Bibliography," and an index; one reads these designations and is suddenly a little moved by Sammartino's concern for students, manifest in the reminder that tables are useful, and that Bibliographies are helpful. Surely these will be. An "extra added bonus" is Professor Sammartino's discussion of the Freeman manuscript, which may eventually exercise—but bids fair to intrigue—many Oxfordians with new interpretations of the Northumberland Manuscript (previously associated mostly with Francis Bacon) and Oxford's relationship with Elizabeth. (See the Fall 1984 issue of this Newsletter for a brief indication of some of its contents.)

Taking all in all, then, I recommend *The Man Who Was William Shakespeare* as a worthwhile purchase, particularly for school libraries and for teachers (especially teachers already somewhat informed) willing to lend their pupils impartial help while leading classroom discussions on the greatest of all literary mysteries.

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Part I*

THE FABLE OF THE WORLD, TWICE TOLD

by Peter R. Moore

The McKeldin Library at the University of Maryland, where I do most of my research, contains about one hundred volumes of the Historical Manuscript Commission (HMC) Reports. These books consist mostly of transcripts and abstracts of letters of leading British families; the set at McKeldin is incomplete, but it does include nineteen of the twenty volumes of the Salisbury Manuscripts, the papers of the Cecil family. The entire HMC collection has a three volume general index, which I only recently realized as incomplete. Consequently I went through the indexes of the nineteen volumes of the Salisbury Manuscripts, and then through the indexes of the other eighty or so volumes. In the former I found a great deal on the Earl of Oxford (mostly routine matters), and in the latter a few odds and ends about him. In the quotations that follow, additions made by the HMC compilers are shown (thus) in single parentheses, while my own additions are ((thus)) in double parentheses. Here is some of what I found.

On 3 July 1575 Sir Walter Mildmay congratulated Lord Burghley on the happy delivery of Lady Oxford (HMC Salisbury 9/2, p. 101). In 1594 Burghley drew up a historical chronology of his family, which states that his granddaughter Elizabeth Vere was baptized at Theobalds on 10 July 1575 (HMC Sals. 9/5, p. 70). The date of the former item and the location of the latter (Theobalds was close to London) virtually rule out the possibility that Lady Oxford delivered in September (which would have implied illegitimacy), which Lord Oxford should have been able to confirm easily. The ruin of his marriage had a different cause.

Burghley had Oxford spied upon while in Italy, with one spy report being written on 23 September 1575 (HMC Sals. 9/2, p. 114). B.M. Ward publishes the report on p. 106 of his biography of Oxford, though he does not identify it as such.

On 25 April 1576 Burghley penned a memorial on Oxford's separation from his wife (HMC Sals. 9/2, p. 131-2), most of which is in Conyers Read's *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (pp. 134-5) and in Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (p. 556). On 27 April Oxford wrote his harsh letter to Burghley, insisting on the separation of himself from his wife, making a pointed reference to Lady Burghley, and regretting that Burghley's indiscretion has made this scandal into "the fable of the world" (HMC Sals. 9/2, pp. 132-3; see also pp. 121-2 of Ward or p. 559 of Ogburn). On 29 April Burghley wrote a memo that is summarized in HMC Salisbury 9/13, p. 128, which I quote in its entirety:

"The communication I had with my Lord of Oxford." Contains various complaints made by the Earl, such as "His money not made over to him according to his directions," "his followers not favoured by me," "his letter showed to the Queen of set purpose to bring him into her Majesty's indignation" etc. With respect to Oxford's wife, Burghley's daughter, "taken away from him at Wivenhoe and carried to London, he means not to discover anything of the cause of his misliking, but he will not

*Part II will be printed in the next Newsletter.

come to her until he understands further of it"; also that "my wife hath ever drawn his wife's love from him, and that she hath wished him dead"; and that "at Wivenhoe she caused a division in his house, and a slander to be raised of him for intention of killing of his men."

In Burghley's hand. 1 page.

Before discussing this extraordinary item, I will summarize a few more. At an unknown date in 1576, Burghley drew up a list of six complaints made by Oxford against him; Burghley denied or justified all of them (HMC Sals. 9/2, pp. 145-6).

1. That Clopton and Faunt ((Oxford's men)) were... maintained ((by Burghley)).
2. That Denny, the French boy, and others that lay in wait to kill Clopton, were punished by the Lord Treasurer ((Burghley)).
3. That he ((Oxford)) had not hie money made over sea so speedily as he desired.
4. That his wife was most directed by her father and mother.
5. That Hubbard would not deliver to the Earl his writings ((concerning his debts)), wherein he was maintained by the Lord Treasurer.
6. That his book of entail was not enrolled whereby the estates were void."

These two and a half pages in Burghley's hand close as follows: "1576. His own good nature. Pleasing of Almighty God wherein is contained *omnes charitates*" etc, etc, "The greatest possession that any man can have is honor, good name, good will of many and of the best sort."

There is also a summary of a statement in Burghley's handwriting refuting "certain slanderous reports as to his conduct towards the Earl of Oxford," namely items 3 and 6 above (HMC Sals. 9/1, p. 474). The HMC dates this at 10 July 1570, but it refers to Oxford's trip to Italy of 1575-76. Lastly is a one page document of uncertain date (the HMC guesses 1577) which is summarized as: "Memoranda by Lord Burghley of the good offices rendered by him from time to time to the Earl of Oxford and of the latter's subsequent ingratitude" (HMC Sals. 9/2, p. 171).

The items above relating to Clopton, Faunt, and Denny presumably refer to the Gad's Hill episode of 1573; see Ward, pp. 90-2 or Ogburn, pp. 528-9. Ward speaks of Wotton rather than Clopton, but my guess is that these are the same men, and either Ward or the HMC compiler misread the name. In other words, the Gad's Hill attack was intended to kill or terrorize two spies that Burghley placed in Oxford's household. Burghley's spying tendencies are well established. He spied on his son Thomas during his travels in 1561-3, as he spied on Oxford; he apparently placed John Florio as a spy in Lord Southampton's household in the early 1590s; and Robert Lacey's 1974 biography of Sir Walter Raleigh argues for several reasons that the Protestant Raleigh was acting as a government spy when he joined the Catholic courtier circle to which Oxford belonged in 1579. The six page article on Burghley in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (DNB) sadly acknowledges that Burghley's domestic spying was dishonorable. Conyers Read's sycophantic two volume biography ignores this distressing matter.

As for the five year break in Oxford's first marriage, it appears that Lord and Lady Burghley's domineering habits caused that. One may imagine the scene at Wivenhoe for oneself. Oxford's initial suspicions of infidelity could have been satisfied, but he must have been enraged by the spying, by Lady Burghley trying to raise a mutiny among his servants, and by the carrying away of his wife. Another cause of resentment indicated by these old documents is that it took Oxford years to pry his full estate out of the hands of Burghley, his former guardian. So the clumsiness of the Burghleys wrecked the marriage that they wished to save. It may be added that Lady Burghley showed hostility toward Oxford as early as 1572, see p. 78 of Ward or pp. 510-1 of Ogburn. The only known quarrel during the final phase of the marriage, 1581-8, occurred in 1587 as a result of Lady Oxford siding with her father against her husband, see p. 285 of Ward or p. 701 of Ogburn.

I interpret the remainder of the 29 April memo as follows. The letter shown to the Queen to excite her indignation is likely to be Oxford's letter of 27 April, which was written at Greenwich. Lady Burghley's slander aimed at upsetting Oxford's servants has a double ring of *deja vu* about it--something like this happened twenty-three years earlier, and then again twenty-one years later. Servants in those times were not mere employees; they were part of the household and were supposed to be utterly loyal to their master. But their loyalty included the duty of keeping their master from committing crime or folly. Upon the death of Edward VI in 1553, the 16th Earl of Oxford declared his support for Lady Jane Grey as Queen, whereupon his servants mutinied in favor of Princess Mary Tudor, whereupon the Earl wisely changed his mind. It was difficult for a master to oppose the unified will of his household. The sense of the item on Lady Burghley's slander must be something to the effect that Oxford, knowing or suspecting more Burghley spies in his

household, threatened them to Lady Burghley's face, and that she then rushed to tell the servants that Oxford planned to kill them in order to unite them against him.

OPEN LETTER TO SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY

I am convinced that the climate of opinion towards our theory in your country is such that it is time for an ordered and professional approach to capturing the hearts and minds of tomorrow's public opinion: in other words, all those at schools and colleges today. It is essential that we influence the next generation of academics. Your achievements as a Society and the 1984 publication of Charlton Ogburn's *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* have laid the ground-work for just such an approach, and we are now in a position to finally convince people that we are no lunatic fringe group, but a dedicated and professional movement, determined to expose the biggest lie in history.

I would propose to do this by delivering lectures on our theory of the authorship in schools, colleges and clubs throughout the United States. The lectures will also allow us the opportunity of introducing our books into university and college libraries, as well as establishing formal contact with the teachers and professors. Clearly, the whole scheme requires a great deal of planning, but I feel sure that once the show is on the road, there will be no shortage of engagements.

Yours for E. Ver,
Burford

Earl of Burford, Chairman of the De Vere Society.

STATUS REPORT

Shakespeare Oxford Society's Lord Burford Project

As of mid-October Lord B's address will be 3438 East Lake Road, Suite 14-625, Palm Harbor, FL, 34685. Contacts in the works right now: Penna. Humanities Council of Speakers, The English-Speaking Union, several New England colleges, another in Virginia, plus negotiations regarding an important November date at the Yale Club, NYC. Lord Burford's desire to commit his priceless entree and a year's time to delivering the authorship message to schools, colleges and multi-media all across the U.S. is a fine opportunity for our society. As so many agree: Lord Burford's April Folger-Harvard successes prove his multi-media platforming will present our message to a broad spectrum of thousands, ranging from the elementary to the scholarly.

By halving the term from two years to one, we are able to get the project moving on a tight, achievable basis. The list of Shakespeare Oxford Society members offering Imprimatur (and money) to the Burford Project includes: Elisabeth Sears, John Price, Paul Nitze, Morse Johnson, Wm. Plumer Fowler, Tom Goff, Margaret Robson, Dr. Michael Steinbach, Ward Elliott, Lincoln Cain, Peter Sammartino and William Hunt, the latter an Oxfordian donor. To help us insure that Burford's year is dignified and fruitful, we would much appreciate your pledge of a one-year tax deductible contribution payable to the Shakespeare Oxford Society Burford Fund. Your \$200 check for the expenses of the first six months should be mailed to reach me by the deadline when everything will be getting under way--Monday, October 7, 1991.

E. Ver,
John Louther
125 Caryl Way
Oldsmar, FL 34677
(National Secretary,
Shakespeare Oxford Society)

News-Letter

The Shakespeare Fellowship

American Branch

Volume IV

August, 1943

No. 5

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THE FELLOWSHIP DISCLAIMS

The Shakespeare Fellowship disclaims extravagant theories which have no basis in documentary proofs. The desire of this organization is to show by factual evidence that the Earl of Oxford was the author of the plays known by the name "William Shakespeare," following the lead so well set forth by Mr. J. Thomas Looney in his *"Shakespeare" Identified in the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford* (1920).

The most recent unsubstantiated claim to attract attention is that Lord Oxford was the author of numerous poems known to have been written by George Gascoigne, the soldier-poet. Gascoigne was quite definitely on his own account an author of both poetry and prose and his work was much admired by his contemporaries.

Except that sixteen of Lord Oxford's early poems were included in an anthology which contained poems by Gascoigne, Hatton, and others, and that he was responsible for the publication of the lot in one volume, *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573), there is no reason to believe for a moment that the Earl ever had anything to do with any prose or verse written by Gascoigne. There was room for both of them in the literary world of London.

False claims have likewise been made to the effect that the Earl of Oxford was the author of Edmund Spenser's poems. Such fantastic theories are to be deplored.

Documentary proofs of sufficient weight and number have been established, to the satisfaction of members of The Shakespeare Fellowship, that the Earl wrote many dramas to be produced at Court, at the little Blackfriars playhouse, at the public theatres and at the Innyards, like the Boar's Head; that late in his life he adopted "Shakespeare" as a pen name after a few of his plays, badly garbled, had been published anonymously by pirate publishers; and that, from 1598 onward, several of his plays, apparently authorized, appeared in print under that pseudonym.

Evidence must be collected and it must be interpreted but interpretation must accord due regard to facts and sane reasoning.

IMPORTANT NEWS!

The October issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* (usually on the stands around the 25th of the preceding month) will carry a debate on the Shakespeare authorship question. Tom Bethell, a distinguished free-lance journalist and a Contributing Editor of *The National Review*, documents the case for Edward de Vere and the case against Stratford's Will Shakespeare. I recommend that Shakespeare Oxford Society Members write complimentary letters to *The Atlantic Monthly*. Even if the letter is not printed in an ensuing issue, an impressive outpouring of letters will have a resonating impact on the editorial staff of that magazine.

SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY
1991 ANNUAL MEETING - OCTOBER 25, 26 & 27, 1991
Brazilian Court, 301 Australian Avenue, Palm Beach, Florida 33480
(Room Reservations: (1-800-552-0335) - Single: \$65; Double: \$89)

- Program printed in previous Newsletter
- Complete information and program will be sent to all current Members under separate cover.
- U.S. Air discounts available: Call its Meeting & Convention Reservation Office 1-800-334-8644; Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Refer to Gold File Number 28120000.
- Other airline discounts are available provided reservations are made early.
- Since Brazilian Court is a small hotel, it is advisable to make reservations early.

JOIN SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY AND RECEIVE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The purpose of The Shakespeare Oxford Society is to document and establish Edward de Vere, the 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 corroborating 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: \$10.00

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Sustaining: \$50.00 or more

1. Dues and requests for membership information to:

Shakespeare Oxford Society
Cathedral Station-Box 0550
New York, NY 10025-0550

2. Submit materials for publication in the Newsletter to:

Morse Johnson
Suite #819, 105 West 4th St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

The Shakespeare Oxford Society was founded and incorporated in 1957 in the State of New York and chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state as a non-profit educational organization. Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The Shakespeare Oxford Society IRS number is 13,6105314. The New York tax number is: 07182.



