



The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter

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"Dedicated to Researching and Honoring the True Bard"



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"I am not what I am." Othello li

Spring 2006

Did Shakespeare Read From the 17th Earl of Oxford's Personal Library?

W. Ron Hess,
assisted by Alan Tarica

A real-life, reading, writing,
book-owning Bard:

One of our greatest Oxfordian advantages is that the 17th Earl of Oxford demonstrably read and wrote, whereas the family of Mr. Shakspeare of Stratford were afflicted with "congenital illiteracy" (quoth Irv Matus in a 1994 debate), and there is little to contradict the inference that Mr. Shakspeare was illiterate too. As to "Shakespeare," the author of the works we cherish, there's little doubt that he read and wrote "in over-plus," not just in English but also in Latin, French, Italian, and possibly Spanish. Moreover, whole

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OXFORD AND THE FIRST BLACKFRIARS

Part Two of Dr. Davis's previous article: "William Shakspeare, Oxford, Elizabethan Actors, and Playhouses"

As near as can be determined conclusively, Oxford was involved directly in only one Elizabethan playhouse, and that was the "first" Blackfriars, the third dedicated theater established in Elizabethan times. The history of this playhouse is most interesting and certainly relevant to our discussion, clearly introducing Oxford into the theater world.

To begin, we need to recall that Blackfriars was a monastery for the Dominican (or "Black") friars until Henry VIII broke with the Catholic Church (or vice versa), and Henry either destroyed or confiscated the monasteries of England as he did with Blackfriars in 1538. He presented (by "letting") Blackfriars to his supportive aristocrats so that during Elizabeth's reign the properties were held privately. Blackfriars was in an upscale area of west London (at the time) (Adams 91-110), and though it was within the city wall, it was under the jurisdiction of the crown as opposed to the Council of London. It consisted of a number of buildings and numerous gardens. In and around the property lived important gentry such as Lord Cobham and the French ambassador. Numerous court activities had occurred there during Henry VIII's reign including the hearing of the case against Catherine of Aragon and later the Parliament hearing charges against Cardinal Wolsey.

Following the success of James Burbage's Theater and Curtain in 1576-7, a Richard Farrant sought to convert one of the buildings to an enclosed playhouse. His ostensible plan was to use the playhouse for practicing of the Children of the Royal Chapel, but to no one's surprise, he would

open it up to the public who would pay to see these "practice" plays. He obtained his lease from Sir William More who had acquired the property from Lord Cobham who in turn had procured it from Sir Henry Neville. It is interesting that Neville apparently helped (through his connections) Farrant with the acquisition.

Farrant consummated the lease from More on December 20, 1576, and proceeded to renovate the property, causing him to become seriously indebted. (In a subsequent law suit, More complained that the renovations had put the property into a state of "great ruin.") For the "training" of boy actors, Farrant sought to combine the Children of Windsor with the Children of the Royal Chapel for whom William Hunnis was master. In 1580, Moore was planning action against Farrant for utilizing the property continually as a playhouse, not just for rehearsal. Unfortunately, this was the year Farrant died. Anne Farrant, his widow, was now saddled with the debt problem without the ability to run the theater. She wrote a letter to More asking permission to sublet the premise, which she did, although later More denied giving such permission. The widow made a formal lease (sublet) in December, 1580 to William Hunnis and John Newman for £20 13s 4d per annum. This was a little over £6 that she had to pay More for her lease. In 1583, Hunnis and Newman transferred their lease to a Welshman, Henry Evans. This was done without More's consent and constituted a definite breach of the original lease agreement. More declared the original lease invalid, but Evans, who was

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P.O. Box 1854
Silver Spring, MD 20902
Tel: (301) 946-8333
Fax: (301) 946-1313
Email: oxfordnet@aol.com
ISSN 1525-6863
www.shakespeare-oxford.com

Editors:
Lew Tate

Editorial Board:
Dr. Frank Davis
Susan Sybersma
Ramon Jimenez
Brian Bechtold
Dr. James Brooks
Joe Peel
James Sherwood
Dr. Richard Smiley

Layout and Printing
St. Martin de Porres Lay Dominicans
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President's Page

Dear Fellow Shakespeare Lovers:

Countdown to the Ann Arbor Conference (November 9-12, 2006)

It's hard to believe our conference in Ann Arbor is only three months away!

This will be our second joint conference with the Shakespeare Fellowship. We're hoping for a great turnout from both organizations, as well as from as many non-members as we can attract. A big draw for this conference – in fact one of the main reasons we opted for this venue during these dates – is the presence at the University of Michigan of famed Shakespearean actor Patrick Stewart and the Royal Shakespeare Company the same week of our conference. We're exploring the technological feasibility of "beaming up" Patrick Stewart and others from the RSC into our conference. More on that later!

We have secured tickets for conference participants (maximum of three tickets per registrant) for *Julius Caesar* (Thursday evening), *The Tempest* (Friday evening), and *Antony and Cleopatra* (Saturday evening). Please see the Registration insert or the SOS website for more details. These tickets are in great demand, so I encourage you to register and order your tickets as soon as possible.

Another Countdown – Our 50th Anniversary in 2007

Over the next several months, your Board of Directors and hopefully all members of the Society will be exploring ideas for celebrating our 50th anniversary next year. I hope we will all take this opportunity to "Think Big" so we make the most of the "golden" PR and marketing opportunities offered by our Golden Anniversary in 2007. Among other things, we should consider:

- Setting an ambitious goal for expanding our membership;
- Marking the anniversary year with a series of special authorship and Oxford-related "Hot Topics" publications;
- Establishing an active Speakers Bureau of members willing to speak to lo-

cal schools and community groups;

- Sponsor a series of lectures or conferences on the authorship question;
- Seek funding from individuals, and foundations to support our ongoing educational and outreach programs.

Please share any ideas you have about how best to mark our Golden Anniversary.

New Yahoo! Email Discussion Group

The Board of Directors recently voted to create a new Shakespeare Oxford Society discussion group on Yahoo! The group has now been created and all SOS members are invited to participate. Simply visit ShakespeareOxfordSociety-subscribe@yahoo.com to subscribe to the group.

Let me be clear: This new Yahoo! group is exclusively for members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, about the Shakespeare Oxford Society. There are other groups out there for broader discussions regarding the

(cont'd on p. 25)

GREETINGS

Whereas we have many words to fit in the newsletter, and whereas brevity is the soul of wit, ...

I wish to thank the scholars/writers for the tremendous content of this issue. Also, several of them deserve thanks for adjusting to a hurry-up deadline enabling us to inch closer to a reasonable schedule. If you are working on a project for the 'summer' newsletter, try for a mid September submission. While on submissions: a) if at all possible, please submit digitally; b) please use MLA, particularly in documentation; c) if not MLA, please indicate the format you are using and stick with that format; d) please remember that you can report on De Vere studies activities, educational strategies, personal experiences; e) keep digging. You may be the one to find the document, authenticated by your good work, that says, "I am damn tired of writing the name of that rube from Podunk, Warwickshire."

Signed, Edward Oxenford

Lew Tate, ed.

tate3211@bellsouth.net

SOS and SF Joint Conference November 9-12, 2006 in Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Ann Arbor Authorship Conference, jointly sponsored by the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship, will be held beginning at 2 p.m. on Thursday through 2 p.m. Sunday, November 9-12, at the Dahlmann Campus Inn, on the campus of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. This will coincide with the last week of a three-week "residency" of The Royal Shakespeare Company. Tickets will be available for all interested registrants for the RSC performances of *The Tempest* (Friday night) and *Antony and Cleopatra* (Saturday night), both starring Patrick Stewart. A limited number of tickets to the Thursday night performance of *Julius Caesar* are also available. Each registrant may purchase two additional tickets to each performance while available.

The following is a list of current proposed speakers: Tom Hunter, Peter Dickson, Ron Hess, Bill Farina, Ron Halstead, Barb Burris, Johnathon Dixon, Paul Altrocchi, Ren Draya, Michael Egan, Roger Stritmatter, Lynne Kositsky, Rima Greenhill, Earl Showerman, Stephanie Hughes, Matthew Cossolotto, Richard Desper, Peter Austin-Zacharias, Richard Whalen, and Hank Whittemore.

The closest major airport to Ann Arbor is Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, about 25 miles away. This airport is a hub for Northwest Airlines and also serves other airlines such as American, America West, Continental, Delta, Southwest, Spirit, United and US Airways. Possible travel arrangements to Ann Arbor will be provided upon receipt of Conference registration.

Accommodations:

A very limited number of discounted rooms are being held at the Dahlmann Campus Inn. Regularly priced rooms at the Campus Inn and at two other campus hotels within walking distance of the Campus Inn and the theater are also being held. Please call

the hotels directly and mention either the SOS or the Shakespeare Fellowship.

Dahlmann Campus Inn (734-769-2200): Discounted rooms are \$135/\$157 (single/double occupancy). Regular priced rooms are \$201/\$233

Bell Tower Hotel (734-769-3010): varying rates from \$139/\$161 to \$216/\$238

Inn At the Michigan League (734-764-3177): Single occupancy rate \$130 Thursday night and \$135 Friday and Saturday nights. Extra person \$10

A larger number of less expensive rooms are being held in several hotels located in a cluster (within walking distance of each other) about 2-3 miles off campus (on the way from the airport to the campus). Again, call the hotels directly and mention SOS or SF to get the discounted rate.

Hampton Inn South (734-665-5000): \$89

Four Points Sheraton (734-996-0600): \$92. There is a complimentary shuttle bus service for guests to get to campus.

Courtyard by Marriott (734-995-5900): \$89

Fairfield Inn by Marriott (734-995-5200): \$72

For information on the RSC visit to Ann Arbor, including ticket sales, go to www.ums.org.

If you are interested in presenting a paper at the Conference, please send a title and one-paragraph abstract to either John Hamill (hamillx@pacbell.net) or Lynne Kositsky (lynnekositsky@hotmail.com).

Be sure to register early! Theater tickets may be limited. If available, up to two extra theater tickets may be purchased with your registration. A registration form is enclosed with this newsletter. Send it in today!

THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

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

Submit text in digital form to: editor@shakespeare-oxford.com
ta3211@bellsouth.net

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Newsletter Editor • Shakespeare Oxford Society
PO Box 1854 • Silver Spring, MD 20902

Personal Adventures with the Authorship Question

Robin Fox

My encounters with the "Shakespeare" authorship problem are described in *Participant Observer: Memoir of a Transatlantic Life*, an account of the first forty years of my life. At school in the North of England in the late forties, I had my first shock. (The story is told in the third person.)

"He read Mark Twain on Shakespeare and a whole part of his world came tumbling down. If we couldn't be sure that Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare – and clearly the boring Stratford businessman Mr. Wm. Shaksper hadn't written those exquisite aristocratic poems and plays – then of what could we be sure?" (90-91)

Since my major subject in preparing for university entrance was English Literature and History, and since the major topic was the works of Shakespeare, this revelation had a shattering effect. I had, however, to keep it to myself for exam purposes, which was not hard since the question of authorship never came up as such. The plays were dealt with as things in themselves, unconnected to the life of whoever was their author.

Later, studying sociology, philosophy and anthropology at the London School of Economics in the early fifties, I had another unexpected encounter.. It was my first time speaking at the Student Union weekly debate, and I seconded a motion (something like — "Freedom is more important than equality") proposed by the Tory MP, Enoch Powell.

"He was truly impressed in conversation in the bar afterwards with Powell's intelligence and power of personality. A strange man, not even like a politician, more of an academic – which evidently he had been in Australia: a professor of Greek. He was a passionate believer in the claims of the Earl of Oxford to have written "Shakespeare." This gave them something in common because our skeptic had never recovered from Twain's debunking of the Stratford businessman. In some ways Powell was perhaps too intelligent, too academic, to be a successful politician. When he finally fell from grace it was really because he was too honest: he said what many of his party thought, but could not say out of political necessity: another hard lesson political reality." (121)

Powell's "fall from grace" was a result of his prediction that uncontrolled immigration would lead to blood in the streets. He lost his Conservative seat in Birmingham and was rescued by the Ulster Unionists and voted back to Parliament in Belfast. None of this helped his Oxfordian cause. Powell was a political pariah to English intellectuals, comparable perhaps to Governor George Wallace in the States. To quote him as a supporter of the Oxford case was to court ridicule and contempt. However, the only other serious contender I knew about at the time was Francis Bacon, whose case got lost in a morass of codes and ciphers, which helped the orthodox portray all skeptics as fools. I had been studying the philosophy of science under Karl Popper, and had read enough Bacon – the *Novum Organum* and *The New Atlantis*, to figure

that he was, while a brilliant thinker, an unlikely candidate for the Shakespeare crown.