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Morse Johnson, Editor

EXCERPTS FROM A PAPER WRITTEN BY CHARLTON OGBURN AND READ AT THE 1991 ANNUAL MEETING AT PALM BEACH FLORIDA

Mention of the *Atlantic* brings up an important topic. . . We have come a long way when a leading intellectual periodical, one of the longest established, ventures to make a cover-story of the Shakespeare controversy. In doing so it has, we may be sure, brooked the wrath of academe. Which comes out better in the debate, the case for Oxford or that for Shakspeare, I am too close to the question to be able to judge. I do know that on reading what Tom Bethel had written I telephoned him to say I thought he had produced a masterpiece. . . At this point I have to interrupt myself to recall, as an instance of the circularity of fate, that it was the *Atlantic* that gave me a start as a writer by publishing an article of mine -- on a pet crow; an upstart crow it was, too. That was 56 and a half years ago. Two years and a month after that, on May 1, 1937, the *Saturday Review of Literature* came out with an epochal article by Charles Wisner Barrell on "Elizabethan Mystery Man." My parents and I, along with hundreds of others, certainly, were hooked. With Barrell's article, indeed with, I am sure, J. Thomas Looney's "*Shakespeare Identified*," of which the article was a precis, it was foreordained that the doom laid upon poor Edward de Vere, that "I, once dead, to all the world must die" would in time be lifted. And that time, I should say, is daily coming closer. The one thing that Shakespeare orthodoxy cannot stand, that which the Stratfordians have at all cost had to prevent, is our being accorded respectful treatment where it counts.

That is what we have had, outstandingly, in the *Atlantic* for October -- thanks, I should imagine, to Tom Bethel. It is what we have had, quite remarkably, too, and concurrently, in *British Heritage*, in a six-page article proclaimed on the cover as "Who Was William Shakespeare?" - an article not too well informed but impartial and sure to get attention. . .

Speaking in his introduction to the debate in *Atlantic* of "anti-Stratfordians," the editor recalls that "The Shakespeare scholar Alfred Harbage characterized them in our pages in 1956 as 'eccentrics of the most familiar type -- pathetic victims of the *idée fixe*, or wealthy old gentlemen safely indulging a latent hunger to be "radical" about something.'" But no more. The time has passed when the professoriat and its literary followers can, by slander of their opponents, close the ears of an uninformed public to the facts in the controversy. The question of the identity of the greatest of writers is now for the first time widely recognized as an open one.

I shall finish with an extraordinary instance of this. It was brought to my attention by the noted playwright and professor emeritus of the University of Florida doubtless now in your midst, Winifred L. Frazer. She hailed it as "a grand breakthrough," referring to a new textbook, *The Riverside Guide to Writing* by Douglas Hunt, published by Houghton, Mifflin. "All of Chapter 6," she pointed out, "is concerned with the Shakespeare authorship question." When I had bought the book and read the chapter, entitled, "Arguing When the Facts are Disputed," I echoed Winifred's "Hallelujah" in that a professor of English (at the University of Missouri) could treat the authorship of Shakespeare as a

question on which more than one opinion was admissible. Taking it on myself to write a critique of the chapter, I gave Professor Hunt full credit but felt, as I believe any of you would, that I had to spend most of 1000 words on the deficiencies of his information and incorrectness of much of it. Acting on his advice to a student, that he have his "draft critiqued by someone who disagrees with your view of the subject," I sent Professor Hunt what I had written. His response was considerate and gentlemanly. . . . What he may have thought of the conclusion of my paper, I cannot say. What you here today may think I cannot say either. It reads:

"*The Riverside Guide to Writing* could prove to be of historic importance. It concedes that rational persons may legitimately disagree as to the origin of Shakespeare's work. And once skepticism as to the grounds of the sacrosanct legend is admitted by a representative of the Establishment, misgivings will gain currency and, progressively strengthened by the justification they find, will for ever-growing numbers of readers finally bring the whole crazy, jerrybuilt structure of Shakespearean orthodoxy tumbling into the voice over which it was erected, leaving nothing behind but an invaluable lesson for mankind."

Indeed, a paragraph to be added to a fourth printing of *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* summarized the facts that in my view dispose of Shakespearean orthodoxy once and for all:

"The Elizabethans cannot have been oblivious to the qualities of the greatest of English writers that led John Dryden to call him 'divine,' Carlyle 'the greatest of intellects' and Heinrich Heine 'a creator second only to God.' The first two publications adorned with the name "William Shakespeare," *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, were so popular that one printing after another was called for. Previously, writing of a play unmistakably *Henry the Sixth, Part One*, Thomas Nashe said that it had 'moved to tears. . . . ten thousand spectators at least (at several times).' The first known mention of Shakespeare as a playwright declared him the best of the English for both comedy and tragedy and attested that 'The Muses would speak with Shakespeare's fine-fil'd phrase if they would speak English.' The most authoritative voice among this contemporaries proclaimed him the 'Soul of the age! The applause! delight! the wonder of our stage,' Britain's triumph who 'was not of an age but for all time' who 'so did take Eliza and our James' -- the latter having had seven of Shakespeare's plays presented in the aftermath of his coronation in 1604. Surely other writers, actors, university men, courtiers would have gone out of their way to make the acquaintance of such a man as Shakespeare was. How does it happen, then, that no one we know of reported during the years when he was alive ever to have met, seen or had any communication with a poet or dramatist named William Shakespeare and that the only three who ever wrote of knowing him did so only years after his death, all in the First Folio, and then in ambivalent terms and without recalling a single personal detail about the immortal dramatist? Can there be any doubt that he was known under a different name, that the authorship was a dissimulated one and that "William Shakespeare" was a subterfuge?"

THE ANON OF AVON

By Terry Eagleton

(Book review of *William Shakespeare: A Life* by Garry O'Connor
(Hodder \$19.95) in the English Newspaper Independent 11/6/91)

Given that we know about as much of the historical Shakespeare as we do about the yeti, "biographies" of the Bard tend to be fanciful and cunningly padded affairs, peppered with "maybes" and "might have beens". So it is gratifying to come across a Bardographer like Garry O'Connor, boldly prepared to plug the gaps in the record informing us of all we never knew of the shadowy swan of Avon.

Among the facts which O'Connor offers us are these. The infant William was born with a complicated nature and a generous supply of feminine traits; his birth was acclaimed by his father, who encouraged in

him all signs of masculine drive and warlike vigour, though his mother still mourning her dead daughters, greeted his arrival rather more ambivalently. Easy-going by nature, young Will nevertheless envied his siblings, suffered from a touch of womb envy and struggled with feelings of guilt and betrayal.

He grew up to be a man of nervous, pleasing disposition, enjoying gossip and the odd dirty joke; he was shy but not the forelock-tugging type, and contracted a marriage in which he was happy some but not all the time. He had a keen eye, a ready wit and an alienated, underdog streak, though without any social animus. As a professional actor he was adept at leaping high in the air and generally cavorting around. He was blessed with extraordinarily good taste in music, sometimes didn't sleep too well, and could not visit the Tower of London without feeling a frisson run down his spine. No egoist, he was nevertheless self-conscious about his balding pate.

Shakespeare had a strong sexual nature, though his liaisons with such women as Mary Fitton, Emilia Bassano and Lucy Negro were over by the mid-1590s. From August 1596 onward, "what was now left of his sexual drive, so long expended on iambic pentameters or as dressing up as other people, was re-invested in wife, family and property development." He died fairly well pleased with himself, overtaken by the urge to forgive and be reconciled.

The churlishly skeptical reader might now be wondering just how O'Connor comes to know all this. Table-rapping? A particularly serendipitous few weeks in the British Library? The answer is that he has made it up. His book is as much a farrago of strained speculation, wishful thinking and dubious inference as any other "life" of Shakespeare, it is just that he breezily cuts the "maybes" and "might have beens" and offers his private fantasies as though they were as unimpeachable as the racing results.

Like most biographers, and unlike most literary critics of the past half-century, O'Connor subscribes to the "spot the great soul" theory of literature: that all literary works are secretly autobiographical. The man Shakespeare can thus be reconstructed from his plays, from which it follows that he quite probably spent a fair amount of his time howling naked on a heath surrounded by fools and madmen. If the plays fail you as reliable sources of biographical information, there is always the technique of the spurious syllogism: the Elizabethans were a bit smelly; Shakespeare was an Elizabethan, therefore Shakespeare was a bit smelly.

To write, as O'Connor does, of the man Shakespeare "wanting", "recognizing", "recalling" and so forth is like ascribing a spiritual life to a slug. But the English, addicts of biography, voyeurs of the inner life, cannot rest easy with scandal that there can no more be a "life" of their greatest artist than there can be of Moses or Mickey Mouse. The "enigma" of Shakespeare is a rebuke to their biographical prurience, their inability to let the works rest in all their complex autonomy.

The "enigma", in any case, is an illusion of their own making: there is no mystery to the man Shakespeare, no secret life, no elusive depth. It is just that we happen to know almost nothing about him, which is quite a different matter.

RE: DRAYTON'S ELEGIES UPON SUNDRY OCCASIONS, 1627

by Diana Price

I have not come across a reference to the last 22 lines of Michael Drayton's poem, *ELEGIES UPON SUNDRY OCCASIONS* (1627) in any of my reading, although as a relatively new Oxfordian student, I've barely scratched the surface. The poem "surveys the history of English poetry and delivers some shrewd critical opinions"¹, including the often-quoted tribute to William Shakespeare (lines 119-122):

Shakespeare, thou hadst as smooth a comic vein,
Fitting the sock, and in thy natural brain,
As strong conception, and as clear a rage
As anyone that trafficked with the stage

I note that A.L. Rowse concludes from those lines that Drayton didn't think that highly of Shakespeare.² But the tribute, both of itself, and taken together with the final part of the poem, is revealing, and possibly intentionally restrained.

It is a terse tribute. Shakespeare rates a mere four and a half lines, compared, for example, to 6 for Marlowe, 8 for Sidney, and 8 for Jonson. Marlowe and Jonson, in particular, come out covered with far more glory. Drayton limits his tribute to Shakespeare, referring specifically only to his comedy; that Shakespeare had as "clear a rage" is as close as Drayton comes to acknowledging his genius as a tragedian and historian. His allusion to Shakespeare's "natural brain" smacks to an Oxfordian as being in the same bag of tricks as Johnson's "small Latin and less Greek."

And in mentioning Shakespeare, Drayton fails to refer to him as a neighbor or a fellow Warwickshire man, or in any way to suggest personal familiarity. Elsewhere in the ELEGIES, Drayton describes the poets William Alexander and William Warner in personal terms; further compare the following:

... my dear Drummond, to whom I much I owe
For his much love. . .

Then the two Beaumonts and my Browne arose,
My dear companions, who I freely chose
My bosom friends. . .

If the Stratfordians would have Will. Shakspeare anywhere in Drayton's company, for example, enjoying the literary salons at the Rainsfords of Clifford Chambers nearby Stratford-upon-Avon where Drayton was a frequent bouseguest, they would surely expect to find some personalized comment in this poem.

Although the poem is not an exhaustive survey, it omits Edward De Vere. But if Oxford was indeed the man in the literary scene described by Meres and Lumley, it is fair to say that his absence in this line-up is striking. Altogether, it does seem a disproportionately brief tribute, and therefore odd, every suspect; but there may be more to it of interest to Oxfordians. The lines which close the poem are as follows:

... But if you shall
Say in your knowledge that these be not all
Have writ in numbers, be informed that I
Only myself to these few men do tie,
Whose work oft printed, set on every post,
To public censure subject have been most;
For such whose poems, be they ne'er so rare,
In private chambers that encloistered are,
And by transcription daintily must go,
As though the world unworthy were to know
Their rich composures, let those men that keep
These wondrous reliques in their judgment deep,
And cry them up so, let such pieces be
Spoke of by those that shall come after me.
I pass not for them, nor do mean to run
In quest of these, that them applause have won
Upon our stages in these latter days,
That are so many; let them have their bays
That do deserve it; let those wits that haunt
Those public circuits, let them freely chant
Their fine composures, and their praise pursue;
And so, my dear friend, for this time adieu.

These last 22 lines seem to be a frank reference to noblemen who circulated manuscripts amongst themselves, WHO HAD WRITTEN FOR THE STAGE, and who were not mentioned in the ELEGIES on purpose. Drayton was not going to be the one to blow the cover; it would be left to those who come after him. He mentions unpublished manuscripts ("wondrous reliques"); could those be among those described in 1609 as held by the "grand possessors?"

This poem is dated 1627, obviously after the publication of the First Folio in 1623. I have puzzled over the date; those 22 lines would make more sense if they had been written prior to the First Folio. The introduction of my edition did not elaborate much on dates; a number of poems are listed with a range of dates, indicating that they were revised over those years. Because Drayton revised his works so consistently, I wonder if 1627 is reliable.

Drayton has described all his poets in the past tense, including those authors then still living, such as Jonson, so there's no help there in assessing the date. However, the youngest poet referred to is William Browne (1591-1643), whose fame "rests on his pastoral poetry (Britannia's Pastorals of 1613 and 1616)"³. So it is possible the first draft of this poem preceded 1627. Drummond and the two Beaumonts are the next youngest mentioned, and there does not seem to be any conflict their either in proposing an earlier date. (The poets are presented in rough chronological order, by the way, and Shakespeare is in his place consistent with the Stratfordian's dates.)

But even if the 1627 assignment is correct, could Drayton be referring to additional Shakespearian plays not in the Folio? Or additional poetry? We know that most of Oxford's poetry has not survived, and Drayton does say "For such whose poems." Vivien Thomas supposes the manuscripts might include some of John Donne's poems, but he's not noted for writing for the stage. I would hypothesize that Drayton is referring to Oxford and probably the Earl of Derby, who'd been "penning comedies for the common players."

¹ *Michael Drayton, selected poems*, ed. Vivien Thomas, P.12

² *Shakespeare the Man*, A.L. Rowse, P. 78

³ *Who's Who in Shakespeare's England*

Part II

THE FABLE OF THE WORLD, TWICE TOLD

By Peter R. Moore

(This article continues from Newsletter Vol. 27, No. 3)

We will now move on, passing over Oxford's travel intentions in 1577, various aspects of his marital situation, his attempts to regain Havering House and Waltham Forest, a touching reference "to the sweet little Countess of Oxford," a tournament, real estate deals, a dedication of "Caesar and Pompeius" to the Countess by a prisoner, the total disappearance of Oxford from the Cecil Papers between 2 June 1590 and 9 March 1595, his tin mine letters, until we reach the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to William Stanley, Earl of Derby in January 1596.