Later that decade, at Harvard for graduate studies in the Social Relations Department (now defunct) I was forced to read the works of Sigmund Freud who then dominated intellectual discussion. It was heavy going at first, but I liked *Totem and Taboo*, and eventually wrote a follow-up: *The Red Lamp of Incest*. I deeply admired Freud's great learning. Then...

"He warmed even more to Freud when he discovered that the old guy was a passionate devotee of the case for the Earl of Oxford as the author of "Shakespeare." (How unfortunate, though, that the originator of the case was the oddly named 'J. Thomas Looney': an old Manx name, and pronounced 'Loney' – but no one knew that, and it didn't help the cause." (176)

Add Looney to Powell and you had a lot of baggage going into the authorship argument. I did read Looney, however, and was impressed by his arguments. However, I still thought there was a lot of Marlowe in the early works, and that there must have been a consortium, with perhaps "Shakespeare" (the Stratford one) as the entrepreneurial, wheeler-dealer producer, making the nice profit he later parlayed into Stratford real estate. He also, as the "upstart crow" episode suggests, didn't mind passing himself off as the author.

Many years later, in the seventies, I was on sabbatical at Oxford at the invitation of Maurice Freedman, head of the Institute of Social Anthropology and a fellow of All Souls College. I was invited to dinner there, with A. L. Rowse presiding.

*He did not know quite how passionate a
bardolator Rowse was in turn. "Idiotic stuff!"
spluttered the indignant one. "De Vere!
De Vere! My God! Earls don't write plays.
What earl ever wrote a play? Clever
grammar school boys write plays.*

"For a start he had to fend off Rowse's not-too-serious advances, but then he had the temerity to bring up the subject of the authorship of Shakespeare. He even worse had to mention Enoch Powell's quite passionate espousal of the cause of the Earl of Oxford. He knew Rowse had written a 'biography' of the Bard – full of suppositions rather than facts, since there were so few facts, and those contradictory. He did not

(cont'd on p. 12)

Oxford Blackfriars (cont'd from p. 1)

a lawyer, kept the issue delayed. Now the widow got into the fray by bringing a suit against Evans in the Court of Requests. It was at this time of disaster that the Earl of Oxford entered the picture to save the day.

Oxford himself had a troupe of boy actors (the Children of St Pauls), and as we know through Puttenham and other sources, he was a writer of plays. Oxford bought the lease from Evans, keeping him as manager while retaining Hunnis as one of the trainers for the troupe. The troupe now consisted of both the Children of the Royal Chapel and the Children of St Pauls. Then in June, 1583, Oxford transferred the lease as a gift to his secretary, John Lyly. It was at this time that two of Lyly's plays (later attributed to Lyly), *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*, were shown. Lyly had been in Oxford's service since about 1580, this date determined in part from the dedication of Lyly's second book, *Euphues and His England*; but some have suggested as early as 1578. Lyly had written a letter to Burghley in June of 1582 concerning some unspecified problem he was having with Oxford and tried to convince Burghley that he (Lyly) was not at fault. Perhaps the transfer of the Blackfriars to Lyly was related to resolving this unknown problem, but there is also another possibility having to do with the authorship of the two plays. I am not the first to suggest that Oxford may have had a hand in the writing of not only *Euphues*, but collaborated with the writing of plays now attributed to Lyly. We have no documentary evidence of a quid pro quo, but it is an interesting conjecture with some merit. What we do have is universal agreement that Lyly's works were the "model" for Shakespeare's- particularly for comedy. Consider what R.W. Bond, the renowned biographer of Lyly, said in 1902:

"to his [Lyly] real originality, to the superiority of his work to anything that preceded it, and to his prime importance as *Shakespeare's chief master and exemplar; in comedy, Lyly is Shakespeare's only model.*" [Italics added]

And:

"The evidence of the latter's [Shakespeare] study and *imitation of him [Lyly] is abundant and Lyly's influence is of a far more permanent nature than any exercised on the great poet by other writers.*" [Italics added]

Then:

"From the Earl of Oxford, probably, it was that Lyly first received the dramatic impulse. None of Oxford's comedies survive, but Puttenham writing in 1589,..."

(Bond, I. p. 24)

B.M. Ward (275-280) said that he believed that Oxford *collaborated* with Lyly on the writing of the plays, and he listed six reasons for this conclusion:

1. The details in Lyly's play *Sapho and Phao* concerning the reference to the ferry crossing of the mouth of the Anapus River to Syracuse in Sicily is of such detail that makes one conclude the author had intimate knowledge based on personal observations. Lyly had not been to Sicily, but Oxford had.

2. Lyrics in the plays are considered by scholars, such as Bond and Lee, to be beyond the reach of Lyly, and he is credited with no other poems (except perhaps one). The locations of the songs were indicated in the early quartos, but not written. They first appear in Blount's 1632 collection of "Six Court Comedies" when Blount restored 21 of them. Lyly is without definitive evidence that he wrote poems or lyrics, but Oxford did as Farmer praised him to be as good as the "professionals."
3. Sapho and Phao are thought by many scholars to characterize Elizabeth and Alencon- and Elizabeth is not always portrayed in such a favorable light. Would Lyly be allowed to make these characterizations? The scholars who disagree with the characterization use this question for their reason of doubting. But could perhaps Oxford get away with it?

I am not the first to suggest that Oxford may have had a hand in the writing of not only Euphues, but collaborated with the writing of plays now attributed to Lyly. We have no documentary evidence of a quid pro quo, but it is an interesting conjecture with some merit

4. The quartos were anonymous, except that the last two of his six plays - *The Woman in the Moone* (1597) and *Loves Metamorphosis* (1601) - were attributed to Lyly on the frontispiece.
5. How was Lyly able to get his plays past censorship- especially *Sapho and Phao*? Oxford would obviously have a better chance.
6. In 1593, Gabriel Harvey made that comment regarding the "fiddlestick of Oxford." [see below]

Fiddlestick of Oxford

Bond agrees with G.F. Baker that Harvey's statement in *Pierce's Supererogation* about Lyly:

He hath not played the vicemaster of Poules, and the Foole-master of the Theater for naughtes; himself a mad lad, as ever twanged, never troubled with any substance of witt, or circumstance of honestie, sometime the fiddlestick of Oxford, now the very bable of London; would fayne forsooth have some other esteemed, as all men value him. (I: 33-40)

Bond and Baker felt this indicated that Lyly was in fact Vicemaster of St Paul's choirboys, assistant to Thomas Giles. "The fiddlestick of Oxford" has been debated as meaning either Oxford University or Lord Oxford. According to the OED, the two most likely possible meanings here are: "something insignificant, absurd", which would seem to apply better to Oxford University; whereas, "something to be played like a bow string" would fit better with Oxford, the

person. Another option, according to Ward, would be that Harvey intended both: a double entendre.(279) We can only guess.

It is interesting that in Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, (II,iv,521), we have Prince Hal saying to the Hostess and Falstaff "the devil rides upon a fiddlestick." According to the OED the meaning is "here's a fine commotion."

Early in 1584 things seemed to be going well at Blackfriars. On January 1, 1584, the play *Campaspe* was presented before Queen Elizabeth at Blackfriars and *Sapho and Phao* was presented at Court on March 3rd with a later showing before the public at Blackfriars. But around Easter, things took a turn.

The end of the "First" Blackfriars

The Oxford/Lyly control of the Blackfriars did not last long- just about a year. Around Easter of 1584, Sir William More, the owner of the property, succeeded in taking the case to court and won on the basis that the original lease had no provision for subletting the property. More denied ever having given the permission although the letter from Anne Farrant requesting such permission is extant. The widow also wrote to Walsingham requesting assistance saying the loss "might be her utter undoing." But it was to no avail. The property reverted back to More who then converted the building to tenement housing.

In 1584, Oxford granted Lyly lands valued at £30 13s 4d "in consideration of the good and faithful service that he the said Lyly hath heretofore done unto the said Earl" (Ward 281), and Elizabeth made Lyly Vicemaster of the Children of St Pauls. Could this be another quid pro quo?

Oxford's Men

Oxford's relationship with actors and the theater did not begin with his 1583 involvement in the Blackfriars. Even as a boy, Oxford had been exposed to the tradition of maintaining an acting troupe as his father certainly did. In 1580, the troupe of Warwick's Men was transferred to the service of Lord Oxford, and it may be that Lyly was the manager of this troupe as well. There is a reference dated June 21, 1580 from the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University to Burghley, who was Chancellor, stating:

"commend...my Lord of Oxford his players, that they might show their cunning in certain plays they have already practiced by them before the Queen's Majesty." (Ogburn 633)

In 1584 we have the report that:

The *History of Agamemnon and Ulisses* was presented and enacted before her Majesty by the Earl of Oxenford his boys on St John's Day at night at Greenwich. (Nelson, 247)

It has been suggested first by Looney (312) and reiterated by Eva Turner Clarke (627) that this play was, in fact, later to be called *Troilus and Cressida* and was written by Oxford. Unfortunately, we have no corroborative proof although certainly this is not unreasonable if you believe Oxford was Shakespeare.

The provincial performances of Oxford's Men between 1580-1587 has been well documented by Nelson (245) listing 38 performances during this period. However, there is only one performance

each for the years 1586 and 1587. The next we see recorded relative to the acting activity of Oxford's Men is in 1602 when a report from the Privy Council notes a combining of Oxford's Men with Worcester's and that "they are assigned to the Boar's Head to prevent their changing their place at their own discretion." (Ogburn, 750-1; Nelson, 391-2) Nelson (391) goes on to say that the recording of two plays with the stationer's register "demonstrate the continuity" of Oxford's Men throughout even though the documentation from 1587-1602 is lacking. The two plays were *The Weakest goeth to the Wall* printed in 1600, and *the true historye of George Scanderborge* registered July 3, 1601. It is Nelson's contention to show that Oxford's Men were continually active throughout the time from 1580 to his death in 1604. The importance of this to Nelson is to discredit any possibility that Oxford was writing as Shakespeare. He wishes to maintain that if Oxford were Shakespeare, he would have been writing only for his own troupe, not the Lord Chamberlain's or any other. However, I wish to point out that the registering of a play with the Stationer's Register was for the printing process and does not tell us when the play was written or acted. These two plays, printed/registered in 1600/1601 do not prove Oxford's troupe was active at this time. Furthermore, it is suspicious that the records from the provinces seemed so active until 1586-7 when down to one, they became non existent. Gwynneth Bowen (1) citing from Professor Hurstfield's book (253):

Then in early 1589, shortly after the death of Anne, Burghley instituted proceedings
Against the Earl for his debt, and some of his lands were seized and held for payment.

Ms. Bowen posited that Oxford was in no financial position to continue maintaining an acting troupe from this period. This would seem a logical explanation for the lack of documentation of activity of Oxford's Men during this period. Actors frequently jumped from one troupe to another depending on circumstances and may have then become part of Worcester's Men as Ms. Bowen also suggests.

In short, there are a number of possible explanations for this period of apparent relative non-activity, another being that Oxford was busy writing or rewriting his plays. But the fact is we simply do not know. But neither does Nelson whose persistent bias unfortunately permeates his otherwise important work.

Note that in the beginning, I said that it can only be *determined conclusively* that Oxford was directly involved in one theater, the first Blackfriar's. Please note the "Oxfordian Archive" of Bowen's article (printed in this newsletter and cited below) that suggests another possible theater interest, and gives more important detailed information on Worcester's and Oxford's men.

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Review of the Annual Meeting of the De Vere Society

Derran Charlton

The Annual General Meeting of the De Vere Society was held in the splendid surroundings of The Banqueting Hall, Castle Hedingham, Essex on May 14, 2006. Approximately 100 members and their guests were present, including several welcomed visitors from America and mainland Europe.

Richard Malim, Honorary Secretary, in reviewing the events of the past year, announced the good news that 386 copies of the DVS book *Great Oxford* had been sold to date. Three copies have now been placed in the Archivio di Stato in Venice. Richard expressed how the DVS Library was presently not accessible and outlined how the Globe authorities had proposed storage there. He then warmly introduced Sir Ian McGeoch who gave the following well received talk:

“In Loco Parentis: — An Heir and an Invention”

On 6 October 1573, Henry Wriothesley, 2nd Earl of Southampton, inscribed a letter ‘To my assured friend, Mr William More Esquire, Losely’:

...Although it so happed by the sudden sickness of my wife, that we could not by possibility have her present as desired yet I have thought good to imparte unto you such comfort as God hath sent me after all my longe troubles, which is that this present morning, at iii of the clock, my wife was dd; of a goodly boy (God bless him!) the which, although yt was not without great peril to them both for the present, yet now, I thanke God, both are in good state. Yf your wife will take the paynes to visit her, we shall be mighty glad of her company, this present Tuesday 1573.

Your assured friend
H. Southampton

The baby was named Henry.

The ‘longe troubles’ to which the earl referred had arisen from his staunch, but indiscreet adherence to the Catholic faith, according to which he had avowed that in case of war with Spain his conscience would over-ride his loyalty to his Protestant Queen. In consequence Queen Elizabeth had consigned him, on October, 1571 to the Tower. There he had remained, living in the comparative comfort permitted in his circumstances, until Lord Burleigh,



After wax likeness in Hedingham Castle

in response to his woeful letters, secured his release, on May 1, 1573. During his incarceration the earl could have received visits from his wife in private, so that the maintenance of conjugal relations was feasible: in the present context, however, it may be relevant that for a fervent Catholic such as the earl, abstinence during Lent would have been in order, and in 1573 Lent was from 10 February until 22 March.

From the Tower the earl was taken into the supervisory care of Mr William More, of Losely, near Guildford, whence in due course he moved to Cowdray, in Sussex, the seat of his father-in-law, Anthony Browne, Viscount Montagu. We do not know how things stood at this time between Mary, 2nd Countess of Southampton and her husband. It was the rule rather than

the exception in Elizabethan times for marriages between children of noble, as of royal families, to be arranged; and betrothal took place early. Mary Browne was only thirteen when she was married to the 21 year old Henry Wriothesley; by 1573 she had already borne two daughters and was still only nineteen. According to G.P.V. Akrigg (*Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton*, 1964):

The half-dozen years after the birth of his heir were probably the happiest of the second Earl's life, (but his) years of peace soon came to an end.

Tetchy, ill-tempered and proud, he was no doubt something less than a perfect husband. His wife, no longer the demure young thing of her wedding portrait, was on her way to becoming the self-willed, self-pitying, sensuous woman of her middle years.

On October 4, 1581, two days before his son turned eight years of age, the second earl died. A few months later the fatherless boy found himself in the care of William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, Master of the Wards, in the company of scions of other noble houses, one of whom — and young Southampton was the leading contender — would be chosen to marry Burleigh's grand-daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Vere, daughter of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.

Oxford had himself been a Ward of Court in Burleigh's care since the age of twelve and had grown up with Anne Cecil. His marriage on December 10, 1571, to Anne when he was twenty-one and she was just fifteen was strictly dynastic; indeed, he was said almost at once to have ‘put away’ his young wife, possibly in order to establish the two year non-consummation period necessary in order to provide grounds for divorce. This was certainly no love-

match. Nor were Burleigh's dynastic pretensions achieved. During Oxford's continental travels, from February 1575 until April 1576, Anne bore him a daughter, Elizabeth, about whose legitimacy his bitter Catholic enemies at Court bruited doubts. For this and many other reasons Oxford refused to take Anne back as his wife until at last, in 1582, he and Burleigh agreed that the story of her infidelity was a calumny. Thereafter Anne provided the son and heir so ardently desired, but tragically the little boy lived for a few weeks only and was buried in the church at Castle Hedingham, on May 9, 1583. In June 1588, Anne Oxford died, and there was still no legitimate heir to the 17th Earl of Oxford. It was certainly a triumph of hope over experience for Burleigh, and Mildred, his formidable wife, to seek yet again to promote a dynastic alliance, this time by marrying their grand-daughter to the Earl of Southampton. But this time the young man, unlike Edward de Vere, staunchly refused even to contemplate marriage, pleading youth. In this he was supported by his mother who in May 1593 had remarried, this time to old Sir Thomas Heneage, Queen Elizabeth's Treasurer of

But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather.' What is 'William Shakespeare' supposed to have invented of which Venus and Adonis is the first heir if it were not the pen-name William Shakespeare itself?

the Chamber, Vice-Chancellor of the Household and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

So much for the background. Now for the nub of the matter. Edward de Vere, having acquired a reputation for scandalous and profligate behaviour, had also remarried. His new wife, Elizabeth Trentham, daughter of a Staffordshire landowner, had been a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth for ten years and was clever enough for both to recognize Vere's literary genius and to manage his disorderly lifestyle. More important still, on February 24, 1593, she bore him a son and heir, Lord Bolbec, christened Henry. Why Henry? Never, in the seventeen generations of de Veres, had any of them been named Henry. A clue is to be found in the dedication by Edward de Vere, using for the first time the pen name William Shakespeare, of a narrative poem titled "Venus and Adonis", to Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, the work having been licensed on April 18, 1593, by the Archbishop of Canterbury. This was the first time that the name William Shakespeare had ever appeared in print. — Orthodox opinion has no difficulty in accepting the absence of any Shakespearian juvenilia. Genius, it holds, can suddenly possess a man and enable him to create a thousand lines of beautifully crafted verse founded upon familiarity with, for example, the works of Ovid; nor is any explanation forthcoming of the enigmatic self-deprecatory comment in the dedication: 'But

if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather.' What is 'William Shakespeare' supposed to have invented of which Venus and Adonis is the first heir if it were not the pen-name William Shakespeare itself? And, given the date of publication, is there not a typically Shakespearean play on the word 'heir'? Not only does de Vere invent a new pen-name; he dedicates "Venus and Adonis" to a young man who was in fact his own first-born heir, although he could never be acknowledged as such to the world without bringing dishonour upon the boy's mother as well as upon himself; and it is this youth who, like Adonis, is under pressure to submit to the embraces of a woman or marriage, let us say, when he would much rather be hunting or fighting.

Sharing as we do with the Stratfordians the love of Shakespeare and recognition of his unique creative spirit, it is agreeable to find common ground with them in their response to his works. That standard-bearer for the Stratford man, A.L. Rowse, Fellow of All Souls, for example, had no difficulty in accepting that the same author wrote "Venus and Adonis" and the Sonnets; and he was equally convinced that the noble youth to whom the former was dedicated and the latter addressed was Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. So far so good. But one cannot subscribe in all honesty to the proposition (*William Shakespeare*, 1963) that a man in his late twenties, born, bred and educated in a small country town, could have written 'a series of sonnets to persuade a young (noble) man to marry, to perpetuate his looks and carry on his family.' Rowse is on firmer ground when he observes that: 'one cannot fail to notice the tutorial element in Shakespeare's attitude, solicitous and apprehensive — after all, the young man had no father to direct him-'. Unfortunately, he concludes that 'the Sonnets began as duty-offerings of a poet to his patron, and that character continues throughout, with the proper deference of the writer to one so much above him in social station.' This will not do. Fortunately, Rowse redeems himself in stating that the Sonnets are documents of the first importance, for 'they are the most autobiographical ever written', and we must surely agree with him when he perceives that: 'All through the Sonnets there is a quasi-parental element, an anxious sense of responsibility for the fatherless youth, so apt to be misguided, as if Shakespeare was in loco parentis — to use a university term.'

Commenting on this insightful deduction Charlton Ogburn (*The Mysterious William Shakespeare*, 1984) says: 'If the poet were the youth's father, much of the Sonnets' tenor which is all but inexplicable would be explained and added significance given to the lines in Sonnet II, which already tells us much:

Thou art thy mothers glass; and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April other prime.

Indeed. Let the year be 1573. Call to mind the two young couples of whom we have already spoken — Edward and Anne Oxford and Henry and Mary Southampton. Oxford, immediately after being more or less dragged to the altar, has taken up residence at his Wivenhoe mansion, accompanied by his bride but maintaining a ménage of male friends and their female companions, free-living and carousing so that Anne writes plaintively to her father, and in

sadness meanwhile Edward repairs from time to time to London, where he keeps chambers in the Savoy, continuing to engage in lively pursuit of literature and the arts, as witness his preface dated 5 January 1572, in elegant Latin, of Bartholomew Clerke's translation into Latin of Castiglione's Italian *Il Cortegiano*. Meanwhile, the comely young matron, Mary Southampton, resides at Southampton House, not a mile from the Savoy, while her husband moulders in the Tower. No doubt she pays dutiful visits from time to time, but unlike Anne Oxford (nee Cecil), who retained some affection for her young Lord, Mary Southampton (nee Browne) was at best indifferent to hers.

In the circumstances it would hardly have been surprising if Edward Oxford and Mary Southampton had met socially; that the meeting quickly led to a passionate love affair, and that in consequence Mary had become pregnant, early in 1573, with a child by Edward. Fast forward to October 6, 1573, when Henry Wriothesley, heir to the 2nd Earl of Southampton, is born — 'not without great peril to them both'. This could signify a seven-month baby, in which case conception would have been early the previous April. Relations between Mary Southampton and her husband, confined to the Tower until May 1, 1573, were evidently such that the matter of paternity must remain, in the absence of other evidence, open to question. At any rate there seems to be a strong probability, to

put it no higher, that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was the sire of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton.

There remains, perhaps foremost amongst the questions raised by the Sonnets, that of the identity of 'the.onlie.begetter.of.these.insuing.sonnets.Mr.W.H...' In my view, by far the most penetrating study of these documents — 'the most autobiographical ever written.' is that made by Canon G.H. Rendall, B.D. Litt.D., LL.D. (London, Murray, 1930). He agrees with Rowse that the narrative poems and the Sonnets were by the same author, and that the fair youth was Southampton; unfortunately, when it comes to the identity of 'Mr. W.H.'; whereas, Rowse argues convincingly that 'the.onlie.begetter.' was Sir William Harvey, Mary Southampton's third husband, whom she married in 1608 and made her literary executor. Rendall reasons that Lord (sic) Harvey 'would never, without leave asked or granted, have authorised the publication of the sonnets, which the Earl of Southampton above all others would have been at pains to suppress.' As Rowse says, 'We have reason to think that good relations subsisted between the poet and his patron's mother.' Earlier he had commented 'And so the Sonnets were folded and put away at Southampton House, whence they emerged into the light of day years later.' Was it the Earl of Southampton who ensured that there was no second edition of the Sonnets? In any event, posterity must be everlastingly grateful to Mary Southampton's literary executor

(cont'd on p. 32)

Letters to the Editor

To the editor:

In the interest of avoiding confusion, I would like to offer some comments on the "Pardon by King James I of Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton" submitted by our indefatigable Oxfordian researcher Derran Charlton in the last newsletter. I would first point out that the headline of the article is somewhat misleading, as the letter in question, dated 5 April 1603, was James's warrant for the liberation of Southampton (and Sir Henry Neville) from captivity in the Tower (they were released on 10 April). The official pardon came the following month, on 16 May 1603, at which time Southampton's titles were restored to him.

In introducing his transcription of the letter, Derran writes "On the ninth of May, 2000, whilst researching at the Essex record Office, Chelmsford, I was amazed and delighted to find and transcribe (as written) an original double folded letter initialed by King James I." Another possible confusion here may arise in Derran's description of the letter as "an original". Certainly it is a "contemporaneous copy" of King James's original letter of 5 April 1603, not the original itself. The item in the Essex Record Office (ERO D/DRh/Z2) cited by Derran is one of numerous extant contemporary copies, including BL Add. 33051 f. 53; BL Add. 34395 f. 46; Tanner 75 f. 63; Stowe 156 f. 45; Cotton Titus B. VII. 207 f. 444; et al. These are all initialed "J.R." (James Rex), by the scribes, after the original, which to my knowledge has not been identified. The copy in the Essex Record Office is filed with a transcript by J.H. Round (perhaps overlooked by Derran). Charlotte Stopes transcribes one of the BL Add. copies on pp. 259-60 of her Southampton biography.