There exist a number of letters from 1595 and 1596 in which Oxford shows normal fatherly affection for his daughter Elizabeth, two of which have not, I believe, been noticed before. The first is of 24 April 1595 to Sir Robert Cecil (HMC Sale* 9/5 p. 181) and contains little of note save that the new Countess of Derby had somehow offended her great-aunt Elizabeth, Lady Russell. The latter was sister to the by now deceased Lady Burghley, and she was very easy to offend. The papers of that age are full of Lady Russell dashing about, starting trouble, and picking fights in all directions. A third sister was the widowed Lady Ann Bacon, who preferred to stay at her home at Gorhambury, nagging her middle-aged sons Anthony and Francis by mail. The second letter is of 17 September 1596 (HMC Sals. 9/6, p. 389), also to Sir Robert Cecil from Oxford, who describes himself as "far off as I cannot be at Hand." The letter contains the following warning of trouble brewing:

"You know her youth and the place wherein she lives ((at Court attending the Queen)), and how much to both our houses it imports that she carry herself according to her honour. Enemies are apt to make the worst of everything, flatterers will do evil offices, and true and faithful advice will seem harsh to tender ears," but as Oxford is far away "I commit unto you the authority of a parent in mine absence."

*Historical Manuscript Commission Salisbury - the papers of the Cecil family.

And now the plot thickens. In July 1597 the Earl and Countess of Derby went from London to the Earl's home in Lancashire. In their train was Sir Edward Fitton (father of Mary), a fiftyish knight from Cheshire, whose wife was from Lancashire. In these counties and beyond, the Stanleys had been the paramount noble family for centuries. In 1485 they brought over 6,000 men to Bosworth Field, threw their support to Henry Tudor, which gave him the victory over Richard III. For this critical aid, Henry raised the head of the family, Lord Stanley (Henry's stepfather), to the dignity of Earl of Derby. Queen Elizabeth called the Stanleys the richest subjects in her kingdom, and Oxford's son-in-law, the 6th Earl, had inherited royal blood and a claim to the throne from his mother. As of 1597, the 6th Earl was a mature, well traveled man of thirty-five years. During the Civil War of the 1640s, his son the 7th Earl was said to have raised 60,000 men in Lancashire and Cheshire for King Charles. I dwell on the wealth and power of the Stanleys to highlight the significance of what is about to happen.

Sir Edward Fitton's family allegiance was to the Stanleys, but in 1578 (HMC Sals. 9/2, p. 183) and again in 1588 (DNB) he sought financial relief from Lord Burghley, to whom he was therefore beholden. After the Earl and Countess reached the Stanley mansion of Knowsley, Lancashire, Fitton sent a report to Sir Robert Cecil, by now thirty-four years old and his father's full partner in running the Queen's government (HMC Sals. 9/7, p. 327). Fitton mentioned Cecil's "honorable and virtuous niece" and her husband being met as they entered Cheshire by Fitton's cousin, who was sheriff of the county, various other Fitton kith and kin, and 500 horsemen. The party then crossed into Lancashire where they were greeted by 700 horsemen, who banqueted them and escorted them to Knowsley. Fitton then discussed some unsettled financial aspects of the marriage, and suggested that Cecil get his father involved. So far everything seems routine, but then comes "I beseech you, keep this to yourself until I see you. It is better for me to speak all I know than write. I have appointed all the names of the gentlemen that met my Lord ((Derby)) to be set down for you."

On 9 August Edward Mylar (Miller), another of Cecil's agents in Derby's household, reported to Cecil in a letter from which I must quote at length (HMC Sals. 9/7, p. 339). (I know little about Miller but that he was a gentleman follower of the Earl of Derby who rode with him from London, his home was in Derby's area, and he was under obligation to Burghley):

The Countess of Derby "hath by courtesy and virtue got the love of all here ((Knowsley))."

"This journey hath also dissevered ((i.e., severed or ended)) my lord's humour of frenzy, for when her ladyship lived at Court in the eye of the world, then you know, and with grief I witnessed his ((Derby's)) violent course. But now here yesterday, upon letters from my lord Cobham, the Countess of (Warwick?) and my Lady Raleigh, he is in such a jealous frame as we have had such a storm as is wonderful. But such it appeareth, though (her ladyship) lived in a cell unseen, all is one ((meaning that it would not matter if the Countess was isolated in a cell, she would still be slandered)). Mr. Ireland the lawyer did in wisdom, upon conference with me, prevail so much with all my lordship's officers seeing my lord's madness and my ladyship's patience, whose only defense was patience with tears, as they all went to my lord when he was looked to go to the Court and leave my lady here to shift for herself, and told him that as they had served him and his father and been the same by them, if he held this jealousy in that force as he did, themselves, seeing my lady's carriage of herself and managing my lord's estate with that honourable care of his house and himself that never any the like, if he would hate her and (not) desist from this jealousy and bitterness to her ladyship, and not dishonour himself, or else they would hate him: and bring her to my lord ((Burghley)) and you ((Cecil)), if all ((Mr.)) Ireland had would do it. If my lord ((Derby)) had come ((to London)) I think scarce one many had come with him to attend him. You, Sir, in my simple opinion, you may do well (to incite) my lord Treasurer ((Burghley)) to write to my lord ((Derby)) without knowing of this: assure yourself my lady wanteth not friends, friends firm to our purposes, wise, and experienced in this humorous house.

"Thus having nakedly delivered the truth, for the honour I bear to your old father, who I love about any subject, keep this from him till I see you, for now all is well: but write to my lady to comfort her, and direct your letters to me; you may always send them to the manor for Chester who will convey them safe to me. I have not seen my own house yet, but should have been gone yesterday, if this had not been. - Knowsley, this 9th of August."

One reads this with awe, particularly in light of the botch at Wivenhoe in 1576. Sir Robert Cecil was obviously better at managing this sort of thing than his parents, or perhaps the Cecil family knew how to learn from its mistakes. Besides, by 1597 Cecil dominance was taken for granted, and their domestic espionage network was better established. The Stanleys were bound to be spied upon as they combined great wealth, Catholic leanings, and a claim to the throne.

With a storm developing around his niece, little hunchbacked Sir Robert, generally referred to as Master Secretary, hustles her and her husband back to their country estate, with his agents in Derby's household carefully reporting back to him. When the storm breaks upon the arrival of slanderous letters, the Earl goes into a jealous frenzy and prepares to abandon his wife and return to Court. Whereupon the officers of the Derby household (attorney, chamberlain, steward, etc.) band together behind their recently acquired mistress in defiance of their hereditary master. And he, the Earl of Derby, the richest lord in England, of royal descent, whose family could summon armored horsemen in the thousands to follow their standard, submits within one day to the man that Queen Elizabeth called her "elf" or "pygmy" and that King James later addressed as "my little beagle." And all of these things are kept from old Lord Burghley.

I will briefly finish discussion of events in Lancashire before returning to London. On 11 August Miller wrote to Cecil that all continued well, and that Derby's uncle the Earl of Cumberland had arrived to support the Countess. Cumberland was not so rich as Derby, but he was a mighty sea warrior who led or sent a fleet of private warships against Spain every year. As regards financial arrangements that were being made, the Countess would do as Burghley and Cecil directed (HMC Sals. 9/7, p. 344).

On 22 August the Earl and Countess of Derby wrote to Cecil to say how well they were getting along, signed "Your loving niece and nephew" (HMC Sals. 9/7, p.363). On 14 October Fitton let Cecil know how much the Countess appreciated Cecil's kind letters and deeds (HMC Sals. 9/7, p.430). On 24 July 1598 Fitton reported to Cecil on Derby's financial arrangements for the Countess (HMC Sals. 9/8, p. 275). On 30 July 1598 Derby's attorney Thomas Ireland informed Cecil that relations between the Earl and Countess were still a bit shaky (HMC Sals. 9/8, p. 281). In January 1599 Derby wrote Cecil on behalf of his wife, requesting that a "poor young man" who stole a small silver handbell from her chamber be spared hanging.

We will now turn to the cause of Lord Derby's jealousy. On 1 December 1596 Lady Ann Bacon, a woman of very strict morals, wrote a letter to her son Anthony, the Earl of Essex's spymaster, to be delivered to Essex. The letter accused Essex of the sin of fornication involving the "infaming of a nobleman's wife," who "is utterly condemned as bad, unchaste, and impudent," and who should be "delivered to her husband, and the Court cleansed by sending away such an unchaste gaze and common by-word;" Essex was commanded to reform his ways. The Earl responded graciously that he took "it as an argument of God's favour in sending so good an angel to admonish me." However Essex protested that he had abstained from such sin since his departure for Cadiz on 1 June. He also firmly denied having an affair "with the lady you mean;" he could hardly admit such a thing in writing to someone like Lady Bacon. He added that "I live in a place where I am hourly conspired against and practised upon," and he ended with "Burn, I pray you" (quotations in this paragraph are from Daphne du Maurier's *Golden Lads*, pp. 151-2). This seems like what we are looking for, particularly given that Lady Raleigh and Lord Cobham were bitter enemies of Essex. But Essex was a man of many loves and there were other noblemen's wives. Both Essex and Lady Bacon avoided naming the noblewoman, nor did Lady Bacon give any indication that it was her own great-niece that she was condemning.

That we are on the right track is proven by a newsletter written by Thomas Audeley in London to Edward Smythe in Paris (HMC Sals. 9/7, pp. 391-2). The letter is dated 20 September 1597, but was clearly written that December. It contains the following passage:

"My lord of Essex is in no great grace, neither with Queen or Commons: with the Queen for that he lay with my Lady of Derby before he went ((to the Azores from August to October)), as his enemies witness."

So Thomas Audeley dared to put in writing what everyone in the know only spoke of. But he failed to get the cat out of the bag, for his letter ended up in the Cecil papers along with so many other letters not addressed to the Cecils. It was presumably intercepted and Volume VII of the Salisbury Manuscripts

places it immediately after twelve undated drafts of political intelligence reports in the hand of Archibald Douglas, the Scottish Ambassador to England (presumably Cecil had a spy in the embassy). One sees why Lady Bacon and Essex refrained from naming the infamous noblewoman and why Essex asked for his letter to be burned.

We now come, not to the end for we are really at a beginning, to intermediate conclusions. We can conclude that the infidelity of the Countess of Derby is not fully proven, and note that, as her mother's example shows, accusations can be false. Fortunately for this article what matters is that the slanders against her were widespread and serious. We see one of the reasons for the enmity that was building between Cecil and Essex. The Cadiz voyage of 1596 was Essex's greatest triumph and represented a political victory over the Cecils. Burghley acknowledged as much by currying favor with Essex, and Anthony Bacon crowed that Essex "hath made the old Fox to crouch and whine" (DNB article on Essex). But not Sir Robert Cecil, for in September 1596 Essex wrote to Anthony that he "was more braved by your little cousin ((Cecil)) than ever I was by anyone in my life" (Read, p. 523). "To brave" means to defy or challenge, as in *King John*, "Out, dunghill! Darest thou brave a nobleman?" We also see Cecil's friends and allies, Cobham and the Raleighs striking at Cecil's niece as a means of striking at Essex. After assisting Essex in his course of self-destruction, Cecil secretly dug Raleigh's grave. When Cobham and Raleigh fell together, Cecil offered aid to neither. Cobham's deceased sister had been Cecil's beloved wife, and after her death their son was raised by Sir Walter and Lady Raleigh. I have never seen a good explanation of why Cecil stabbed Raleigh in the back, though we may have the beginning of an explanation in the defamation of Cecil's niece; Cobham, like Essex, destroyed himself.

With regard to the Earl of Oxford, we now know a bit more about his life. As for the authorship controversy, we gain several points. Orthodoxy maintains that Oxfordians have a paranoid obsession with conspiracies and cover-ups, to which our reply should be that that was an age of plots and secrecy. The master plotter was master Secretary Robert Cecil; the word secretary is rooted in the Latin *secretus*, a secretary being one who keeps secrets. We have seen Cecil subdue the richest lord in England with a wave of his hand, as he covers up what was an open secret, trying to prevent even his father from knowing what was gossiped about at Court.

With regard to my theories on the Sonnets, I had assumed that Oxford must have resented Essex for displacing him as commander of the English cavalry in 1585, which post started Essex on the road to glory, but that was years earlier. But Oxford had fresher reasons for resentment. On 20 October 1595 Oxford wrote to Cecil about his suit to recover Waltham Forest and Havering House (HMC Sals. 9/5, pp. 426-7). He said that Lord Burghley had advised him to ask Essex to drop his efforts to get possession of this Vere property, but this Oxford "cannot do in honour, heving already received divers injuries and wrongs from him." And Oxford must have been infuriated by slander about Essex's seduction of his daughter.

In an earlier article I dated Sonnets 78 to 100 as between late 1597 and early 1599 by tying them to events in the lives of Southampton and Essex, with little reference to Oxford. Let us now look back to Sonnets 66 to 70, a cluster of woe, bearing in mind that the Countess of Derby's troubles apparently began in the fall of 1596, coming to a head in August 1597.

Sonnet 66 is a lament without any particular addressed, which complains of "gilded honour shamefully misplaced, And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted." Sonnets 67 and 68 are both about a man in that masculine pronouns are used. Sonnet 67 begins "Ah, wherefore with infection should he live," and goes on to associate Shakespeare's friend with "impiety," "sin," and the "false painting" of cosmetics. I take these as references to Southampton's friend Essex. Sonnet 67 closes "In days long since, before these last so bad."

Sonnets 69 and 70 are addressed to "thee," who is said to be the victim of slander, who, however, is partly at fault. Now things get a bit complicated. Shakespeare always addresses the Dark Lady as "thee," but Sonnets 1 to 126 are sometimes to "you" and sometimes to "thee." No one has ever given a good explanation for these pronoun shifts, but some of them could result from a change in the person being addressed (though in other cases this is clearly not so). I have always believed that the first 126 Sonnets were to or about the same person, but I must admit that Sonnets 69 and 70 can be plausibly explained as to Elizabeth, Countess of Derby. However they could also be to Southampton.

In February 1597 there was a quarrel between the Earls of Northumberland and Southampton, of which the only record is a letter by Northumberland to Anthony Bacon (see Thomas Birch, *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, Vol. II, p. 274). Northumberland wrote that Southampton slandered him behind his back, that Northumberland then gave him the lie, whereupon Southampton sent a gentleman bearing his rapier to Northumberland, who embraced him and asked if he bore a challenge. But the gentleman did not, he only brought the rapier to measure its length against Northumberland's, so the latter sent him away. The gentleman returned within thirty minutes with a challenge but with what Northumberland felt were "strange conditions," one of which was that they fight with single rapier rather than with rapier and dagger, because Southampton had hurt his left arm in a ball game. Northumberland replied disdainfully that he knew Southampton did not play with his left hand, but that he would wait until Southampton recovered. The Queen promptly summoned them before the Privy Council, where they made up and parted friends. It seems that Northumberland was the one who was slandered (one regrets not having both sides of the story), but then he called Southampton a liar and implied he was a coward. Thus Sonnets 69 and 70 could well refer to what Northumberland said of Southampton, bearing in mind that Southampton brought this upon himself. Sonnet 70 mentions that "slander's mark was ever yet the fair," which refers to some other slander of a fair person. This could be a generalization, but it could also look at the recent slander of Oxford's daughter.

Sonnets 71 and 72 are both to "you," 73 and 74 are both to "thee," and all four anticipate the poet's death. Sonnet 72 closes "for I am shamed by that which I bring forth, And so should you to love things nothing worth." I had before and still do see these lines as referring to Shakespeare's plays and poems, but we now have a plausible double meaning, Oxford's shame at his daughter's misconduct.

At any rate, the infection, bad days, shame, and slander of Sonnets 67 to 72 are doubly appropriate for Oxford from late 1596 to fall 1597. I have said that I take "infection" as a reference to Essex, who interestingly ended up of the same opinion. When Essex repented and confessed his crimes after his trial, he said that he "was like a leprosy that had infected far and near," and on the scaffold he asked "God to forgive him his great, his bloody, his crying, and his infectious sin" (*A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons of the Late Earl of Essex, etc* by Francis Bacon, from *The Works of Francis Bacon*, edited by James Spedding, Vol. IX, p. 285).

I said earlier that we are at a beginning, for there is still much to be uncovered. I have not seen the originals of the documents that I discuss but, at best, transcriptions more often abstracts and summaries. Volume II of the Salisbury Manuscripts, p. 58, summarizes a four and a half page document thus: "1573, Sept. 2. - Concerning the affairs of the Earle of Oxford: enclosing articles relating to the same, with the Earle's answers thereto." I have not been able to confirm the handwriting and date on Sir Walter Mildmay's letter to Burghley. The document describing the Wivenhoe fiasco is a combination abstract and summary. And so on. Whoever is able to go to Hatfield House and view the originals of the documents mentioned in this article is bound to find more information about Oxford.

I have not seen Vol. XI of the Salisbury Manuscripts, nor a complete set of the HMC Reports, nor the Lansdowne Manuscripts, the Stanley Papers, nor the papers of people like Anthony Bacon and Lord Henry Howard. It is absurdly unlikely that everything of significance is in the volumes I was able to inspect. Oxford's tin mining letters of March and April 1595 do not say that he has been to Devon and Cornwall, but presumably he had. Oxford's tin letter of 20 March 1595 says that he has been looking into the tin business for "This last year past." Earlier in that letter, speaking of his "unfortunate estate," he said that he has "consumed four or five years in a flattering hope of idle words," which period exactly coincides with his disappearance from the papers of the Cecils. Oxford's letter of 17 September 1596 says "but sith my fortune hath set me so far off as I cannot be at hand in this her ((his daughter's)) troublesome occasions." I may be reading too much into these words, but they seem to speak of some purposeful mission rather than a casual visit to a country house. Evidence of travel in this period jibes well with references to travel and separation in Sonnets 27 to 51, though not much can be made of so weak a point. A letter of military advice from Sir Francis Vere to Essex on 7 March 1596 recommends as a fortifications engineer one "Edward Hamnum. . . sometimes belonging to my lord of Oxford, who ((Hamnum)) is not ignorant of architecture." So Oxford must have done some building, someplace, sometime. We need to try to clarify these matters and fill in the gaps.

"TO CALM CONTENDING KINGS":
Oxfordians Receive Communication from Richard III Society

By TOM GOFF

If Shakespeare is known for any political stance besides his apparent support (and faithful mirroring) of Queen Elizabeth I's regime, it is for the great dramatist's scathing yet fascinating portrayal of England's King Richard III. Though Richard III -- dark deeds and all -- has had a better reception from more recent historians, Tudor propagandists like Thomas More and Polydore Vergil were unanimous in blackening his reputation. However, none has proven as thorough as Shakespeare in making the name Richard III a byword to this day for Machiavellian cunning and cruelty. We can confirm Shakespeare's thoroughness for ourselves merely by reading *Richard III* (and not to be missed is his preparatory study of Richard in *Henry VI Part 3*).

Nevertheless, the Shakespeare who may well have libelled Richard III to near-permanent effect is the very Shakespeare who wrote, "Time's glory is to calm contending kings, To unmask falsehood, and bring truth to light." In accordance with this sentiment, many Oxfordians were recently sent brochures and membership applications by the Richard III Society, with expression of that nationally known organization's hopes to enlist us in a mutual effort to "bring truth" -- the truth about Richard III and the no less surprising truth about Shakespeare (a.k.a. the 17th Earl of Oxford) -- "to light." So, by the happiest of historical ironies, we may have here a real "calming" of contending "kings," so to speak; or at least of their posthumous supporters in redemption of reputations. One "contender" is the perhaps too-much-maligned Yorkist king who lost his life seeking to defeat the first royal Tudor; the other is that monarch of world literature, himself submerged beneath a false identity, who maligned Richard -- with what unfairness time and history will yet determine.

Speaking for the Richard III Society, Inc. (the American branch of the parent Richard III Society based in England and sponsored by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester), Society chairman Eugene McManus addressed Oxfordians (letter of August 22, 1991) as follows:

We have a lot in common: you and your Society are leading the challenge as to who really wrote Shakespeare's plays; we are interested in why someone who should have been just another English king was picked out to be slandered at the Elizabethan court in a Shakespearean play. Both of our societies will, in all likelihood, uncover truths and facts that will benefit the other.

We can and are helping each other in many ways. As a specific example, Edward de Vere [the 17th Earl of Oxford] was recently profiled in our quarterly newsletter, *The Ricardian Register*. You can be a participant in this cross-fertilization of societies. Already several people held memberships in both; with your participation, the number can increase.

Mr. McManus is right: there is abundant evidence that Ricardians and Oxfordians can help one another. At least on the Oxfordian side of the ledger, we have sufficient matter to ponder: for example, as Richard acts throughout the play named for him to defy -- and, ultimately, to provoke -- the Nemesis which stalks him and eventually destroys him, we may be reminded that it was King Richard's early *redemptive* biographer, Sir George Buck, who befriended Oxford, saw several Shakespeare plays through the Revels Office, and was present at the start of work on the Shakespeare First Folio. And the reminder is in Buck's Ricardian biography, which records Oxford's own apparent belief in a Nemesis of sorts talking *his* family and causing the wastage of the Oxford fortunes -- perhaps, Buck implies, because the de Veres supported the Tudors and also opposed the pretender Perkin Warbeck. (Though Buck's Ricardian biography [1619] was first published after Oxford's death, the evidently placid friendship between the two writers may reflect the fairness with which Oxford is not credited often enough, Oxford would probably have been minded not to take offense at Buck's thesis, though he himself was so strongly against Richard III.)

Here is another item which bears reflection: true, the Tudors were not at all favorable to Richard III's memory. But *why* is it, as British parliamentarian the Rt. Hon. J. Enoch Powell has written*, that Shakespeare was able to combine effective anti-Ricardian propaganda and brilliant political insight -- as if from the vantage of a fly buzzing on the wall of the Privy Council chamber -- with *Richard III* coming so early in the playwright's career (as both Stratfordians and Oxfordians agree it did)? Could the Stratford son of a glover have brought it off?

The questions accumulate as we examine the possible motives behind the play: *why* did Shakespeare imbue the work with his own *special* venom against Richard's reputation? (Why does Stratfordian scholar G.B. Evans note Shakespeare's success in "heightening the already 'monstrous' portrait [of Richard] left for us by his political enemies"?) Once again, part of the answer may be sought in Ricardian research -- and in the help Oxfordians and Ricardians can supply one another. For a recent article in the nonpartisan *English Historical Review* by Internationally noted scholar M.A. Hicks suggests to some of us that personal vendetta truly may have influenced Oxford's portrayal of Richard. That article, "The Last Days of Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford" (EHR Jan. 1988, pp. 76-95), indicates that Richard III harshly, though with some legality, persecuted an ancestress of Oxford's by alienating many of her estates for his own gain; this, too, at a time when the Countess, already frail and elderly, was ill-equipped to defend herself -- especially since the Oxford line of earls was then temporarily attained. Hicks delineates the successful efforts of the thirteenth earl of Oxford, John de Vere, to reclaim these estates during his campaign to restore family fortune and honor. But Richard's schemes, legal or not, undone or not, could certainly have disposed the real "Shakespeare" very firmly against him, even years later during Elizabeth's reign. For Feudal family grievances die hard.

As Ricardians and Oxfordians today recognize, Oxfordian research into these matters is useful in demonstrating, not that Shakespeare/Oxford *knew* Richard III to have murdered the famous "two little princes in the tower" or to have exacted the Oxfordian Countess's lands from her by duress; but simply that Shakespeare evinced his *genuine* belief in such stories. As an essential testament to his extreme belief, *Richard III* has much to tell us about Shakespeare. And as a registry of the like beliefs of many of Shakespeare's contemporaries -- and an indispensable launching point for research and discussion -- *Richard III* has much to tell us about Richard III. For, as Oxfordian scholar Charlton Ogburn, Jr. has written, "It was Richard's misfortune to be dramatized by an unforgiving Lancastrian and a de Vere and be made to revel in a villainy unmatched in literature."

What a chance we have, then, to reunite -- figuratively, to be sure -- the "red rose" of Lancaster (the Oxford side in the War of the Roses) and the "white rose" of York (Richard's side), to the advantage of all concerned! (Even the two men's heraldic cognizances, incidentally, are much alike: Oxford's, the Blue Boar; Richard's, the White Board.) So that we may conclude more realistically, let Mr. McManus sum up:

We are seeking the truth about what really happened in Richard's time, just as you are seeking the truth about what really happened during Shakespeare's time. The two are related; they were related in Elizabethan times, and they are related now.

Oxfordians who wish, then, to join the Richard III Society at any of several membership levels [Regular Dues: \$30.00; Contributing & Sponsoring Memberships: Honorary Fotheringhay Member: \$75.00; Hon. Middleham Member: \$180.00; Hon. Bosworth Member: \$300.00; Plantagenet Angel: \$500.00; Plantagenet Family Member: \$500.00+, etc.] may send checks and/or inquiries to:

Richard III Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 13786
New Orleans, LA 70185-3786
(Please allow 6 weeks for processing)

* See J.E. Powell, "Francis Meres and the Authorship Question," De Vere Society Newsletter no. 2 (April 1988); pg. 24; also "Shakespeare's Serial History of England," In Eva Turner Clark's *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (3rd rev. ed., ed. R.L. Miller, Minos Publishing Co. 1974), pg. 722.

TO THE EDITOR

Your Winter 1991 issue contains reprints of an instructive 1978 exchange between Oxfordian scholar Dr. Warren Hope and Richard Ohmann, the past editor of *College English*. Ohmann refused to print Hope's rebuttal to the "reckless charge" of Professor J. Mitchell Morse, in the first chapter of his book *Race, Class and Metaphor* (1976) (first published in *College English* in February 1974) that the Oxfordian theory is based on the idea that literary achievement is the result of literary genes and is therefore inherently racist.

I would like call your reader's attention to the salient fact that one of the greatest black intellects of the twentieth century, Malcom-X, was a total skeptic of the Stratford mythos. Malcom-X considered the authorship controversy during his intensive historical and linguistic studies while jailed in Norfolk prison. In spite of the fact that Malcom-X was, unfortunately if understandably, attracted to racial theories of history, he is quite emphatic that racial matters play absolutely no role in the Shakespeare authorship question:

"No color was involved there; I just got intrigued over the Shakespearean dilemma. . . . I know that many say that Francis Bacon was Shakespeare. If that is true, why would Bacon have kept it a secret? Bacon wasn't royalty, when royalty sometimes used the *nom de plume* because it was "improper" for royalty to be artistic or theatrical. What would Bacon have to lose?" (p. 185, *The Autobiography of Malcolm-X*)

In prison debates Malcom-X, who probably did not have Mr. Looney's book available at the Norfolk library, defended the theory that "Shakespeare" was a *nom de plume* for King James. As is obvious to readers of Mr. Looney's book, Malcom-X's probing queries about the inadequacy of the Baconian theory are fully answered by the Oxfordian thesis.

Malcom-X's interest, and his emphatic statement that "no color was involved there," are sufficient indication of the universality of the issues raised by the authorship question to counter the reckless scholastics of Professor Morse and his colleagues. Such reliance on slipshod *ad hominem* characterizations, as Dr. Hope observes, testifies to the fundamental weakness of the Stratfordian position.

In his response to Professor Ohmann, Dr. Hope contends that there is "no need for new evidence until 'the academy' deals with the evidence which has been gathered over the past sixty years" (SOS 27, 1:2). It is a testimony to the intellect and humanism of Malcom-X that, working from a prison library in Norfolk, Virginia, he could evaluate the evidence -- at least of the negative sort -- with greater acumen than several thousand english literary professionals armed with the best libraries in the world. It also tells something about how academic legends are constructed and perpetuated, if not about how they fall.

Roger Stritmatter.

TO THE EDITOR

Readers might be interested in an anecdote reported to me by a friend who just toured Stratford.