With kind regards,
Christopher Paul

To the editor:

The topics of Stephanie Hopkins Hughes's article, "Oxford's Childhood: What We Know and What We Don't" — the underappreciated activities of Sir Thomas Smith, his important contributions to the childhood of Oxford, as well as, general information on the education of young nobles during the time — are certainly interesting and important, and I was very glad to see the article in print.

There is one glaring error, however, which Hughes repeats for emphasis: she describes Philip of Hapsburg as the King of Spain when he wed Mary Tudor in 1554. He did not become King of Spain until 1556 upon the abdication of his father, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. (Remember him — Nephew of Catherine of Aragon and an important factor in the pope's disinclination to grant Henry VIII's divorce?) Surely the English knew that Phillip would be King of Spain someday but perhaps not so soon.

Sally Mosher

Response:

Many thanks to Sally Mosher for this correction. It doesn't really alter the point that for whatever reason by mid 1555 Phillip was less focused on English politics which would have been obvious to leaders of the Protestant movement, and a great relief, no doubt, as must have been Mary's failure to produce a Catholic heir. Still, an important fact was incorrect, as was the emphasis it was given, and so many thanks for the correction.

Stephanie Hopkins Hughes

The 'Prince Tudor' Hypothesis: A Brief Survey of the Pros and Cons

By Richard F. Whalen

The "Prince Tudor" hypothesis holds that the 17th earl of Oxford and Elizabeth I, a Tudor queen, were the parents of the 3rd earl of Southampton, thus a "Prince", and that *Shakespeare's Sonnets* properly interpreted reveals their secret liaison and the concealed birth of their child, a potential heir to the throne. The hypothesis also offers an explanation for the lack of contemporary records openly identifying Oxford as Shakespeare.

Solving the riddle of the Sonnets would be one of the most sensational discoveries in English literature. Their meaning has been debated for many decades by both Stratfordians and Oxfordians. Now, Hank Whittemore's book, *The Monument*, provides by far the most comprehensive interpretations supporting the hypothesis.

It's a seductive hypothesis, literally as well as figuratively. It involves a possible love affair, potential adultery and bastardy, political intrigue, royal succession, clandestine surrogate parents, the fate of two changeling children, the presumed anguish (in the background) over the identity of one's parents, and whether decoding *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, published in 1609, supports the hypothesis.

The questions at this point in time are whether the hypothesis is valid and whether skeptics and outright opponents have raised effective counter-arguments. This survey of the pros and cons is offered as a possible basis for further research and analysis.

The secret royal heir hypothesis first emerged in the late 1800's when Baconians suggested that Sir Francis Bacon, their candidate for Shakespeare, was the son of Queen Elizabeth, sired by the Earl of Leicester, her favorite early in her reign. In the 1930's, Oxfordians Percy Allen and Bernard M. Ward substituted Oxford as the father and Southampton as the son. Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn Sr. came to the same conclusion. Their son, Charlton Ogburn, said in his 1984 book, "I take no position on it." Thirteen years later, he wrote in a letter to the *Elizabethan Review* that although he had resisted the proposition for years, he had "come to accept it."

The Prince Tudor hypothesis holds that Elizabeth became pregnant by Oxford around September 1573 and secretly gave birth to their son the following May or June. Sometime that summer, the infant and his wet nurse were put into the home of Henry Wriothesley, the 2nd earl of Southampton. The infant, named Henry, took the place of a baby born to the 2nd earl's wife the year before. When the 2nd earl died, Henry became at age eight the 3rd earl of Southampton.

On the historical record, the 3rd earl of Southampton was made a ward of the Crown and sent to live with his guardian, William Cecil, Lord Burghley. When he was in his late teens, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* were dedicated to him by "William Shakespeare." Around the same time, Burghley was trying to marry him to one of Oxford's daughters. (The union would have been incestuous if he were Oxford's son by the Queen.) For whatever reason, Southampton refused. A close friend of the 2nd earl of Essex, he joined Essex in 1601 in an abortive "rebellion" against the government.

He was captured and sentenced to death with the others but was spared execution and left in prison. James I freed him in one of his first acts as king of England in 1603. Later in life, Southampton was a close friend of Oxford's son Henry, the 18th earl, by Elizabeth Trentham, Oxford's second wife.

Although there is, of course, no direct evidence for Southampton as the concealed son of Queen Elizabeth and Oxford, Prince Tudor advocates cite several historical records to support the hypothesis. The following records, or lack of records, are the most important:

- Unofficial writings over the years and polemical Catholic literature reported rumors that the "Virgin Queen" had several illegitimate children whose births she hid from official notice. (Other reports said she was incapable of having children.)

- Queen Elizabeth and Oxford visited the Archbishop of Canterbury, her appointee, early in 1573, the year of her presumed conception, when Oxford's two-year marriage to Anne Cecil, so far childless, might have been annulled so that the two might have been secretly married and their child could claim to be a legitimate heir.

- Few, if any, court records in 1574 during what would have been her third trimester put her in a position where her pregnancy might have been noticed, especially by the ambassadors from France and Spain. She may have worn a farthingale, a style of dress sometimes thought designed to hide a pregnancy. Thus, she could have secluded herself and kept secret her pregnancy and the birth of a child and heir.

- No record has been found for the baptism of the baby born to the wife of the 2nd earl of Southampton who said in a letter to a friend that she had given birth on 6 October 1573.

- In his will, the 2nd earl left money for the education of "William my Beggars Boy," whose identity has not been determined. The hypothesis holds that William was his wife's "unbaptized" baby boy, and it was he who was born on 6 October 1573 and nearly a year later was put with an unknown family and replaced by the infant son of Elizabeth and Oxford. That infant was given the baby boy's birth date and raised to become the 3rd earl of Southampton.

Supporters of the hypothesis also note curious events in the life of the 3rd earl of Southampton that they find difficult to explain unless he was the son of Elizabeth and Oxford: Why he was the youngest nobleman not of royal blood to be nominated for the Order of the Garter, although without any discernable achievement at age nineteen. Why the Queen removed him from an apparently dangerous command in Ireland if he was not her son. In particular, why after the Essex rebellion Southampton's death sentence was not carried out; why James ordered his release from the Tower in one of his first acts as king; and why Southampton and others were arrested on the day Oxford died but were released the next day.

Also, why he was for many years a close friend of Oxford's son

Henry, eighteen years younger, unless they were related, and why a will that might give his parentage has not been found.

If historical documentation for the Prince Tudor hypothesis is scanty, consisting almost entirely of what's missing and intriguing questions, the evidence based on interpretations of Shakespeare's works, principally the Sonnets, is dauntingly extensive. (Certain passages in *Venus and Adonis* and a few in the plays are also cited.) The most elaborate interpretation of the Sonnets is Whittemore's *Monument*, an oversize, 842-page book, published in 2005.

The Monument is a monumental work of scholarship. Whittemore provides a generous gloss for every line in the 154 sonnets—more than two thousand interpretations, some of them hundreds of words long. He finds hidden meanings in 606 words. In these “translations,” for example, “abundant issue” = royal child; “beauty’s treasure” = Elizabeth’s royal blood in Southampton; “bastard shame” = Southampton as a royal bastard; “confined doom” = Southampton’s prison sentence for life; “dark as night” = Elizabeth’s imperial negative view; “decrepit father” = Oxford, a father powerless to help his son be king; “entitled in thy parts” = Southampton entitled to the throne.

He maintains that the 154 sonnets fall into groups and sub-groups that correspond to chronological sequences of events in the lives of Elizabeth, Oxford and Essex. For example, “the sixty verses from Sonnet 27 to Sonnet 86 correspond precisely with the sixty days from February 8 to April 8, 1601.” And in another example, “the nineteen days from Southampton’s liberation [from the Tower] to Elizabeth’s funeral are matched by the nineteen verses from Sonnet 107 to Sonnet 125, one for each day.” Thus, the Sonnets are a carefully constructed chronological diary in verse. (Lynne Kositsky and Roger Stritmatter have critiqued aspects of the groupings.)

Whittemore agrees with most scholars that the “Fair Youth” is Southampton; but in his readings the “Dark Lady is Queen Elizabeth, and the “Rival Poet” is not Essex or some other poet but Oxford’s pen name, “William Shakespeare.”

The Sonnets reveal, according to Whittemore, that the powerful Robert Cecil, who wanted King James to succeed Elizabeth, “forced Oxford to sacrifice his identity, both as the father of the Queen’s heir and as the author of the ‘Shakespeare’ works dedicated publicly to Southampton, who had to renounce his own claim of succession in return for his life and freedom and a royal pardon [by King James I].”

This short summary cannot do justice to Whittemore’s ingenious and fully developed interpretations. Although the reader might wish for clearer organization of the superabundance of historical and literary material, Whittemore presents intriguing arguments, all or at least some of which may be more widely accepted some day. They are, however, based primarily on literary interpretation that decodes words and finds hidden meanings throughout—necessarily a very subjective business. Still, for some supporters, it is an irresistibly beautiful hypothesis.

As Jerome Bruner once wrote, “The shrewd guess, the fertile hypothesis, the courageous leap to a tentative conclusion—these are the most valuable coin of the thinker at work.”

Skeptics and opponents suggest a number of problems with the Prince Tudor hypothesis. They argue that it’s very unlikely that

Elizabeth, the “Virgin Queen” all her life, and Oxford, married for two years, would risk having a child and keeping it secret. Oxford was only twenty-three, and the Queen at age forty was at the end of her reproductive life. Presumably, either they fell in love in a May-December romance, or it was mainly a late but extended effort to produce an heir. Whatever their intentions, which are essentially unknown, her giving birth would have carried great risks for a monarch famous for her cautious, prudent statecraft and her success in preserving her options and her hold on political power.

Whether Elizabeth went into virtual seclusion for two months in her third trimester and thus was able to hide her pregnancy from public view seems doubtful to skeptics. Diana Price argued in 1996 in *The Elizabethan Review* that documents recording the queen’s regular personal interactions with others prove that she was not significantly in seclusion.

Pauline Hendle surveyed the literature on her wardrobe and concluded in “Queen Elizabeth and the Watchers” in *The Vere Society Newsletter* that “it is difficult to attribute the styles that Elizabeth wore to any desire to mask an embarrassing condition or, in fact, see how, with the uncomfortable physical constraints, any such condition could be masked.” Elizabeth’s portraits show her as a slim woman.

If she did conceal her pregnancy and delivery from public view, it’s hard for skeptics to accept that the monarchy could prevent anyone from writing about Southampton’s royal parentage, especially his close friends, who would have great prospects if he were to become king, and that the monarchy could suppress private writings about what was a crucial concern during most of Elizabeth’s life. Those likely to know would include at least some of the Queen’s Ladies-in-Waiting, Lord Burghley, the 2nd earl of Southampton and his wife plus at least some of their relatives, the 3rd earl of Southampton and his wife and close friends, rivals for the throne and their cohorts, courtiers and foreign ambassadors ever eager for valuable news and gossip about the Queen, dressmakers, wet nurses. It’s true that the monarchy could impose a ruthless censorship whenever it wanted, and it’s true that some or all of them may have known about it but left nothing in personal writings that have survived. Still, for skeptics it’s not easy to accept that not one word survives that might document such a sensational birth, when personal power, glory and wealth were at stake, not to mention the effect on international power politics.

The Prince Tudor hypothesis also relies mainly on an unorthodox method of literary criticism. It is not the usual literary-biographical analysis that looks for signs of an author’s documented biography in his or her works. That is quite common, and it is what Oxfordian biographers do. They work from the known facts of Oxford’s biography to find him in the Shakespeare works, just as biographers find the lives of Tolstoy, Proust, Twain and all great writers in their writings. Entirely different is trying to work from an author’s writings to suggest hidden events in his or her life that are not in documented biographies. This is rare, risky and virtually unverifiable. Looking in an author’s works to find his hidden biography is necessarily subjective. Researchers have to use caution when gathering evidence to support such an hypothesis. The risk is that

(cont’d on p. 17)

Personal Adventure (cont'd from p. 4)

know quite how passionate a bardolator Rowse was in turn. "Idiotic stuff!" spluttered the indignant one. "De Vere! De Vere! My God! Earls don't write plays. What earl ever wrote a play? Clever grammar school boys write plays." Despite sounding like an exaggerated version of Ashley Montagu at his most exaggerated, Rowse was in fact a miner's son from Cornwall, and a clever grammar school boy himself. As a card-carrying member of the clever-grammar-school-boy's club, our boy granted him his point in general, but said in a loud aside that it proved nothing about the case in question. Freedman was much amused, being himself, like Ashley, a product of the poor Jewish East End of London who had polished up his diction: yet another of the clever-grammar-school Mafia." (541)

I learned that this was a pretty standard rant by Rowse; something much rehearsed and dreaded: trotted out when faced with a heretic. "Oh my God," said a colleague, "you didn't mention *that*?" I have mentioned *that* quite often now to the orthodox. "Oh no! You're not one of *those*, are you?" A UFO fanatic or Holocaust denier could not evoke more horror and dismay. In the meantime, Stratfordian pornography like *Will in the World* continues to gush forth and be the subject of uncritical hype. One can only wonder at the depth of human gullibility.

I have since these encounters discovered the intriguing world of Oxfordian scholarship, largely through a friend, Gaile Sarma, who was a member of a society I didn't know existed. She actually gave me a copy of Charlton Ogburn's large and expensive tome, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare*. I am completely convinced of the case *against* the Stratford man. No question there; Twain was right. The positive case for Oxford is strong, but is in turn often overstated. Thus Ogburn has to trash the Stratford Grammar School to prove it incapable of giving "Shakespeare" the classical background he needed. I went to such a small country grammar school, with one classics teacher, and by age fifteen I could read comfortably in Latin, (less Greek – but that was my fault.) By seventeen I was acquainted with most of the authors the Bard is credited with knowing, either in the original or in translation, and certainly equipped to read further. If Shaksper *had* gone to the grammar school, as Marlowe did to the King's School at Canterbury, he would have started Latin at about eight rather than my eleven, and concentrated on it much more exclusively than I was able to do. By the time he left for London he could have been perfectly well equipped in the classical languages and literatures. The real case to make is that there is no evidence that he *did* go to the grammar school, and the evidence of his few signatures suggests he was at very best semi-literate. Also, in my further reading I had the advantage of good free local libraries, and the earliest, and very cheap, *Penguin Classics*. Many of these classical texts were not even translated in Elizabethan England, and the only libraries were private and exclusive.

Despite such excesses (and this is one of the few blemishes I find in Ogburn's fine book) the cumulative positive evidence for Oxford, as at least major contributor, is impressive. A nobleman of his standing could not have published plays and poems under his own name, and the efficient police state run by Cecil and

Walsingham could easily have ensured there were no traces of his authorship. The *First Folio* seems to have been a put-up job by Oxford's relatives, to preserve the plays while obscuring the authorship, with the strange complicity of Ben Jonson. One can make a case against this as against all conspiracy theories, but for me there are simply too many coincidences that point uncannily to de Vere. Mark Anderson points out that the only place the names Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern appear outside *Hamlet*, is in Peregrine Bertie's manuscript account of his sojourn as British ambassador at the court of Denmark in Elsinore. This account was in Cecil's private library, and thus easily available to Bertie's brother-in-law, and Cecil's ward and son-in-law, Oxford. But how could the petty litigator from Stratford, shifting his lodgings in London to dodge his taxes, have seen it? Nor would this have been in the "court gossip" he is supposed to have picked up in the tavern and used in the plays. A small point, but one of so very many. The "biographers" of the Bard constantly tell us that Shaksper *could have* acquired the knowledge, the information and the experiences that went into the plays. But in Oxford's case we know he *did have* all three. We don't have to speculate. Of course I long for a smoking gun that will incontestably connect the claimant to the work, but so do the Stratfordians!

Robin Fox, is University Professor of Social Theory at Rutgers University, where he founded the department of anthropology in 1967. He is the author of fifteen books including *Kinship and Marriage*, *The Passionate Mind* (essays and verse), and, with Lionel Tiger, *The Imperial Animal*. The excerpts here are from *Participant Observer: Memoir of a Transatlantic Life* (Transaction Publ., 2004). www.robinfoxbooks.com.

NOTABLE QUOTES

"Shakespear has frighten'd three parts of the world from attempting to write; and he was no scholar, no grammarian, no historian, and in all probability cou'd not write English."

Quoted from: *An Essay Against Too Much Reading* by Captain Goudling, 1728.

Conference (cont'd from p. 1)

dictionaries of his source materials have been identified from domestic and foreign authors and ages long past up to his own time (see Gillespie's dictionary). Thus, for centuries our opponents have sought texts reasonably "annotated" by Shakespeare, possibly even "owned" by him, hoping to link their candidate to evidences of literacy. Except for the authenticated "six signatures" in business records, each suggested "autograph signature" by Mr. Shakspeare has been refuted as a forgery, even if diehards may argue otherwise. Our opponents have no truly verifiable samples of Mr. Shakspeare's handwriting, such that even the six are likely not by any one individual (see articles three and four on my webpage, by Jane Cox and Robert Detobel). Thus, they have no independent identification of Shakespeare annotations as having been by Mr. Shakspeare. Oxford might as well have been the annotator in any given text.

Aside from the 1569 *Geneva Bible*, well established as owned and heavily annotated by Oxford, (see Dr. Roger Stritmatter's dissertation), Oxfordians may have almost as much difficulty proving our candidate owned a large library, and even if we could identify logical books in Oxford's library, can examination show evidence that Shakespeare had read from them? That is the question! Until now, the quest for "the Library" might have been just a fool's errand. After all, in dire financial straits, selling his patrimonial lands and castles, what was the chance that Oxford would have retained an identifiable library to the end of his days? With four centuries of it being scattered after his death, how could its entries be identified? Yet, in large part with unwitting assistance from our opponents, Alan Tarica and I believe we have identified at least five and possibly seven books from Oxford's personal library. Better yet, they reveal a key annotation element called the "manicule", a hand with finger pointing symbol, which may help us to identify more books. Most importantly, the specific nature of the annotations in each of the books strongly indicates that Shakespeare either read from those books, or else someone eerily channeling from Shakespeare's mind and intentions was emphasizing passages that focused-on matters to be found in his works. That, however, leads to a problem.

Most of the suspect annotations were written in a "Secretarial" hand, whereas, all samples of Oxford's writing are in "Italic" hand. Still, a great many noblemen and other demonstrably literate Elizabethans left examples of both these hands (just as today most of us can write in both "printing" and "cursive"), and there's no reason to suppose that Oxford was an exception. The key factor is that Oxford certainly knew how to read and write, whereas Mr. Shakspeare doubtfully did.

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Alan Tarica has contributed an important Appendix R to my forthcoming Vol. IIIC of *The Dark Side of Shakespeare*, in which he points to documents partly in a mystery secretarial hand that deal with details of Oxford's estates. The presumption has been that they were done by a secretary, yet why not by Oxford himself? From those and other interesting deductive analyses, Alan provisionally identifies "Oxford's secretarial hand." After that reasonable process, if any MS up to 1604 were theoretically written by Mr. Shakspeare or Shakespeare, it is amazing that "Oxford's Secretarial hand" gives us a plausible explanation. Thus, we argue Oxford orchestrated his own "cover-up," in his own hand! Back to our suspect books:

Book 1: Ovidit Metamorphoseon, Libri Quindecim 1502 Venice Edition:

The oldest book is a copy of Ovid in Latin that has long been of interest because scholars at the Bodleian Library have argued that it has Mr. Shakspeare's

signature on the title-page, and on the facing page a note from "T.N." dated 1682 stating that the book had been given him "by W. Hall who sayd it was once Wille Shaksperes." Since Thomas Nash (without the "e") and William Hall were relatives of Mr. Shakspeare's heir Susannah Hall, our opponents thought they had everything they ever needed. Although the signature was long accepted as valid in the Nineteenth Century, in the early Twentieth Century it was shown to be a forgery (Craster, 74), and the note is suspect too. Still, after Alan and I had been Readers in the Folger Library, we noted from a postcard (PR 1405 S596 #2) that there was a "pin-prick" doodle to the right of the "T.N. 1682" that strongly resembled a "griffe de notaire" example that Alan had seen elsewhere and suspected to have been a special sign used by Oxford-Shakespeare (de Chambrun, 267-72). Thus, we tried to obtain a microfilm copy of the book and found that due to the copy's notoriety the Bodleian is asking an exorbitant price for the privilege. In any case, we did learn that it doesn't contain any notable examples of a key element or "doodle" that we suspect Oxford-Shakespeare used, so this is less alluring to us now. Young Oxford, though, would have logically used such an Ovid before his uncle Arthur Golding's 1565-67 English translation was done. Possibly a British Oxfordian friend can view the text and draw conclusions?

Book 2: Halles Chronicles 1550 2nd Folio Edition:

Keen & Lubbock show that "the Annotator" was a young "schoolboy" and that the book was signed April 6, 1565 (initials "R.N." & date at top of folio Cxiiij) identified as Sir Richard Newport, "Lord of Ercall," arguing it was possessed by Newport's family thereafter, (though Ms. Green links this to Oxford's family too). Back to degrees of separation: Newport was a great-grandfather of Sir Henry Herbert thus a great-uncle of Herbert's cousin, Oxford's future son-in-law, Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke-Montgomery. Or we tri-

angulate by noting as Ms. Green did, that Sir Richard was related to William Newport, who c. 1590 renamed himself as Sir William Hatton in order to inherit the estate of his uncle Sir Christopher Hatton, and then he wed Oxford's niece Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Cecil. Still, the ownership of the copy prior to 1565 remains unclear. Or is it really?

The next suspect book was identified by Keen & Lubbock in their 1954 book *The Annotator*, and has been embraced by some Stratfordians (e.g., Halliday, 203-04) as potentially a long-sought link between Mr. Shakspeare and evidence of literacy. Conversely, Nina Green's 1991-92 *Edward DeVere Newsletter* (32-34, 39, 56) persuasively argued the annotator was Oxford, even adding an appendix with vocabulary of the annotations.

Keen & Lubbock offered whole appendices with ancestry diagrams and implications that friends of friends of relatives or neighbors of Mr. Shakspeare MAY have owned or possibly accessed the copy in question. But, this was little more than an early example of the modern "Seven Degrees of Separation" (identified with actor Kevin Bacon), wherein everyone on Earth and apparently in the past, present, or future, is linked to everyone else by no more than a small number of connections (in a sense, we're all just one degree from Shakespeare because we've each read the fruit of his mind!). If Mr. Shakspeare were a distant relative of Oxford via his mother's Arden maiden name and through Oxford's grandmother's Arden relatives, or if the former were a servant or agent of the latter, we can cut those degrees of separation down to only one or two. Indeed, James & Rubinstein (50-51, 235), (Also, see R. Jimenez's review of their book in the *SOS News*) argue that Sir Henry Neville the Younger possibly accessed the copy in question and used this as an argument in favor of Sir Henry as ghosting for Shakespeare!

In whatever way the copy came to the present, the young annotator twice identified himself with margin entries as "Edward," once in pin-pricks and again in ink (folio xliii) immediately under what appears to be "iptsubion" (sic; Latin "ipsius" = self, very, or possibly = "verily I am"), and ad-

jacent to a text discussing King Henry IV's 1400 execution of rebels at Oxford town. Most importantly, there should be little

doubt that this "Edward" was a "deVere" because the large capital "E" of "Edward" was a complex figure first constructed by an equally large "V" whose right-leg ended at top in an "e" curl; then there was an "r" whose top formed the middle-bar of the "E"; and to wrap it up, the bottom-bar of the "E" was formed under an over-sized "e" loop. However, as my friend G.R. Caponiti pointed out, there's also clearly a diagonal "d-e" in it. Thus, this "Edward" signed with a "d-e-V-e-r-e" compactly inside his name's first letter (Alan and I found this when we both realized something was odd about that signature)! See Figure A and visualize the youth's ingenuity, practice, and skill in making that design.

Our key element is a "finger-pointing" or "fist" (now technically termed a "manicule"), or a hand with extended index finger, emphasizing a line or passage, and we're most interested in those that have an aristocratic ruffed sleeve. Here the hand was crude and the finger about twice as long as anatomical. Yet, it featured four knuckles, a ruffed sleeve (or one in which a handkerchief had been daintily tucked) and was clearly intended to resemble a hand.