A major tour company took his group around to the usual "Shakespeare" sights but the guide kept making comments about how Will of Stratford was not the real writers of the plays and poems, but the true author was . . . Edward de Vere! My friend who had heard some of this from me, was astounded at how bold the guide was, considering that his livelihood depended on the Shakespeare myth. The guide cautioned those on the tour not to tell anyone he had confided to them -- but to look up books on the subject!

Scott C. Smith

TUDOR THEATER, THE EARLS OF OXFORD,
AND STATE PROPAGANDA
By Gary B. Goldstein

In his presentation at Wilkes University last April, Justice John Paul Stevens proposed the following scenario to explain Shakespeare's use of the state:

The Queen. . . for reasons of her own, may have decided to patronize a gifted dramatist, who agreed to remain anonymous while he loyally rewrote much of the early history of Great Britain (Stevens).

There is evidence in Elizabethan documents to support the theory that Edward de Vere employed the theater and his servants to "rewrite the early history of Great Britain," as well as to comment upon contemporary issues.

From 1580 to 1589, the 17th Earl of Oxford maintained two troupes of actors: a company of men who performed exclusively in the provinces and a company of boys who played weekly at a small theater at Paul's Church and at the Blackfriars Theater. In 1583 Oxford also bought the lease of the Blackfriars Theater, which he immediately transferred to John Lyly, his secretary. Moreover, during the 1580s, Lyly wrote eight plays for Oxford's company of boys.

Reavely Gair, a modern historian of the theater at Paul's Church, offers confirming evidence from Elizabethan documents on how Oxford used both the medium of theater and his secretary, John Lyly, for the express purpose of commenting upon political and social matters:

If our contemporaries find Lyly's plays irresistible as courtly allegories, so did his, for Gabriel Harvey remarks, 'all of you that tender the preservation of your good names, were best to please Pap-hatchet, and see Euphues betimes, for fear lest he [Euphues] be moved, or some of his apes hired, to make a play of you; and then is your credit quite undone for ever and ever; such is the public reputation of their plays.' Others corroborate this view, for in *Ironical Letter* of 1585 Jack Roberts warns Sir Roger Williams [a retainer of Oxford's] to 'take heed and beware of my Lord of Oxenford's man called Lyly, for if he sees this letter, he will put it in print, or make the boys in Paul's play it upon a stage.' Paul's then. . . developed a reputation under Lyly, and because of Lyly, for personal satiric allusions and contemporary allegory in their plays, and while this added spice to the audience's enjoyment of a performance, it led to the Children of Paul's into serious trouble, for their association with Lyly drew them into a grave quarrel between Church and State (Gair 109-110).

Harvey's references to Pap-hatchet and Euphues are pen-names for Lyly and Oxford. In 1580, Lyly had dedicated to his master, the Earl of Oxford, a novel entitled *Euphues and His England*; he later wrote, in 1589, a pamphlet entitled *Pap with a Hatchet*. The word "ape" was a colloquial express for actor. We thus see that Oxford's contemporaries believed that he actively employed the theater for public purposes -- and had been doing so for some time.

In his 1589 pamphlet, Lyly openly acknowledges this use of the stage to comment upon social and political issues, for he specially "remarks that a Marprelate play, 'if it be showed at Paul's. . . will cost you four pence [pennies]'" (Gair 88-89).

Martin Marprelate was the pseudonym attached to a series of eight pamphlets published in 1588 and 1589, attacking the Anglican Church in the name of Puritan principles. Lyly, however, was not a Puritan writer or sympathizer. As Sir E.K. Chambers states, Lyly and other dramatists were hired by the Church of England to counter the pseudonymous Puritan attacks with plays of their own, at least one of which Lyly suggests was produced at Paul's in 1589:

The state is brought into the church and vices make play of church matters, said one episcopalian writer. . . [Francis] Bacon also condemned this immodest and deformed manner of writing lately entertained, whereby matters of religion are handled in the style of the stage. But before long, the vigor of the attack drove the Bishops to seek on their side for an equally effective retort. They hired writers, including Lyly and Thomas Nashe; and these not only answered Martin [Marprelate] in his own vein, but also made use of the theaters for what must have been the congenial task of producing scurrilous plays against him (Chambers I:294).

The 17th Earl of Oxford also commented upon Martin Marprelate in his play, *As You Like It*:
 Touchstone: We shall find a time, Audrey, Patience, gentle Audrey.
 Audrey: Faith, the priest was good enough, for all the old gentleman's saying.
 Touchstone: A most wicked Sir Oliver, a most vile Mar-text [sic]. But Audrey, there is a youth here in the forest lays claim to you. (V.i.1-7)

Several lines later, the dramatist informs us this youth is named William and is 25 years old. William Shakspeare of Stratford upon Avon was just that age in 1589 -- the year Martin Marprelate -- or Mar-text -- was publishing his pseudonymous pamphlets against the Anglican Church. By punning on Martin Marprelate's name just before introducing a character named William aged 25, Shakespeare gives dramatic evidence that *As You Like It*, or at least this scene, was written in 1589. It also reveals Oxford's hostility to the Puritan writer, Martin Marprelate, and the Puritan cause.

The public use of the stage by the 17th Earl of Oxford was not an innovation he introduced into Elizabethan England. The 16th Earl of Oxford, John de Vere, had employed the nation's pre-eminent playwright of the age, John Bale, to write religious propaganda plays, and used his own company of actors for their production.

John Bale wrote a total of 21 plays, only five of which survive. The original list recorded by Bale in a manuscript of 1536 consists of 14 plays written between 1531 and 1536 for John de Vere -- the first Protestant Earl of Oxford.

Bale's biographer, Jesse Harris, describes their relationship:

Vere, who supported a number of players in his household, was active in the movement to divorce the English Church from Rome. The plays [by Bale] were Protestant polemics. In fact, one of them dealt with the question of the King's [Henry VIII] two marriages. Consequently, one readily infers that they were intended to be used by Oxford's players to popularize the Protestant program (Harris 75).

Among these 14 plays for the 16th Earl were *King John*, "the foremost Protestant play of the age" (Harris 98), as well as *On The King's Two Marriages* and *Impostures of Thomas a Becket*. "Both titles," writes Harris, "reflect the contemporary movements in the English State" (Harris 98).

Another Vere was the protagonist of a propaganda play in London in the autumn of 1599. A first cousin of the 17th Earl's, Sir Francis Vere was a general commanding English forces in Holland during England's war with Spain. The lost melodrama celebrated the English victory of Turnholt in Holland on January 24, 1598. The play is described in a letter by Robert Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney on October 26, 1599:

"Two days ago, the overthrow of Turnholt was acted upon a stage, and all your names used that were at it, especially Sir Francis Vere's, and he that played that part got a beard resembling his, and a satin doublet, with hose trimmed with silver lace. You was also introduced, killing, slaying, and overthrowing the Spaniard, and honorable mention made of your service, in seconding Sir Francis Vere, being engaged." (Chamer I:322n)

As is evident, the de Vere family had employed the theater as an instrument of state policy well before Queen Elizabeth I granted the 17th Earl of Oxford his 1,000 pound annuity through the Secret Service in 1586.

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BOULDER CITY HIGH SCHOOL
Boulder City, Nevada

Shakespeare-Oxford Society

Dec. 1, 1991

Dear Sir or Madam

As a 27-year veteran of teaching *Hamlet* to high school seniors, I am fascinated with the theory that Edward de Vere wrote the works attributed to Shakespeare.

I shall appreciate receiving more information regarding this compelling case as promised in the October, 1991 issue of *The Atlantic*.

Many thanks!

(Mrs.) Eleanor Phoenix

Editor's Note: 56 students in the Boulder City High School have written their own letters to the Society requesting receipt of more information about the Shakespeare authorship question.

1991 ANNUAL MEETING - OCT. 25-27
Palm Beach, Florida

In many respects this was the best Annual Meeting in our history and certainly the most well-attended. The speakers at Luncheons and Dinners were Dr. Peter Sammartino, Palm Beach Chapter President; John Price National Chairman; Elizabeth Sears National Board President; Right Honorable Charles Vere, Earl of Burford and greetings and messages from Ruth Lloyd Miller and Charlton Ogburn were read. The speakers for the Scholar's Program were Verily Anderson, Charles Boyle, Richard Desper and Gary Vezzoli, Winifred Frazer, Isabel Holden, Paul Nelson, Elizabeth Sears, Roger Stritmatter and Hank Wittemore.

The Members passed without any objection a Motion to raise Annual Dues from \$25 to \$35 and Student and Initial Teacher from \$10 to \$15 and establish a Family Membership of \$50 and elected Don Salianni as Trustee to replace Barbara Crowley who declined to run for reelection. Mr. Salianni has converted the town of Calgary to Oxfordianism and even converted the Superintendent of the Calgary public schools.

The Society is profoundly indebted to Dorothy Travers-Davies, Convention Chairperson, and her Committee: Margaret and Norman Robson, Loraine Curry, Rolf Kalfenborn, Florence Koch, Mrs. A.B. Strange and Ronald Davies.

LORD BURFORD'S LECTURE TOUR

As John Louther brilliantly predicted, Lord Burford's 1991 April Folger-Harvard impressive presentations proved his platforming would intimately broadcast the Oxfordian thesis to a broad spectrum of thousands. His eloquent and convincingly factual lectures in the northeast during November and December have been congenially applauded in a wide range of schools, colleges and cultural organizations. In addition, the number of inquiries and scheduled ensuing confirmations during 1992 throughout almost every state far exceeds our most optimistic anticipations.

Since there are some dates still open, if you wish to make arrangements for Lord Burford to lecture in your community, please contact:

John Louther
125 Caryl Way
Oldsmar, FL 34677
(813) 784-0563

(National Secretary, Shakespeare Oxford Society)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It's that time again! January 1 through December 31 marks the Society's membership year. Renewals for 1992 are now due. Please send your check for *thirty five dollars* (\$35 U.S. currency) to:

Shakespeare Oxford Society
P.O. Box 0550 Cathedral Station
New York, N.Y. 10025-0550

Family memberships (husband and wife) are fifty dollars (\$50). Student memberships are fifteen dollars (\$15), as are first time memberships for teachers.

Special membership categories are given for tax-exempt contributions to the Society as follows: \$75; Knight: \$150; Baron: \$300; Earl: \$500; Marquess: \$1,000; Duke: \$2,500; Royal Consort: \$5,000.

JOIN SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY AND RECEIVE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The purpose of the Shakespeare Oxford Society is to document and establish Edward de Vere, the 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 corroborating information and commentary

Student: \$15.00 Annual Dues Regular: \$35.00 Sustaining: \$50.00 or more

1. Dues and requests for membership information to
Victor Crichton
Cathedral Station - Box 0550
New York, NY 10025
2. Submit materials for publication in the Newsletter to:

Morse Johnson
Suite 819, 105 West 4th. St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

The Shakespeare Oxford Society was founded and incorporated in 1957 in the State of New York and chartered under the membership corporation laws of that state as a non-profit educational organization. Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The Shakespeare Oxford Society IRS number is 13,6105314. The New York number is: 07182.



Morse Johnson, Editor
Cathedral Station, P.O. Box 0500, New York, NY 10025-0550

THE CASE AGAINST SHAKESPEARE (Daily Herald Arlington Heights, Illinois 1/23/92)

By
Tom Valeo, Staff Writer

Every season I see several Shakespeare plays and after each one I wonder how a butcher's son from the tiny rural village of Stratford managed to write such eloquent, sophisticated dialogue.

My doubts put me in good company. Ralph Waldo Emerson admitted that he could not "marry" the facts of Shakespeare's life to the man's creative output. Mark Twain said he didn't know who wrote the Shakespeare plays, but he was sure that Shakespeare didn't. And Sigmund Freud concluded that the man from Stratford "seems to have nothing at all to justify his claim (to authorship)."

But I've always assumed the evidence showing that William Shakespeare wrote the plays must be pretty strong or he would have been dethroned long ago.

Then I picked up the October issue of Atlantic magazine. The cover story, "Looking for Shakespeare," is a debate between Irvin Matus, a scholar who believes that William Shakespeare from Stratford wrote the plays, and Tom Bethell, a journalist, who believes that the plays and sonnets were written by Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. I expected Matus, the "Stratfordian," to dispatch his "Oxfordian" rival with a few well-aimed facts, settling once and for all — in my mind at least — the authorship question.

Instead, Bethell amazed me by absolutely demolishing the Stratfordian position.

I had no idea that the evidence linking Shakespeare to the plays was so paltry. As far as we know, for example, Shakespeare never claimed that he wrote the plays, and no one in his lifetime ever claimed that he did. And if he wrote the plays, he certainly would have been known to his contemporaries. Yet, not a single description of Shakespeare the man, written during his lifetime, has come down to us. And when he died, he received none of the tributes and eulogies that accompanied other famous writers and actors to their graves.

If fact, even though Shakespeare is the most extensively researched subject in English literature, barely a dozen solid facts are known about his life: He was born in 1564; his father was illiterate; he married at the age of 16 and soon was the father of three children; he left his family and moved to London, where he was listed several times as a tax delinquent; he purchased the second-largest house in Stratford in 1598; he apparently was an undistinguished actor in the company known as the King's Men; he owned a share in the Globe and Blackfriars theaters; he died in 1616, leaving an extremely detailed will that included no books or manuscripts.

That's about it. Virtually everything else you find in biography of Shakespeare is conjecture: He must have had an extraordinary education in the Stratford grammar school (no records have survived); he might have traveled in Italy (even though foreign travel was expensive and dangerous); he somehow acquired extremely detailed knowledge about Queen Elizabeth's court (even though access to the queen's inner circle was carefully guarded). The Stratford man can qualify as the author only by attributing to him the education and the experience he would have needed to write the plays. Without these attributes, his claim is simply preposterous.

Edward de Vere, on the other hand, was eminently qualified to be the author. As Bethell demonstrates, the plays fit into de Vere's life the way a hand fits into a tailor-made glove. De Vere was extremely well-educated. He was a superb court poet who "won for himself an honorable place among the early masters of English poetry," according to 19th-century historian Thomas Macaulay. In later life, he became the leader of a literary movement known as "Euphuism," which sought to adapt the refined vocabulary and elegant syntax of classical writers to modern speech — precisely what Shakespeare did.