Whether or not the manicule was popularly used by others, it must have been reserved by any annotator for only the

most significant passages since each time the elaborate figure was used, it obviously required much attention and detail to render it (vs. simple stipes or cross figures, also often used). And though it's possible this was a book from some host's library (Sir Thomas Smith or Sir William Cecil?), we feel it was much more likely that the young annotator owned the book or was at least a permanent guest or ward in the family that owned it because any serious adult collector of books would have fainted at the prospect of a spoiled alien kid scribbling in such an expensive treasure (1,300+ pages)!

Though Alan had obtained from the British Library a microfilm copy of the book that *The Annotator* describes, we were unaware our key annotation element was in that book until Ramon Jimenez kindly pointed it out to us. It is on the right margin of folio xi, Biii, pointing at a passage about the 14th Century "Earl of Darby" (future King Henry IV), overheard by a disapproving Abbot to say:

"subieccion & obeysance...princes had to litle, & religions had to muche...."

with the implication that Henry IV wished to suppress perquisites of high prelates. That was a sentiment young Oxford or Shakespeare would have been impressed by if he were skeptical, "a-religious," or even Puritan (e.g., the 1588-92 "Marprelate Controversy"). So, even if not directly related to the famous works, the annotations might give us insights into Oxford's mind.

Prof. Seymour Pitcher made a compelling argument partly based on the relationship of the annotations in *Halles* to references in *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (*Fam. Vic.*, anonymous, performed 1585), often accepted as a source for Shakespeare's *1 & 2 H4* and *H5* history plays. His Appendix B (231-50) provides an extensive correlation of the *Halles* annotations in the Keen & Bulloch copy with *Fam. Vic.*, a sensible way of providing an association with both the authorship of *Fam. Vic.* and the annotations in *Halles*. Also, Pitcher discussed the strength of B.M. Ward's argument for the "elaborated role" of the Earl of Oxford, carefully noting that Ward was not an Oxfordian (in

fact Ward was!) and oddly discussing a possible association of *Fam. Vic.* with Oxford's annuity of 1,000 pounds. (185) Pitcher argued that Oxford's annuity was possibly the source for financing the play and that *Fam. Vic.* may have been the first play commissioned for the Queen's Men through this financing (186).

Another example of an annotation with Oxfordian implications is found in an intriguing comment by the

Tho. stukine his sonne.

This likely gives us a "not after" date of 1570. The soldier and later Catholic expatriate Thomas Stukeley (1526?-78) was in the 1560s a buccaneer financed by Queen Elizabeth and Oxford's guardian Wm. Cecil. His raids though of French and Spanish ships got embarrassing, so he was arrested in Ireland and then fled to Spain in 1570, where his apologies were accepted, he was knighted by Philip II, and he often assumed the title of "Duke of Ireland" (ironically, that title had last been held by Robert De Vere, 9th Earl of Oxford!) He fought bravely under Philip's half-brother Don Juan of Austria at Lepanto in 1571 and then plotted invasions against England, serving as courier several times between the Pope and Don Juan in the Netherlands while the latter prepared to invade England in 1577-78. Then, in early 1578, Stukeley sailed from Italy in a ship provided by the Pope for invading Ireland but got diverted in Lisbon into a quixotic crusade in Morocco where he died bravely alongside King Sebastian of Portugal. The invasion continued, landing in 1579, and for several years a small Spanish-Italian army occupied Munster. In the 1590s Stukeley became the posthumous hero of a largely-fiction anonymous play (e.g., in the end he's murdered by five Italians sent by the Pope!) which was performed ten times in 1597 and published in 1605. Thus, after 1570 the annotator would have referred to him as "Sir Thomas Stukeley" or at least "Capt.," and after 1571-78 he would have noted Stukeley's heroic legendary status.

Another point: Stukeley after 1570 allowed the rumor to circulate that he was a bastard son of King Henry VIII, thus

half-brother of Elizabeth, yet our annotator marked him as merely the King's "almoner's" son. Mr. Shakspeare would have been oblivious to all this, while young Oxford would likely have known Stukeley personally while the garish pirate made visits to the house of William Cecil where Oxford dwelt for nearly a decade after 1562!

We emphasize the significance of Ms. Green's and our independent identifications of Keen & Lubbock's annotator as Edward De Vere, (independent because after we had found the "Edward" and made our conclusions, Alan then recalled Nina's articles). First, it shows the mind of Oxford as a young boy or teen, about the time he had narrowly saved his status by staving off a claim that his parents' marriage was illegal. He had already begun visualizing his name in an abstract way, just a short step from adopting symbolic identities for pseudonyms like "Cuddie," "Soothern," or "Shake-Spear." Second, this was the only work discussed here for which we have likely not-after dates (April 1565 or 1570) as well as not-before dates (1550 or more practically 1562 when Stukeley began pirating for Cecil, though the two were "thick as thieves" all the way back to the late-1540s when together they worked with Sir Thomas Smith and Arthur Golding for the Lord Protector while much of Oxford's father's patrimony mysteriously evaporated in that blatant culture of corruption!). So, Keen & Lubbock's annotations can be dated as broadly as 1550-70 or as narrowly as 1562-65, either way much too early for likely-illiterate Mr. Shakspeare!

Keen & Lubbock absurdly assumed Mr. Shakspeare was invited into one of the Newports' personal libraries sometime in the 1580s to 90s for the purpose of scribbling all over this copy of an expensive book that became one of Shakespeare's sources. Can that ever be as credible as Shakespeare himself owning it and personally knowing some of the persons-events-matters emphasized by the annotations? Unless Stratfordians show that a one-year-old Mr. Shakspeare later had access to a book that by 1565 coincidentally bore an "Edward de Vere" signature, we feel the excellent arguments Keen & Lubbock made for that copy having been annotated

by Shakespeare should be used for the 17th Earl of Oxford!

Book 3: *Apxaionomi* [or *Archaionomia*] 1568 by Wiliam Lambarde:

The next and most-troubling example came to our attention because of an alleged Shakespeare signature; this one, barely visible on the title page, has a mirror-image smeared through onto the verso page. My thanks to Dr. Steven May for pointing me to this when I sat with him at "Tea" in the Folger's Tea Room. More on this translation of Anglo-Saxon Law, a fragile copy of STC# 15142, can be found at the Folger (PR 1405 S503 #1 and PR 3115 #11), where Professors W. Nicholas Knight, Louis Marder, J.C. Maxwell, and Giles Dawson have each weighed-in with conflicting judgments on the signature's authenticity. Some sensible skepticism was evidenced by Marder in his response to Knight's submitted article; despite Knight's rather glib and shallow answers, Marder still printed the article.

I believe the signature and an accompanying misleading note on the velum cover, (about Mr. Shakspeare's alleged street address, knowing that there were no street addresses before c.1650), were ingeniously forged. I suspect it was likely done by an altruistic female of Dr. Dawson's staff, intent on "salting the mine" with evidence for superiors to find. This was altruistic because it was not for her own glory but stemmed from her despair at the scarcity of tangible evidence for her divine Willy. She was likely well-positioned years later to hover over Prof. Knight as he used ultraviolet to examine the signature; moreover, she was the lady on record as having pointed out to Knight the dot inside the "W" of "Wm.," which is alleged to be a hallmark of some authenticated signatures. Someday I may write an article explaining my suspicions in more detail. But, the real tragedy is that this may be an "O.J. Simpson-like" case of "framing a guilty man," in the sense that this book was "framed" to have Shakespeare-relevance when it was already a fair candidate for having been owned or used by Oxford-Shakespeare, and the focus on the doubtful autograph has only distracted everyone from the text and annotations inside it.

Oxfordians will recall it was with her Master of Chancery, William Lambarde (1536-1601), that Queen Elizabeth on August 4, 1601, had the following conversation about the lately executed Earl of Essex, as promptly put into Lambarde's diary only a month before his death:

Her majestie fell upon the reign of King Richard II, saying I am Richard II, know ye not that? W.L. Such a wicked imagination was determined and attempted by a most unkind Gent. [Essex], the most adorned creature that ever your Majestie made. Q.Eliz. He that will forget God, will also forget his benefactors; this tragedy was played 40tie times in open streets and houses. (cited by Knight's article in Marder's *Shakespeare Newsletter* of July 1971).

Although Oxford and Lambarde served together in the Commission trying Essex and his co-conspirators, I believe there was a logical connection between the two going back to before the 1568 *Archaionomia*, when Lambarde was a Proctor at Lincoln's Inn while Oxford was a student at Gray's. Saving this for a future article, let's just note that Lambarde's *Archaionomia* and c.1580 *Perambulations of Kent* are said to be sources for Shakespeare's *King Lear* and his 1579 *Archeion* (or *Eirenarcha*), and the 1582 *Duties of Constables* supposedly influenced Shakespeare's general knowledge of the law as seen in many plays.

Thus, it would have been nice to examine the voluminous underlinings reportedly inside the text of the Folger's *Archaionomia*. Sadly, as the Head of Research told me, the book is so fragile that even she is prohibited from accessing it. Still, while only the title-page and verso are available in facsimile, I heard rumors that some of it had recently been photocopied. So, I was able to get a staffer who had peeked inside the book to tell me off the record that: a) it apparently doesn't have any of the manicules or griffes we're looking for, and b) the underlinings were done in numerous different inks, apparently by different persons, as in a law office, but none of them are thought to be by Mr. Shakspeare (odd that orthodox scholars believe he defaced the title-page but apparently didn't read or

annotate the contents!). But, do any of its annotation handwritings match what we are looking for? Without access, photocopies, or microfilm, nobody knows.

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End of Part One

In the next issue read of *The Geneva Bible, 1569, 2nd ed.*, *Holinshed's chronicles, 1577, 1st ed.*, *English Secretorie, 1586, 1st ed.*, and *Holinshed's Chronicles, 1587 2nd ed.*

NOTABLE QUOTES

"To admit an entire play, however, is to admit previous prejudice. In Academia, furthermore, what is not known is not knowledge."

"The tide of current orthodoxy is sluggishly on the turn. At least one professional (Honigmann 1982,90; 1985,126) has cogently contended that Shakespeare wrote his first plays long before the accepted date of c. 1590, his twenty-six year."

Quoted from the introduction of
Shakespeare's Edward III by Eric Sams.
Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1996

Prince Tudor" (cont'd from p. 11)

quite unintentionally everything begins to look like supporting evidence for a coverup, and anything contrary is subsumed into the coverup.

Perhaps most important, seven contemporary historical documents can be cited by those arguing against the Prince Tudor hypothesis. Christopher Paul compiled them and provided details in *The Oxfordian* of 2002. Six of the documents refer directly several times to the wife of the 2nd earl of Southampton as the mother of Henry, the 3rd earl. They were written over a span of twenty-five years. All seem quite genuine; none betrays signs of coverup. Three of them are letters by the wife and mother, letters in which she refers to herself several times as the mother of the 3rd earl. In her will, she left sixteen diamonds to her "dear son Henry, earl of Southampton" for him to put into a gold setting and "wear in memory of me, his loving mother." Her son was thirty-three years old. Paul and others find it hard to believe that this bequest in particular and the letters could all be part of a coverup. Also supporting the contention that the 2nd earl of Southampton and his wife were indeed the mother of the 3rd earl is the will of his paternal grandmother who left bequests to "my son's son Harry," that is, the 2nd earl's son Henry.

These seven documents must raise questions for the Prince Tudor hypothesis. They also raise doubts about the supposed identity of "William my Beggars boy" in the 2nd earl's will as the infant born to the 2nd earl's wife on 6 October 1573, when the documents name that infant Henry and Harry, not William. "Beggars boy" sounds like he might have been an illegitimate son of the 2nd earl, perhaps by a servant, a son whose birth date is unknown.

Skeptics suggest three additional problems: Why the Protestant, risk-averse queen would risk putting her son and heir to the throne with a Roman Catholic nobleman who had just been imprisoned for his role in a plot to de-throne her, even if blackmail were involved. Why Oxford would later name his son by Elizabeth Trentham, "Henry," if he already had a son named Henry by the Queen. And why Oxford would use the Sonnets to urge an incestuous marriage with his daughter Elizabeth, who would be Southampton's half-sister. (Unless, as

has been suggested, she had been sired by Burghley or someone else, Oxford knew it, and she was his daughter in name only. Other hidden parentage combinations can be explored. At a recent De Vere Society meeting, Sir Ian McGeoch suggested that Oxford might have been the father of the 3rd earl of Southampton, not by the Queen but by the wife of the 2nd earl, who was

*(It's thus very doubtful
that Burghley was well
informed when he insisted
later that Elizabeth, then
forty-five, "was very apt for
procreation.")*

impregnated when her husband was imprisoned in the Tower.

Finally, it could happen, but the odds are not good that Elizabeth could become pregnant at age forty, survive the dangers of childbirth at age forty-one and have a boy. Whether or not she was trying to get pregnant, conception would probably result only after several sexual encounters over several months unless she was very lucky—or unlucky, as the case may be. Fecundity without the help of modern medicine usually ends at around age 39-41. One physician-researcher reports that by the time a woman is in her early forties her chance for a pregnancy is less than 5 per cent each month, and there is a 40 per cent chance of miscarriage. Even if Elizabeth, against these odds, did become pregnant and deliver safely, the chances that it would be a healthy boy were no better than 50-50.

(It's thus very doubtful that Burghley was well informed when he insisted later that Elizabeth, then forty-five, "was very apt for procreation." Or perhaps he knew the facts but ignored them. In his memo to file on "Answers to Objections Against a Marriage with M. Alencon," he repeats his confidence in her "aptness" six times, betraying more anxiety about an heir than asserting confidence in his knowledge.)

Although the skeptics can find a number

of quite plausible arguments against the Prince Tudor hypothesis, they are still at a disadvantage in the debate. They have not yet coalesced around an alternative, convincing scenario that would solve the riddle of the Sonnets, explain the silence in the surviving records about Oxford's authorship of Shakespeare and thus displace the Prince Tudor hypothesis. Whether they ever will is an open question.

In one such alternative scenario, Oxfordian Joseph Sobran offers a homosexual explanation of the Sonnets in his book, *Alias Shakespeare*. (1997) He considers the Prince Tudor hypothesis "dishonorable." Stratfordian Joseph Pequigney also argued for a homoerotic interpretation in *Such Is My Love*. (1985)

Another scenario, published in the same year as Whittemore's book, may be promising. In *The Oxfordian*, John Hamill reviewed the literature about the poet's sexuality as revealed in his works and arrived at what he calls the obvious conclusion, "Shakespeare was bisexual." He has support from an unlikely authority, Marjorie Garber, a distinguished professor at Harvard and an eminent Shakespeare scholar. In *Vice Versa: Bisexuality and the Eroticism of Everyday Life* (1995), she declared it is "obvious: the sonnets describe a bisexual triangle."

In the summer 2005 issue of *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter*, Hamill suggested that Oxford's second wife, Elizabeth Trentham, was the mother of Henry de Vere, the 18th earl of Oxford, not by Oxford but by the 3rd earl of Southampton, Oxford's lover and thus also bisexual. Whether the bisexual interpretation of the Sonnets will gain general support remains to be seen.

Renouncing all such notions, Ron Hess argues in the *De Vere Society Newsletter* of October 2004 that there is no hidden meaning, "no 'conspiracy theory,' no 'royal birth' or 'incest,' no tacky sharing of a 'Dark Lady' by two men, no adulterous affair with a 'married Dark Lady,' no 'homosexual Shakespeare.'" He holds that the themes in the 154 sonnets are prefigured in the 1584 collection of poems called *Pandora*, poems inspired by Ovid, Ronsard, Du Bellay and other earlier writers. Stratfordian J. B. Leishman suggested a similar inspiration in *Themes and Variations in Shakespeare's Sonnets*. (1961)

For their part, establishment Stratfordian scholars have all but given up trying to find a story-line and a clear meaning for *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. In his edition of Shakespeare, David Bevington sums up the situation: "Probably no puzzle in all English literature has provoked so much speculation and produced so little agreement. To whom were the sonnets addressed? Do they tell a consistent story, and, if so, do they tell us anything about Shakespeare's life?" Stephen Booth, in his annotated edition of the Sonnets, resorts to sarcasm: "William Shakespeare was almost certainly homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual. The sonnets provide no evidence on the matter."

In sum, Whittemore and others find powerfully persuasive their Prince Tudor interpretations of the Sonnets, the opportunity they see for Southampton's hidden birth by the Queen in 1574, and their explanations for unusual events in Southampton's life and for the silence in the records for Oxford as Shakespeare. But there is little or no historical evidence for their elaborate hypothesis which relies mainly on literary interpretation of the Sonnets and seeks to

explain virtually everything. Historical documents that would seem to undermine the hypothesis of a coverup are subsumed into the coverup as elements of it.

Skeptics and opponents can cite historical documents and evidence that they contend render the Prince Tudor hypothesis too far-fetched, if not impossible. They might paraphrase Thomas Huxley, "The tragedy of scientific [read 'literary'] inquiry is the slaying of a beautiful hypothesis by an ugly fact [or series of facts]."

The three different hypotheses, espoused by Whittemore, Sobran and Hamil, have not yet been tested and validated. Until one of them wins widespread support and becomes a bona fide theory—or until archival researchers and textual critics come up with yet another and better hypothesis—the watchword for the Prince Tudor hypothesis should probably be, "Caution."

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

Before Hank Whittemore's *Monument*, two other books argued for the Prince Tudor hypothesis: Elisabeth Sears's *Shakespeare and the Tudor Rose* (1990), Tudor Rose

being an earlier tag for Prince Tudor, along with Tudor Heir; and Paul Streitz's *Oxford, Son of Queen Elizabeth* (2001), which indicates by its title that Streitz also holds that Oxford was the son of the Queen by Thomas Seymour, the Lord Admiral.

Various points of view are discussed in articles and letters in Oxfordian publications, including Paul Altrocchi's article in the summer 2005 issue of *Shakespeare Matters* summarizing the Prince Tudor hypothesis, based primarily on historical evidence. Kositsky and Stritmatter's paper on the numerical structure of the Sonnets appeared in the fall 2004 *Shakespeare Matters*. At this writing, Sir Ian McGeoch's paper is in press. It is entitled "'In Loco Parentis' — An heir and an invention: Evidence that Edward de Vere was the Natural Father of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton by Mary Brown, 2nd Countess of Southampton." He delivered it at the May 2006 meeting of the De Vere Society at Hedingham Castle.

In the 1990s, three issues of *The Elizabethan Review* carried commentaries on

(cont'd on p. 32)



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A Sharp Blade, a Tall Man and a Good Whore?

By Sam C. Saunders

English history records that the Italian Renaissance was a major influence during Elizabethan times; many things 'Italian' came into vogue. Courtiers adopted the Italianate fashion of dress, wearing a ruff collar and a rapier, to effect a slightly menacing appearance.¹ This veneer of irascibility by men of nobility also entailed fencing-practice as a sport, from which masculine competitiveness inevitably induced dueling 'for honor.' In fact, provocative behavior soon became subject to codified 'rules' of conduct.²

Shakespeare's parody, in *Romeo and Juliet* of the practice of "wearing a chip on one's shoulder," is expressed in Mercutio's description of Benvolio's excuse for swordplay:

Why thou wilt quarrel with a man
that hath a hair more or less in his
beard than thou hast. Thou wilt
quarrel with a man for cracking
nuts, having no other reason but
because thou hast hazel eye....
Thou hast quarreled with a man
for coughing the street, because
he hath waken'd thy dog that hath
lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou
not fall out with a tailor for wear-
ing his new doublet before Easter?
And with another for tying his new
shoes with old riband?

(*The Riverside* 3.1.17-29)

Edward de Vere was, himself, involved in just such a confrontation over an insignificance which resulted in a challenge to a duel from Sir Phillip Sydney (a man who advocated practicing over an hour each day with the rapier and dagger). It was a dispute concerning priority of access to a tennis court! (Apparently neither man possessed common courtesy.) However, Queen Elizabeth forbade the duel, cautioning Sydney that there was a great difference between an Earl and Gentleman. Sydney replied that rank should not be used for injustice.

Once fencing skill was assumed to be an essential part of every nobleman's education, some of the English nobility, including Peregrine Bertie who later became Edward de Vere's brother-in-law, imported, c. 1570,

an Italian rapier master, Rocco Bonetti, for their private instruction. This College of Fence, (Bonetti declined to call it a school), lasted for thirty years and provided the most notable fencing instruction in England. Its fees were high, from £20, up to £100, per pupil depending upon duration of course (Hutton 43). Thus, not only was a modicum of wealth required to obtain such tuition, but also time must be available for regular practice to maintain the confidence necessary to project the desired bravura.

One can imagine the resentment Bonetti's "college," with its highly paid Italian "professors," engendered among the teachers of English style swordsmanship. Their "schools" had, under Henry VIII, been formed into a short-lived corporation instructing principally in the broadsword and buckler. They now felt themselves disenfranchised by the new-fangled "Italianated fencing" with rapier and dagger. But the incessant bragging of the Italians about both the superiority of their weapons and their higher degree of skill was an unbearable aggravation. As their livelihood fell away the specialists in English weapons became desperate.

About 1583 Austin Bagger, an expert with the English short sword, went to Signior Rocco Bonetti's at the Blackfriars and called him out, saying:

"Thou art thought to be the only
cunning one with thy weapon, thou
that takest upon thee to hit anie
Englishman with a thrust on anie
button, ... Thou cowardly fellow
come out...if thou dare for thy life I
am come to fight with thee." ... Bag-
ger closed with him, stroke up his
heels³ and cut him over the breech,
and trod upon and most grievously
hurt him under his feet.

(153)

Thus, publicly defeated, and humiliated, Signior Rocco retired and departed, turning tutelage in his college over to Geronimo, his son, and Vincentio Savolio.

Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet* provides a mimetic resume of this rivalry between English and Italian styles of sword-

play. Along with the unknown, "ancient grudge," which generates animosity between the two families, there is also a subtext of English swordplay versus Italian fencing. This challenge would have been apparent in the drama to Elizabethan audiences, but it is lost on modern viewers. However, there is ample evidence of this confrontation in the action. The play opens with the entry of retainers of the house of Capulet, who have non-Italian given names, carrying the very weapons of the English swordsmen that were being challenged, during the late 16th century, by the stylish Italian dagger and rapier.

ENTER SAMPSON and GREGORY,
with swords and bucklers, of the
house of Capulet. [As two Montague
servants approach, the Capulet
servants initiate a quarrel.]

Samp. Let us take the law of our sides;
let them begin.

Greg. I will frown as I pass by, let them
take it as they list.

Samp. Nay as they dare. I will bite my
thumb at them, which is
disgrace to them if they bear it.

(1.1.36-43)

Such insults were unforgivable, and a fray began. When old Capulet hears it, he enters and calls "Give me my long sword." (1.1.74). This too was a weapon used for over three centuries in England; it was carried both by Richard Coeur de Lion against the Saracens and by Edward Longshanks against the Scots. The long sword stood chest high and was heavy enough to be used against mounted warriors wearing chain mail. However, Lady Capulet, with a wife's candor, calls instead for the servant to bring old Capulet his "crutch."

A former friary, "the Blacke Fryers," was leased as a playhouse by Oxford and his secretary, Lyly, in 1583. A theater occupied the upper floors but a large room on the ground floor was subleased to Bonetti's college, then run by Geronimo Bonetti and Vincentio Savolio. Savolio became well known through his 1595 book on rapier play (Hutton 152).

Most instructors of English-style sword-play were illiterate and left no written record of their art. The only exception is George Silver, elder brother of Tony (or Toby) who published the pamphlet *Bref Instructions*, and later, in 1599, *Paradoxes of Defense*, (Holland 60-61). Both men were gentlemen by birth and scholars by education. The Silvers, devotees of the English art of swordsmanship, were hostile to the "fence tricks of the fifth-rate Italians who had been taken up by the society of the day and whose false teachings seemed likely to oust the good old English custom of fighting with sword and buckler, where honest downright blows and not 'frog-pricking thrust' were concerned", (Hutton 153). They mounted a continuing and unalloyed attack upon the teachings of the Italians.

During the 1590's one of the provosts at Blackfriars was a Gérard Thibault, who was then compiling his great treatise *Académie de l'Épée*; its style was judged arcane because it was based upon metronomic (musical) timing (e.g., minim rests) with arithmetic and geometry used to calculate the length of thrust or arc to obtain a touch from different positions.⁴ Shakespeare knew of Gérard Thibault, and his reputation, as we see in the following lines from *R&J*:

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. More than the Prince of Cats.