When de Vere was 12, his father died, and he was raised as a royal ward by William Cecil, better known as Lord Burghley, who was Queen Elizabeth's closet adviser. De Vere himself remained on intimate terms with the queen throughout his life, which would explain his in-depth knowledge of court affairs.

On top of all that, Edward de Vere was passionately devoted to the theater. His father supported an acting company and Edward himself, when he was 30 years old, took over the Earl of Warwick's acting company. He leased the Blackfriars Theatre three years after that for his own company of players, and eventually transferred the lease to the eminent Elizabethan dramatist John Lyly – who was de Vere's private secretary. Also, during a trip to Italy in 1575, de Vere attended performances of the *commedia dell'arte* – a style of theater that had a profound influence on "Love's Labour's Lost" and other plays.

Astounded by all this, I turned to "The Mysterious William Shakespeares: The Myth and the Reality," an exhaustively researched 800-page opus by Charlton Ogburn, who has devoted his life to the authorship question. There, I encountered wave after wave of evidence that effectively washed away any possibility that William Shakespeare could have written the plays that bear his name.

And yet, every Shakespeare expert I turned to for comment scornfully dismissed the notion that Shakespeare might not have written the plays. Peter Saccio of Dartmouth University, who has recorded a series of lectures on Shakespeare for The Teaching Co. of Washington, D.C., accuses skeptics of snobbery.

"They can't believe a commoner from a small town could write anything," he said, sneering.

Richard Pettengill, dramaturg for the Goodman Theatre, and a former student of the esteemed Shakespeare scholar David Bevington, of the University of Chicago, was just as dismissive.

"The Oxfordians I've talked to remind me of Moonies," he said. "They get a crazed glint in their eye when they start to talk about their beloved Edward de Vere."

Barbara Gaines, the founder of the Shakespeare Repertory in Chicago, merely scoffed at the charge that Shakespeare lacked the knowledge and the verbal skills needed to write the plays.

"People talked a lot in those days," she said. "Travelers all got back to Stratford and London sooner or later, and undoubtedly stopped in pubs that Shakespeare frequented."

Even Matus himself, when I called him, could not do much to bolster the case he presented in *Atlantic* magazine. He is finishing a book tentatively titled, "Shakespeare, In Fact," which will offer no "blinding revelations," he admitted. Instead, he will place the Stratford men "into the much broader picture of Elizabethan Renaissance theater." In other words, he will try to demonstrate that Shakespeare, unlikely as it may seem, *could have written* the works attributed to him.

What is going on here? At the very least, those familiar with the evidence should be saying, "Well, we aren't entirely sure who wrote the plays, and some of the evidence pointing to Edward de Vere as the author is pretty persuasive." Instead, like adherents to some wildly implausible religious doctrine, Shakespeare experts proclaim their steadfast faith in the Stratford man, and vigorously attack those infidels who express doubts.

Comparing the Stratfordian position to a religion is apt if we think of religion as a method for explaining reality to ourselves, for like all religions, Stratfordianism is based on attractive myths.

One myth maintains that through hard work and dedication, we can overcome the lack of opportunity brought on by social class and poverty. This notion was expressed to me most forcefully by Roman Polak – a Czech – who is in town to direct the production of "Macbeth" that opens Feb. 5 at the Shakespeare Repertory.

"Shakespeare was a small-town man, and someone who lives in a small town has a more interesting outlook," Polak said through a translator. "If he has a natural intellect, he can absorb everything he sees and hears, and he has time to think about it because he is an outsider, a viewer on the sidelines."

Polak, 34, comes from a small town in Czechoslovakia, so by defending Shakespeare, he was, in a sense, defending his belief that a small-town boy – like himself – can rise far above his background.

That romantic view of human potential is very appealing, and it's true that some people actually do overcome enormous obstacles to acquire skills faster than others, as any teacher knows.

But the fact remains that everyone, no matter what their natural endowments, must develop their abilities somehow. And Shakespeare, born into an illiterate family and faced with the need to earn a living, simply didn't have the time or the resources to acquire the knowledge and the language skills he needed to write the plays.

"Ah," the Stratfordians respond, "but Shakespeare was a genius." This is the cornerstone of the Stratfordian position. They don't have to demonstrate how Shakespeare acquired his abilities because he was a genius, born with mental powers we can't even imagine.

"You can only account for Shakespeare's language by saying he was a genius," said Louis Mardar of Evanston, a retired Shakespeare professor at Northwestern University who has published the Shakespeare Newsletter for more than 30 years.

This is the "Amadeus" syndrome in action. In the play "Amadeus," the author, Peter Shaffer, portrays Mozart as "beloved of God," which is what the famous composer's middle name means in Latin. In this view,

God simply reached down and touched his beloved Mozart on the head, endowing him with all the abilities he needed to create extraordinary music.

This is wonderfully romantic view of genius, but it bears no resemblance to what we know about human intellect. A few years ago I interviewed Howard Gardner, a cognitive psychologist who has received a MacArthur Foundation "genius" award in part for his research into human intelligence. (He's the man who proposed that we all possess at least six different types of intelligence, not just one.) Gardner said many people believe that "genius" is built into certain brains, just like the capacity for hearing and eyesight. However, this just isn't the case.

"We don't really know enough about the brain yet to explain genius," he admitted, "but when we do, I'm sure we'll find that genius is not in the hard wiring of the brain; it's in the programming."

In other words, extremely talented people may rise to greater heights than the rest of us, but they must climb the same steps that face us all. Shakespeare, as far as I can see, simply didn't have the access to the stairway leading to a vocabulary of more than 17,000 words (two to three times that of a normal person), familiarity with the Greek and Latin classics, and extensive knowledge of history, astronomy, botany and geography. Edward de Vere not only had access to the stairway, we know that he climbed it and reached considerable heights.

So why didn't de Vere claim authorship? Although de Vere wrote poetry under his own name, including several poems in Latin, it simply was not acceptable for a nobleman to write for the public theater. No one disputes this. And Lord Burghley, who had considerable control over his son-in-law (de Vere married Burghley's daughter), certainly would have prevented de Vere from embarrassing the nobility by writing plays under his own name.

So de Vere adopted a pseudonym. In "The Arte of English Poesie," published in 1584, the author, believed to be George Puttenham, states that although members of the nobility might write poetry, they usually concealed the fact, "or else suffered it to be published without their own names on it." Some noblemen, he added, "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 (de Vere) Earl of Oxford."

The name "Shake-speare" began to appear on the title page of some plays about 1598. That was the year that William "Shakespeare" (or "Shakspere," or "Shaxpere" – he spelled it various ways) purchased the second largest house in Stratford. The hyphen suggests that this was meant to be recognized as a pen name, and the notion of shaking a spear seems to be connected to de Vere. A family crest depicts a lion brandishing a spear; de Vere was a well-known champion with that weapon; and in 1578, when de Vere was just 28, a former classmate praised him lavishly in a speech before the queen, telling him that "Thine eyes flash fire, thy countenance shakee spearee. . ."

Everyone I talked to about the authorship question eventually said that it doesn't matter who wrote the plays and the sonnets we attribute to Shakespeare. But it matters a great deal.

First of all, if Edward de Vere wrote them, the facts of his life will influence our understanding of the plays. Literary biographers delve into an author's life in hopes of illuminating the author's work.

But even more important, the belief that that Shakespeare wrote the plays perpetuates romantic notions about genius and the human capacity for excellence. The simple fact is that genius has far more to do with motivation, concentration and education than it does with any sort of mysterious God-given aptitude.

If we're willing to believe that the most eloquent, sophisticated writing in the English language could spring from an untutored rustic who probably never ventured beyond London and its environs, then we're likely to dismiss the crucial importance of education and opportunity for our own children.

Shakespeare's plays are not just demonstrations of ability; they burst with evidence of enormous accomplishment rooted in learning. No doubt the author possessed extraordinary aptitude, but he also developed it to an extraordinary degree through study and contemplation. Until the Stratfordians can demonstrate how William Shakespeare obtained and developed his abilities, I simply can't believe that he wrote the plays.

"The Shakespeare works display such polish and cultivation that many have found it hard to attribute them to their reputed author, the man who is buried in Stratford-on-Avon. The problem is not merely a literary one; the question of the identity of the author of the plays is also one of evidence, and therefore within the province of lawyers."***

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun:

"The Oxfordians have presented a very strong . . . almost fully convincing. . . case for their point of view. The debate continues and it is well that it does. We need this enlightenment in these otherwise somewhat dismal days. If I had to rule on the evidence presented, it would be in favor of the Oxfordians."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr.:

"I have never thought that the man of Stratford-on-Avon wrote the plays of Shakespeare. I know of no admissible evidence that he ever left England or was educated in the normal sense of the term. One must wonder, for example, how could he have written The Merchant of Venice."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, in the introduction of his Max Rosen Lectures at Wilkes University, announced:

"I have decided that this lecture should include a mixture of comments on two apparently unrelated subjects: first, on the unorthodox view that Edward De Vere, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, is the true author of the Shakespeare Canon and second, the utility of certain canons of statutory construction."

An excerpt from that lecture:

"For present purposes, I shall confine my analysis of the Fourth Canon to the Sherlock Holmes' principle that sometimes the fact that a watchdog did not bark may provide a significant clue about the identity of a murderous intruder. The Court is sometimes skeptical about the meaning of a statute that appears to make a major change in the law when the legislative history reveals a deafening silence about any such intent.

This concern directs our attention to three items of legislative history that arguably constitute significant silence. First, where is Shakespeare's library? He must have been a voracious reader and, at least after he achieved success, could certainly afford to have his own library. Of course, he may have had a large library that disappeared centuries ago, but is nevertheless of interest that there is no mention of any library, or of any books at all, in his will, and no evidence that his house in Stratford ever contained a library. Second, his son-in-law's detailed medical journals describing his treatment of numerous patients can be examined today at one of the museums in Stratford-on-Avon. Those journals contain no mention of the doctor's illustrious father-in-law. Finally--and this is the fact that is most puzzling to me although it is discounted by historians far more learned than I--is the seven-year period of silence that followed Shakespeare's death in 1616. Until the First Folio was published in 1623, there seems to have been no public comment in any part of England on the passing of the greatest literary genius in the country's history. Perhaps he did not merit a crypt in Westminster Abbey, or a eulogy penned by King James, but it does seem odd that not even a cocker spaniel or a dachshund made any noise at all when he passed from the scene."

*** From the Foreword by Tappan Gregory, Editor-in-Chief, in SHAKESPEARE CROSS-EXAMINATION published by the American Bar Association Journal, 1961; 3rd printing, 1974.

THE BOAR IN THE INDUCTION SCENE

By Diana Price

[Editor's note - Synopsis of Induction:

Scene 1 - Christopher Sly drunkenly falls asleep on the ground. As a practical joke, the local Lord decides to take the unconscious man into his home and have him awaken in the lap of luxury. He orders his servants to inform Sly that he is a gentleman who has been insane for many years, believing himself a poor drunkard. A traveling company of Players arrive and the Lord then directs them to perform for Sly. He further arranges for the Page to pose as Sly's wife.

Scene 2 - Sly awakens in a bedroom of the Lord's house, and the servants offer him delicacies. His 'illness' is explained to him by the Lord, but Sly denies it and briefly describes his true place in the world. The Lord and his servants offer the gentlemanly pleasures they insist are properly his, including a beautiful wife, and Sly accepts their version of his life. The Page appears, dressed as a woman. Sly's lusty instincts are laid to rest by the assertion that sex will produce further delusions of poverty. The Player's performance is announced, and Sly prepares to enjoy it.]

It was naturally Charlton Ogburn who first put me onto the scent of the Induction Scene in TAMING OF THE SHREW and its relevance to the Oxfordian hypothesis. Ogburn's interpretation puts it practically into the category of a signature scene - summing up both Oxford's and the Stratfordian's relationship to the authorship.

The induction may or may not be part of the original draft of the play; even orthodox scholars comment on its superfluity. Many, not most, theatrical productions of SHREW cut the scene; and except for some echoes about wifely duty, there's not much to tie it to the main body of the play. Probably it could be tacked onto almost any of the comedies. So the scenes must be drawing attention to something autobiographical or topical, in and of itself (emphasis added).

Orthodox scholars pounce on the induction for its revelations of Stratfordian autobiographical references. Rowse says, "With THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, however, Shakespeare achieves his own authentic voice, and it is redolent of the Cotswolds. One can see that the ingenuous author is a countryman, a provincial." How he squares his "provincial" playwright with the overall sophistication of the oeuvre is beyond me.

Rowse goes on to link up the various Warwickshire names and places to the Shakesperian context. "Even more to the point is the Stratford background at the beginning. Christopher Sly is Old Sly's son of Barton-on-the-Hearth, where Shakespeare's [i.e. Shakespere's] Arden aunt, Joan Lambert, lived. Marian Hacket is the 'fat ale-wife of Wincot', etc. Rowse misses the caricature of William Shaksper in Christopher Sly; as Ogburn asks, "If these details are not supplied to identify Christopher Sly (the ely fellow who bore the Lord?) with Shakspeare, why are we given them?"

Rowse is one of many orthodox scholars who seem not to notice, or at least not to be bothered by, the uncomplimentary picture their poet paints of his family and neighborhood. For the orthodox scholar, at best the Stratfordian casts his relatives and acquaintances into low-life surroundings; at worst he casts himself into the role of buffoon and drunkard, while projecting the nobility as something quite different.

And what do we actually learn about the lord?

1. He hunts and has his own huntsmen; he is very knowledgeable about hounds and hunting; he has his own hawks and several horses.

2. His country manor is in the general vicinity of Warwickshire, and is large enough both to have a "fairest chamber" and to put up a troop of actors overnight; there are references to fine clothes, jewelry, and provision of fine food and wine.

3. He is familiar with the trappings of the office of Ewrie and has the paraphernalia on hand. (See Charles Wisner Barrell's notes on "The Ewrie Office of the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford in Looney Vol. II, p. 107-114).

4. He owns Italian paintings and demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter; he has evidently informed his staff as well.

5. He sponsors theatrical troops; he recognizes one of the players and recalls an earlier role; many have noted this scene's similarity to the players scene in HAMLET.

6. He likes music and has at least one instrument in the manor house.

7. He does not entirely trust women ("a woman's gift To rain a shower of commanded tears").

8. He can conjure up a plot, in this case a practical joke which includes the Elizabethan convention of using boys to play women's parts; he instinctively looks to theatrical solutions (i.e. the onion), and he is used to giving stage directions ("I'll give thee more instructions" and "I'll in to counsel them.")

9. He has a household staff of at least 6, probably more- (2 huntsmen, at least 3 servants, and a page.)

10. He may or may not be married; a wife does not seem to be present. But there may be an implied lady of the manor (or paramour), because a suitable lady's dress (not a costume) is readily available to outfit the page.

11. He is a nobleman and probably relates his own distinguished lineage to the line "a mighty man, of such descent".

The composite fits Oxford perfectly, as far as it goes. Equally striking, by my reckoning, the lord fulfills at least 9 of Looney's characteristics in SHAKESPEARE IDENTIFIED! Oxford's country home in Rugby, 19 miles northeast of Stratford, which he retained until "the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign" puts him into the geographic neighborhood, and if a clincher were needed, the inclusion of the aspects of Ewrie-ism provides it.

It would not be unreasonable to suppose that any home of rank was furnished with the paraphernalia of washing-up, but it is worth noting that it is this particular procedure, associated with the ewrie, that is described, - not some other household activity that could also be associated with court formalities, such as, saying grace, supervising the horses, etc.) The most likely explanation for the otherwise arbitrary inclusion of detailed procedure with the ewrie is to point to Oxford.

The Penguin edition of SHREW notes that the Italian painting described was "probably a Correggio or Romano; . . . But there seems to have been few Italian pictures in this country in the 16th century; and there is

no reliable evidence that Shakespeare (i.e., Shaksper) ever visited Italy. He may of course, had heard something about Italian art from men who had been to that country; but the most likely explanation. . . . is that the Italian painters. . . . were deeply influenced by Ovid."

This footnote struggles unsuccessfully to account for the [Stratfordian] author's supposed knowledge of Italian art. What is further worth noting is that it would be a very unusual home in all of Elizabethan England with Italian paintings on the wall. We know that Oxford sent back a portrait of himself from Paris; perhaps he also procured paintings in Italy. We can be certain he SAW some during his travels abroad.

Perhaps what first really caught my attention in this scene was a tantalizing and cryptic clue to Sly's line "Therefore paucus pallabris; let the world slide: sessel!" The line comes at the top of the scene, and with little context to precede it, it really doesn't make a lot of sense. It must be in there to provide either some in-jokes or to send off some pithy signals.

Penguin notes that "paucus pallabris. . . was something of a cant term in Shakespeare's England, . . . a corruption of the Spanish 'pocas palabras' . . . a jesting allusion to Thomas Kyd's THE SPANISH TRAGEDY (111, 14, 118) where Hieronimo, the hero of the play, cautions himself against revealing too much of what he knows by saying "Pocas Palabras, mild as the lamb." The fuller text is as follows:

. . . Even so:

What new device have they devised, trow?

Pocas palabras! mild as the lamb,

Is't I will be revenged? No, I am not the man.

The footnote in the text of SPANISH TRAGEDY identifies "pocus palabras" as the Spanish for "few words," so just on this surface, we have the entertaining situation of a drunkard quoting a corruption of a Spanish phrase from a play he hasn't read or seen (the lord of the manor tells us later that Sly "never heard a play") and the implication is that for some reason, he (Sly) shouldn't reveal too much. Perhaps he is even suggesting that "he is not the man."

But "paucus pallabris" when examined both phonetically in Latin, and as the spelling suggests, might carry a punning allusion to Oxford himself. "Paucus" is pronounced the same as "porcus" (pig or board, Oxford's crest). Pallabris could be a play on Pallas (Athena), i.e. 'of Pallas Athene'. Further, "bris" connotes hubris; my dictionary defines hubris as pride, and more specifically "(In Greek tragedy) an excess of ambition, pride, etc. ultimately causing the transgressor's ruin." We know that Oxford flirted with ruin regularly by his association with the theatre.

A Latin Dictionary provides another possible dimension to this phrase. A "palle" is "In the poets, a garment worn by men, e.g. the dress of a tragic actor". So Sly's reference could be paraphrased as "Therefore, I will not reveal too much; but I am in this very line revealing the Board, the Proud Athenian or Dramatist, in actor's garb."

Whether the proverb "Let the world slide" had particular relevance to Oxford is a question; maybe it's a reference to The Globe. The second instance of the same proverb, SHREW, II, 142, "we shall ne'er be yonger" has an echo in Lyly's EUPHUISM "Take hart et gresse, younger thou shalt never be." I have been unable to uncover a helpful reference to the word "sessa," sometimes shown as "sesey", although the Latin word "Sessor" is a very rare term for "a siter in the theatre." Some scholars think it's just a variant of cease or stop.

A second allusion to THE SPANISH TRAGEDY, "Go by, S. Jeronimy --") is Sly's bungled version of a line which apparently became a sort of catch-phrase; it must have been very commonplace, as there's no implication Sly was remotely familiar with the source play. Those watching the Induction Scene at court would get the gag: as Eve Turner Clark supposes THE SPANISH TRAGEDY to be an early work of Shakespeare rather than Kyd, the line would take on a subtler humor, with the shadow author misquoting the very lines he is supposed to have written.

No Oxfordian would miss the Player's line "Fear not, my lord, we can contain ourselves, Were he the veriest antic in the world." Penguin translates "veriest antic" as "the most complete buffoon; the oddest and most fantastical fellow." Naturally, it misses the pun on Vere, with Sly/Shaksper described as a "the most Vere-like [or passing-himself-off-as-Vere] actor in a ludicrous or grotesque part."

The lord's reference to the actor who played Soto provides another possible allusion. Maybe I am just starting to read too much into this passage, but a "farmer's eldest son" would certainly describe Shaksper, and that he "woo'd the gentlewoman so well" would take a swipe at the hasty and probably shot-gun marriage to Anne Hathaway. The name Soto could be just a variant of "Sot" to complete another set of jokes about the Stratfordian.)

The information in this scene is so suggestive in its depiction of Oxford and Shaksper that I almost wonder how the passage survived.

[Editors Note - While visiting the Victoria and Albert Museum, I found that the identification card adjacent to one of the cartoons painted by Raphael for tapestries reported that it had been originally owned by Philip, Earl of Montgomery, and Susan Vere, the daughter of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.]

Editor The Writing Company
Culver City, CA

Dear Editor:

Your 32 page SHAKESPEARE 1992 CATALOG lists books, videocassettes et alie but as far as I could determine not one of such provides an exposition and/or biography of those Shakespeare scholars who have rejected the attribution of the works of William Shakespeare to Will Shaksper of Stretford. To be sure, a preponderant number of Shakespeare biographers have adhered to that traditional attribution but hundreds of distinguished men and women of letters have not, to mention a few; Clifton Fadiman, Henry James, Clare Booth Luce, Mark Twain, Veldmir Nabokov, Charlie Chaplin, Sigmund Freud, Helen Keller, Walt Whitman, Orson Welles, John Greenleaf Whittier, Maxwell Perkins, Daphne DuMaurier and John Galsworthy,

I cite, and quote from, the listing of your first three biographies:

1. "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By Peter Levi. This engaging portrait of Shakespeare's [i.e., Shakespere's] life examines his poems and plays in their biographical context. . . ."

In his Introduction, Professor Levi predicates:

It is an axiom of method that the facts of Shakespeare's [i.e., Shakespere's] life. . . must be established as firmly as possible and without wishful thinking before those facts can be related to his writings. . . Many inspiring and misleading writers about (Shakspere) impart to (the) characters and passages of (the) plays an experience of life they merely imagine, bearing conjecture on conjecture and cobweb on cobweb (underlining supplied).

Examples of Professor Levi's method of establishing "facts without wishful thinking" are illustrated on p. 31 and similarly throughout the book:

"If as seems likely. . . "; "may well have been. . . "; "Perhaps. . . "; "had certainly left. . . "; "probably never. . . "; "is supposed. . . "; "What makes the story likelier. . . "; "may have been. . . "; "There is no reason why. . . "; and "it may be considered. . . ."

2. "SHAKESPEARE OF LONDON. By Marchette Chute. In this unique, classic biography, the author attempts to demystify the playwright and present what she calls a 'life-size' portrait of William Shakespeare. . . ."

Hamilton Basso in reviewing five orthodox biographies in The New Yorker (Apr. 8, 1950) wrote:

"The one thing [the five books by Bliss, Brown, Chute, Cooper and Pearson] have in common - besides their preoccupation with the same subject - is the making of bricks without much straw. . . Let us take Miss Chute at her foreword. . . She has based her book entirely, she says, 'on contemporary documents. . . The confusion that surrounds Shakespeare's life has not been caused by any lack of information. . . ' Having made so large a promise. . . we can only wait for Miss Chute to stand and deliver. . . but she doesn't. She, too, is hamstrung by the paucity of source materials. . . she has two ways of overcoming the difficulty, by making one flat unproved statement after another, and by using 'if' and 'probable' . . ."

3. "THE LIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By Giles E. Dawson. Illustrated with photographs of artifacts, this booklet reconstructs Shakespeare's [i.e., Shakespere's] life from the scant existing records of the time. . . ."

In 1949 Giles E. Dawson, when under oath in a deposition in the proceedings during an action for libel against him, confessed that he could not identify even one scrap of evidence during the Stratford man's lifetime which documented that he was the poet and playwright "William Shakespeare." Almost 10 years later, Dr. Dawson, when not under oath, wrote in his THE LIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE that there were "some fifty printed or written references set down during (Will. Shakespere's) lifetime" that referred to him as the author of the Shakespeare canon.

In SHAKESPEARE CROSS EXAMINATION (American Bar Association Journal, Third Printing 1974), Richard Bentley, one-time President of the Chicago Bar Association and member of the Board of Editors of the American Bar Association Journal, wrote:

Nowhere apart from the works themselves was a Shaksper or Shakespeare referred to during his lifetime either as playwright or a poet. We find no external evidence to identify William Shaksper of Stratford, or Shakespeare the actor, as an author. During Shaksper's entire life. . . not one of his contemporaries ever referred to him personally as a writer. The only references to Shakespeare were to writings with which that name was connected, and none referred otherwise personally to a writer of that name. Shaksper lived unknown as a literary man, and died unnoticed.

There are allusions in contemporary writings during Shaksper's lifetime to the Shakespeare works, and to a person who wrote them without otherwise identifying him in any way. However, not one of these allusions during the lifetime of the man of Stratford referred to him in any way as a writer, or connected him with the writer, or made any allusion whatever to the writer to identify him even remotely with the man of Stratford. Accordingly none of these allusions has the slightest probative value as to the identity of the author. . .

All of the allusions during the Stratford man's lifetime to the works or to someone who wrote them are part of what the orthodox Stratfordians call the "documentary proof" of the authorship. But of what are they proof? Only of the fact that there was a writer who wrote magnificent poetry and plays under the name of William Shakespeare or Shakes-speare. On that point, however, there is and has been no disagreement whatsoever, anywhere. But to offer those allusions as proof of who the writer was, whether the man of Stratford or someone else, is another question. On that point all of these allusions are in legal jargon, 'incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial,' for not one of them even purports to identify the writer with anyone.

Morse Johnson

"SHAKE-SPEARE & CO."
Reviews of New (And Still Available) Oxfordian Books
by
Tom Goff

Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose, by Elisabeth Seers. 122p., bibliography. Seattle, Washington: Consolidated Press Printing Co., Inc., 1991.

[Note. The following review deals with a new treatment of a much-argued and intricate subject: the hypothesis that the 17th Earl of Oxford and Queen Elizabeth were the 3rd Earl of Southampton's parents. For a fair-minded -- and noncommittal -- outline of the proposal, see The Mysterious William Shakespeare by Charlton Ogburn, Jr., pp. 342-346, 519-524. Brevity requires that I write especially of what is new and noteworthy in the book discussed below.]

Once "William Shakespeare" had dedicated two lengthy poems (Venus and Adonis in 1593 and The Rape of Lucrece in 1594) to Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, it was only a matter of time before readers would start to notice the easy, lordly familiarity with which "Shakespeare" addressed his noble patron (in one of the dedications Shakspeare -- with no small presumption for that era -- informs the young Earl of Southampton that he, Shakespeare, has *chosen* him to support the work). Likewise, it was perhaps inevitable that readers should one day notice the apparent link between those two dedications and the language -- paternal, legal, and regal -- of many of the Shakespeare Sonnets with all their glorious and riddling complexity.

After the Oxfordian movement had begun in the 1920's, some who believed Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, to be the true "Shakespeare" deciphered the idiom of the Sonnets and the darker secrets of England's "Virgin Queen," Elizabeth I, to disclose (they thought) the true story of the Wriothesley heir: the boy who -- substituted at birth as a genuine Wriothesley child -- still stood possible to inherit the English throne. (Shakespeare, perhaps writing ellusively, mentions "a little changeling boy" in one of his plays.) Such a circumstance, these Oxfordians believed, might help explain the secrecy and pseudonymity enshrouding the creation of the Shakespeare plays and poems. And they cited intriguing contemporary evidence to at least suggest

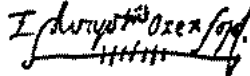
that the "virgin" Elizabeth not only could but *did* conceive and bear children (witness the spate of then-current rumors culminating in the illegal, long-dead "book of Babies," and the vents surrounding the mysterious disappearance of one Arthur Dudley, son [?] to Elizabeth and Lord Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester).

Now, longtime Oxfordian Ellsabeth Sears enters the fray with her bracing Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose, perhaps the most fully detailed and sequential treatment yet of a hypothesis delineated notably by Percy Allen, the Ogburns (Dorothy and Charlton, Sr.; see This Star of England, esp. Chap. 61), and William Plumer Fowler (see "Shake-spears's Heart Unlocked," SQS Newsletter, Fall 1982). Certainly her book, though it argues a thesis unfairly derided by Stratfordians, can persuade Oxfordians to think anew on the tasks before us; for while her hypothesis could yet be upset without dislocating our basic case for Oxford -- this to be urged in future moot-court tribunals and before mass audiences, perhaps -- the implicit message here is that we're also about the business (once the persuasive case is made and seen to win) of furnishing a new biography of "William Shakespeare," partly from the kinds of internal (the Sonnets) and external evidence Mrs. Sears supplies.

She raises and proposes answers to some fascinating questions: did Oxford and Elizabeth have a child together, and does this explain her mysterious withdrawal (1574) from a royal progress? Did Oxford secretly marry Elizabeth, even as early as 1569, and thereafter spend a frustrated career as her unacknowledged consort? If the 3rd Earl of Southampton was the offspring of an Oxford-Elizabeth cohabitation (and therefore presumably heir to the English throne), why was his claim discarded in favor of the eventual King James I? The odd pattern of imprisonment and release, of ascension into and fall out of royal perferment (for both Oxford and Southampton) is produced here in evidence.

The book's handling throughout is lively and succinct, with extensive documentation (the bibliography alone runs almost ten pages; would that there were an index!). Since the consequences of this conjectured episode -- possibly fateful for England -- stem from the intertwining of several careers (Oxford's, Elizabeth's, Southampton's, and William and Robert Cecil's), each protagonist is allotted ample treatment. And since no record of Southampton's career is complete without comment on his devotion to the Earl of Essex, the Essex Rebellion is outlined here in a highly engaging set-piece.

An especially notable exhibit Mrs. Sears introduces is Oxford's so-called "crown signature," with its superlineal "crown" design and a bottom flourish (a long horizontal slashed through with seven almost vertical penstrokes) looking like part of a tournament scoring-cheque.



[Signature reproduced from Shake-speare: Handwriting and Spelling by G.H. Rendall. London: Cecil Palmer, 1931.]

Oxford used the signature consistently from 1569 until just after Queen Elizabeth's death (1603), when he reverted (as on one Privy Council document) to a more conventional flourish with a knot of interconnected loops.¹ Was the "crown" really an emblem of the Earl's status as the unsung King Edward VII? Or was it just an earl's "coronet"; were the seven slashes just a signal of tournament success? (I feel less than qualified to sift the data here, especially without a copy of the article Sears cites in support.)

With all of its stimulating contentions, Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose is not faultless, perhaps, in one sense: occasional human and political events Sears touches upon may bear more than one interpretation, whereas she sometimes gives us a single reading. Mrs. Sears takes Sir Edward Dyer's remark that Queen Elizabeth "[does] descend very much in her sex as a woman" to refer to specific sexual transgressions, though it more probably has to do with a woman's supposed unsuitability to rule -- and her second-class status after Eve and the Fall. Also, not everyone will agree precisely with Sears's chronology: one justly noted Oxfordian, otherwise agreeing about Southampton's place in the first seventeen "marriage" sonnets, nevertheless disagrees with some of Mrs. Sears's beliefs about identifying the young Earl throughout the Sonnets as the "Fair Youth," citing Southampton's apparent diminishment in Oxford's esteem when negotiations to wed Southampton to the senior Earl's daughter Elizabeth (at apogee c. 1592) finally failed in 1594. (In fairness to Mrs. Sears, perhaps Southampton's subsequent absences campaigning with Essex help account for Shakespeare's ensuing silences.)

If Mrs. Sears has omitted any relevant items or possible readings of information, some such omissions are to be expected: she is an advocate urging one particular argument -- very ably. Moreover, certain of her contentions ("far-fetched," the Stratfordians will say) have a real if unexpected factual basis. Though I'm unconvinced by some pro-Oxford attempts to find Edward de Vere's name alluded to in passing and ordinary usages of "ever" and "never" (apart from well-known and credible instances in enigma-writings like the 1609

Troilus and Cressida preface: "A never writer to an ever reader. Newes"), Shakespeare did, in the Sonnets, use such terms -- and possible allusions both to Elizabeth's motto of "Always the same" and Southampton's of "One for all, all for one" ("Why write I still all one, ever the same. . .?"). And how can one object when Sears quotes verses styled "A Prelude upon the name of Henry Wriothesley Earl of / Southampton / Ever. . ." [emphasis added], with a "Never" closely following? Thomas Nashe, too, addressed the Earl of Southampton as the "bud" of a certain "red [Tudor?] rose": if he'd meant to exclude Elizabeth from the scope of his verses, would he rather have accentuated the "Wriothesly" name-component by means of a phonetically similar play upon "rose / lily"?²

Despite its freight of such possibly unanswerable questions, Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose is also laden with facts; and these somehow don't encumber Mrs. Sears's concise, to-the-point writing. Again, her evaluations of some facts may be debatable, but they do proceed from a thorough grounding in Elizabethan politics. Her beliefs about Oxford's (or Elizabeth's, or Southampton's) conduct at any given moment may be arguable, but they don't proceed from any serious misreading or distortion of the principals' psychologies as true history has recorded them. Without feeling completely convinced by Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose, I yet emphasize that this is a readable, serious, responsible effort highly deserving Oxfordian's attention.

To close, let us welcome this and other, forthcoming attempts to understand Oxford, Southampton, and Shakespeare's difficult Sonnets: searching for and finally knowing the truth behind the poems' mysteries will not not leave them diminished. They hold, till the end of time, their final secret: poetical greatness.

I've given publication data as printed in the book itself (may it soon find a mainstream publisher!), but Oxfordians can obtain the volume by writing Elisabeth Sears at 53 Coppervail Court, Princeton, NJ 08540, and by enclosing a requested \$15.00, postpaid.

1. Thereby hangs a tale about the importance and consistency the Elizabethans accorded their signatures. Even the formidable Richard III felt disinclined to challenge Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond (and mother of the future Henry VII), when she exercised her right to sign herself "Margaret R." -- R signifying either Richmond or her regal lineage. And Sir Walter Raleigh, following common practice, stuck to one consistent spelling of his name to distinguish himself from his identically named father residing in Fardell; Raleigh's signature then changed, but again with subsequent consistency, upon his daughter's demise. The one outstanding case of sloppiness and inconsistency coming to mind among Elizabethan signatures is, to be sure, that of William Shakspeare of Stratford.
2. As in Sonnet 98, according to William Plumer Fowler (see Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters, p. 141). Southampton's family name, Wriothesley, is usually given as having been pronounced "Risley," but could, notes Mr. Fowler, have been pronounced "Rose-ley," or "Rose-illy."

Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays, By Eve Turner Clark. Ed. Ruth Loyd Miller. 3rd rev. ed. (1974).
A Hundreth Sundre Flowres (from the orig. ed. of 1573). Eds. Bernard M. Ward, Ruth Loyd Miller. 2nd ed. (1975). In 2 vols. (Vol. 1: "Shakespeare" Identified and The Poems of Edward de Vere. Vol. 2: Oxfordian Vistas).

The above titles available from: Minos Publishing Co., P.O. Drawer 1309, Jennings, La. 70546.

Many Oxfordians would possibly agree that James Lardner's extensive New Yorker article on the Shakespeare authorship controversy (April 11, 1988), while seasoned with that magazine's characteristic wit and whimsy, was also a fair-minded miniature history of the anti-Steffordian movement. And while Lardner's thumbnail sketches of several prominent Oxfordians seemed almost Dickensian in skirting the line between accuracy and affable caricature, his rendering of Ruth Loyd Miller and Judge Minos D. Miller seemed delightful and true to life. Since Mrs. Miller's handsome editions of Oxfordian classics are still very much available, I wanted to "spend a word" on them and their books in this column.

The Millers' activities for the Oxford cause are many (and only part of their Renaissance-minded careers: Judge Miller, retired since 1977 from his position on Louisiana's 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals, is an engaging public speaker and highly capable student of Elizabethan paleography, with an important article on Shakespeare's Tempest lately to his credit in these pages [Spring 1988 Newsletter]). Mrs. Miller is an untiring researcher, educational and civic activist and attorney -- her successful advocacy made the landmark "Miller vs. Usury" litigation a feature of law students' case study for many years). At her equally successful talks on the Earl of Oxford (a number of them given during bi-annual research trips to the Huntington Library in San Marino), Mrs. Miller is apt to compare an introductory lecture on Oxford to a cocktail-party introduction, where there's little time for a novice to do more than pass, perhaps, through a receiving line and shake the Earl's hand. Mrs. Miller, however, modestly understates the informative value of her representations. The fine editions of pro-Oxford classics she's edited are still more informative.

Like so many of us, the Millers were converted to Oxfordianism by a chance-acquired book (the Ogburns' This Star of England). Mrs. Miller then found herself dismayed by the shortage of similar materials at L.S.U. end, characteristically, resolved to do something about it. Her solution was to seek out editions of J.T. Looney's "Shakespeare Identified" and other pioneering Oxfordian volumes for reprinting: "an enterprise," writes James Lardner, "that has entailed tracking down rights, designing covers (in matching deep purple), and composing new material to reflect the recent findings of Oxfordian scholars, Mrs. Miller among them." The refurbished volumes of De Vere scholarship resulting are lavishly illustrated, both in color and black-and-white, with reproductions of Oxford's principal surviving residences, family relation portraits, armorial bearings, and ancestral monuments. The rarely photographed Mr. Looney gazes (perhaps a little shyly) at the reader; and the textual as well as the pictorial content of the books is reflective of the Millers' scrupulosity and care.

That Mrs. Miller has expended the original works could be daunting to a new student, and perhaps occasion minor misunderstandings. Looney's magnum opus now appears in two volumes, as against the original one. Eva Turner Clark's Hidden Allusions, the first large-scale attempt to redate the Shakespeare plays to within Lord Oxford's lifetime, now contains new Millerian and other articles; while B.M. Ward's edition of A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres, a poetry anthology to which the young Oxford contributed, now has added information about George Gascoigne (erst-while collaborator with Oxford and later the book's bowdlerizer). But let no one worry: the added material is neither padding nor random interleaving.

Looney's great work is allowed to unfold in all its own omote yet compelling readability; the Millers' commentary picks up where he leaves off (they supply an evidentiary rejoinder reclaiming The Tempest for Shakespeare/Oxford, since Looney had thought it spurious on various ground of style and content). Meanwhile, Volume Two (Oxfordian Vistas), handled with the Millers' talents for ordering and classifying, contains a dazzling array of subject beadings ("The First Folio: A Family Affairs," etc.), valuable not only for the attached articles but also as research indicators for future students.

Occasionally, added materials actually realize an author's or editor's original intent: Ward, given the chance, would surely have included the Gascoigne annotations now appearing in Flowres. Hidden Allusions now contains Mrs. Clark's own pamphlet-length expansion of her earlier, now supplanted, chapter on Love's Labour's Lost.

Mrs. Miller, too, writes with abundant persuasive power (as do Judge Miller and J. Valcour Miller, both here represented) -- and with flashes of wit, as in the Hidden Allusions article (on Macbeth) composed as a "recipe" for "16th century marble cake" (the "ingredients" include such toothsome items as "Earl of Essex bitters" and "oils for Cecil"). In the cauldron boil and bake! The net effect of these articles (and others contributed by C.W. Barrell, J. Enoch Powell, et al.) is to strengthen the case of Oxford immensely. As with Charlton Ogborn's The Mysterious William Shakespeare, these books are indispensable cornerstones of any Oxfordian library. Available also from the Millers are xerox copies of B.M. Ward's out of print (but important) 1928 biography, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. For a current price listing, please write to the Millers at the address indicated above.

"THE SHAKESPEARE CONTROVERSY"

Warren Hope, former editor of the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter, M.A. Ph.D. in British Literature, Temple University, has written a book on the authorship issue entitled The Shakespeare Controversy. The 200-page hardcover book will be brought out in July 1992 by McFarland & Company Publishers, an academic publisher, at a list price \$25.95. The publisher has offered the Shakespeare Oxford Society special discount rates for prepaid bulk orders, as follows:

10 - 99 copies	30% discount (\$18.20 per copy)
100+ copies	40% discount (\$15.60 per copy)
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To achieve the greatest discount, the SOS must know which members would like to order and how many books they each would like to order. After figuring the total order, we will put a notice in the June issue of the Society newsletter as to what discount has been achieved. At that time, purchasers will be informed where to send their checks.

Those members interested in purchasing copies of Dr. Hope's book should send their orders to: Gary Goldstein, Trustee, Shakespeare Oxford Society, 123-60 83 Avenue, Suite 11-0, Kew Gardens, NY 11415. Please include your name, shipping address, and number of copies you would like to order.

From Betty Sears:

Charles Vere, Earl of Burford's speaking tour is a smashing success. Traveling with him for the past two weeks has been quite an experience. Listening to him tame all kinds of audiences from erudite English Speaking Unions to restless high school students. I am impressed by his ability to grab their attention quickly and convert their long-held Stratford mythology to curiosity about the truth.

One of Charles' most rewarding encounters was at a large private school in Connecticut, the Loomis-Chaffee School. The Junior and Senior classes, plus a sizeable contingent of students from nearby Simsbury High School, as well as faculty from both schools, filled a large gymnasium. The following day, Jane Archibald, Chair of the Loomis-Chaffee English Department, called to ask Charles to return on May 1st to address a special colloquium of faculty from all the private schools in Connecticut.

Charles Boyle has arranged for Charles to speak at Harvard, M.I.T., Boston University and U. Mass. at Amherst at the end of March.

Mildred (Pidge) Sexton has been busily organizing an Oxford Chapter in St. Louis. In response to a newspaper ad, she heard from 21 people. Lawyer and Oxford enthusiast, Leonard Deming in Nashua, NH has started a nucleus of an Oxford chapter in his area.

The Editor apologizes to Charlton Ogburn for printing in his article in the Fall 1991 Newsletter "voice" instead of "void" in the last sentence of the first quotation on page 2; and to Dom Sallani, for any inconvenience that may have been caused to him by printing in the same Newsletter of exaggerated reports to his efforts in promoting the Oxford case in Calgary.

Copies of THE MYSTERIOUS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE The Myth and the Reality (1984) by Charlton Ogburn have been returned, with shopworn jacket covers, and will be sold for \$15.00 plus \$3.50 (UPS) for postage (4 1/2% sales tax for Virginia residents) by EPM Publications, 1003 Turkey Run Road, Maclean, Va., 22201. (800-389-2339).

N.B. Since libraries do not retain jacket covers, gifts to them would certainly be accepted.

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