O, he's the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance and proportion; he rests his minim rests, one two and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button, a duelist, a duelist; a gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause. Ah, the immortal *passado*, the *punto reverso*, the *hay*!

(2.4.18-26)

The words *passado*, *punto reverso*, *hay* are all Italian expressions, here being ridiculed, which describe rapier strokes used in sword play and the final cry in attack.

Shakespeare's experience at fence, (which skill, like music or falconry, was unavailable to any but noblemen), is shown in Benvolio's analysis of the duel between Tybalt and Mercutio:

He tilts With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast: Who all as hot, turns deadly point to point, And with martial scorn, with one hand beats Cold death aside, and with the other sends it back to Tybalt, whose dexterity Retorts it.

(3.1.158-164)

Note, this describes Mercutio's tactics as if he were carrying a buckler in his left hand, by which he parried Tybalt's thrust, and then, with his broadsword in his right hand, he counter-attacked.

Then all goes wrong; Romeo intervenes to stop the fighting because Mercutio is his friend and Tybalt his new relative. But Tybalt doesn't stop; he thrusts his long rapier under Romeo's arm and Mercutio, blocked from parrying, is wounded. "I am hurt, A plague on both your houses, I am sped....No, 'tis not as deep as a well nor as wide as a church-door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. —Ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man.... a braggart, a rogue a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic!" [another clear reference to Thibault's volume]. (3.1.90-102)

Shakespeare's knowledge of weapons is further evidenced by the use of: the obscure word "skains-mate" (2.4.154). This is from the Celtic expression *skeen-dhu*, the short black dagger worn in the knee stocking of a Scot (now only in full-dress kilt). A skain-mate would be a male member of that ilk (in one's clan) wearing the same style skeen-dhu. De Vere had served as an aide-de-camp in Scotland during one of the English punitive expeditions in the border wars.

The diatribe against Italian swordmasters is of chief interest here when Mercutio says,-

The pox of such antic, lispings, affecting [phantasies], these new tuners of accent! "By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!" Why, is not this not a lamentable thing, grandsire, that we should be afflicted with these strange flies, ...O, their bones, their bones!

(2.4.28-35)

"By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!" What does this

enigmatic phrase mean? It seems to be a phrase expressing deep emotion, which might today be compared with "SweetJesusIhateBillo'Reilly.com" But why is it in quotation marks?⁵ From where does the quotation come? The only explanation given to illuminate this obscure passage is that "tall" means "brave." Well bravo. That is much clearer. Remember the 16th century plural word "houris" is related to the Aramaic word "houris," the seductive and compliant nymphs of heaven, who yet today await the suicide bomber.

The 1995 reprint of Alfred Hutton's 19th century book, *The Sword and the Centuries*, subtitled, *500 years of European swords and the duels that have been fought with them*, describes the principals in the conflict between English and Italian sword fighting styles during Elizabeth's reign. Among those mentioned were the proprietors of the Bonetti College of Fence. After A. Badger, with his short-sword, had defeated in public combat Signior Rocco with his rapier, Rocco was relegated to private life and forced to yield school management to the new partners Vincentio and Geronimo who then relocated to the Blacke-Fryers and taught "Rapier-fight at the Court, at London and the country thereabouts for seven or eight yeares" (154). Coincidentally, their public braggadocio became more and more intolerable to the English masters of arms: it is recounted that Vincentio

...was in great braverie amongst manie gentlemen of good accompt, with great boldnesse he gave out speeches, that he had bene thus many yeares in England, and since the time of his first coming, there was not one yet Englishman that could once touch him at the single Rapier or Rapier and Dagger.

(188)

On one such occasion an English Master of Defence, named Bramble challenged him, called him a coward to insult him, then threw a "'great blacke Jacke⁶ halfe full of Beere'" on him. Regrettably, nothing more was said about the ultimate consequence.

In his book, Vincentio also claimed that Englishmen were strong "but had no cunning and they would go back too much

in their fight which was a great disgrace to them." George Silver responded:

...my brother Toby silver and myself made challenge against them both, to play with them at: the single Rapier, Rapier and Dagger, the single dagger, the single Sword, the Sword and Target, the Sword and Buckler, the two hand Sword, The Staffe, Battell Axe, or Morris Pike, to be played ant the Bell Sauvage upon a Scaffold, where he that went in his fight faster backe that he ought, of Englishman or Italian, should be in danger to breake his neck off the Scaffold.

(188)

The Silvers printed public handbills announcing this challenge to Vincentio and Geronimo who refused to "Come to the place of triall." Being pushed off backwards from a scaffold twenty feet in the air must have seemed very likely to them.

Most notably another English swordsman, named Cheese, (or Cleese) traveling by horse, overtook Geronimo Bonetti who was riding in a coach accompanied by "a wench he loved well" (Hutton 155). Cheese, ordered the coachman to halt, called Geronimo out and slew him. The description of this, even, is interesting; it says:

Cleese, a verie tall man, in his fight naturall English, for he fought with his Sword and Dagger, and in rapier fight had no skill at all.... but with all the fine Italianated skill Jeronimo had, Cleese within two thrusts ran him into the body and slue him.

(155)

A possible explanation of this recondite quotation in *R&J* presents itself. Suppose it is only "a fervent wish" for a means to rid themselves of affliction by "these foreign flies." Consider "the Cleese method" to dispatch Geronimo. Firstly, assume that "very tall" really meant "verie tall." Having longer arms is a considerable advantage in sword fighting⁷ and taller persons generally have longer arms. Secondly, it is well known that during the era in which coaches were a common conveyance, they were often used as venues for assignations.⁸ Consequently any man, regardless of his skill at arms, who

has been called forth to mortal combat interrupting conveyance in such luxury, would have, at least temporarily, the disadvantage of nervous indisposition, not to mention low muscular vascularity.

I believe the quotations in *R&J*, (2.4.29-31) of the Riverside Edition, indicate the well known précis by which that very tall Mr. Cleese was able to defeat the Italian Fencing Master. He first obtained a very good blade and then utilized a female assistant, who wittingly or not, like a toreador before the corrida, had the capability to weaken and slow the bull's reaction, so as to facilitate and enable the torero's mortal thrust. The English tactics were described in an 1890 article from *The Cornhill Magazine* entitled "The Duello in France," putatively attributed to Arthur Conan Doyle; but stated as clearly by Henry V:

The French ... were incomparable better swordsmen, but the young Englishmen, relying on their superior bodily strength would throw themselves upon their antagonists with such supreme disregard for the science of the thing that they not unfrequently succeeded in cutting down their bewildered opponents.

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Endnotes

1. But only a century later, all such Italianate affectations ere derided with the appellation "macaroni." This clarifies the verse in "Yankee Doodle," viz. "stuck a feather in his cap and called it macaroni" once you understand that in the Highlands gentlemen distinguished themselves from their lowlier neighbors by a feather in the bonnet.
2. *The Book of Arms and Honor* (1590) by Sir William Segar, reduced the causes for gentlemen to duel to only two; the first cause is accusation of a capital crime and the second is ANY (emphasis added) question of honor!
3. Suddenly charged
4. Then, as now, any mathematics is too much for many.
5. The Yale Shakespeare also includes quotation marks but he redoubtable Playgoer's Edition of the Arden Shakespeare does not.
6. OED, in *Brewing* a vessel with a perforated bottom for straining the wort from the hops.
7. Rob Roy is said to have had arms so long that they hung to his knees, and is so depicted in the statue of him in Sterling, Scotland.
8. History reveals that Napoleon himself practiced this method.

NOTABLE QUOTES

Professor C.T. Winchester of Wesleyan University speaking of Shakspeare's biography:

"These are all the facts we know beyond question; you can put them all into one sentence. He married at eighteen a wife who was twenty-five or twenty-six; at about twenty-one went up to London; in the course of the next twenty years achieved immortality and a rent-roll; at thirty-four bought a house and corner lot in his native village; at about forty-five settled down there to reside; at fifty-two died. That is the whole story." (117)

Winchester, C.T. *An Old Castle and Other Essays*, Macmillan Company, New York, 1922

Antony and Cleopatra: the Women's Voices

By Ren Draya

About Cleopatra, Sir Laurence Olivier once proclaimed, "She cannot be explained, she can only be felt" (TLS). The name alone, Cleopatra, echoed or shouted or whispered, evokes images of woman supreme, of sensuality and excitement and beguilement. Shakespeare's sprawling tragedy, *Antony and Cleopatra*, opens and closes in Alexandria; it is Cleopatra's passionate presence which fills and determines the drama. We hear the voices of women within and without the play reaching to Elizabeth I.

Most of us can immediately call to mind Enobarbus' description (via Plutarch and North):

... she did lie
In her pavilion--cloth-of-gold of tissue--
O'er picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. (2, 2, 208-211)
... and Antony,
Enthroned i' th' marketplace, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air, which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too.
(2, 2, 224-227)

"Overpicturing" means a magnificence greater than the most elaborate of portraits or statues. Cleopatra *overpictures* even Venus. Rare Egyptian, indeed! All creation has stopped to admire her, and the great Mark Antony simply waits and whistles to the air. The first act of this play is Cleopatra's: the first speeches of the play are about her — she is called a "tawny front," a "gypsy," and a "strumpet," — all of which make Antony, of course, "a strumpet's fool." In her first appearance, we see Cleopatra as fiery, extravagant, convincing, cajoling. Next to her, Antony seems a patient Walter Mitty. Thus, from the start, in both language and dramatic presence, the dualities of this great play are laid down: the flamboyant, sensual East vs. the restrained West; Egypt vs. Rome; love vs. duty; woman vs. man.

Cleopatra's first line is a request: "If it be love indeed, tell me how much" (1, 1,

14). This seems the dare of a young, very egotistical child: "How much do you love me?" Tactfully, Antony replies, "There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned" (15). Implication: because you are bigger than life, my love for you is boundless; don't ask me to quantify it. This scene, part comic/part romantic, sets a pattern which continues throughout the play. Many of Cleopatra's conversations involve a crescendo of "one-upsmanship" exchanges: a statement or question is offered, it provokes a response; in the next exchange there is increasing exaggeration and expanding hyperbole. Note the progression:

*Her heart could indeed
"engender hail"- she is, in
her language as in her pas-
sions, larger than life.*

Cleopatra: If it be love indeed, tell me how much.
Antony: There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.
Cleopatra: I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.
Antony: Then must thou need find out new heaven, new earth.
(1, 1, 14-17)

Traversi nicely labels the "superb emotional expansiveness" (81) of the play, and critics have long commented on the richness of the language. Cleopatra's imperious hyperbole stands out. For example, yelling at the messenger who brings news of Antony's marriage to Octavius Caesar's sister, Cleopatra shrieks, "Thou shalt be whipped with wire and stewed in brine, Smarting in ling'ring pickle!" (2, 5, 66-67). She addresses Antony, at one point, as "Lord of lords, O infinite virtue" (4, 8, 16-17). I could fill pages quoting Cleopatra's extravagant diction, so I best offer just one more. It is her response to Antony when

he wonders if she has grown cold hearted toward him,

Ah, dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,
And poison it in the source, and the first stone
Drop in my neck; as it determines, so
Dissolve my life!
(3, 13, 161-165)

Her heart could indeed "engender hail"—she is, in her language as in her passions, larger than life.

In addition to Cleopatra's bantering, love-making, commiserating with Antony, we also hear her with her personal satellites, the fluttering women and eunuchs who attend her. She whines, confides, cajoles, rants, bemoans. And we hear those women's voices, too. For example, when a soothsayer tries to assure Charmian and Iras that their fortunes are alike, the following exchange occurs:

Iras: But how [alike], but how? Give me particulars.
Soothsayer: I have said.
Iras: Am I not an inch of fortune better than she?
Charmian: Well, if you were but an inch of fortune better than I, where would you choose it?
Iras: Not in my husband's nose.
(1, 2, 58-63)

The sexual quips emphasize Egypt as a place of fruitfulness and fulfillment. Cleopatra's amorous triumphs have created a pervasive atmosphere of sensuality and excess.

Yes, the play opens in a mood of comedy and melodrama, but the realities of Rome quickly intervene: there are political strains as the triumvirate totters, and its three leaders become foes; there is frequent talk of strategies and battles; there is the news of Fulvia's death (Antony's wife). Octavia, sister to Octavius Caesar, that is, to the world of Egypt, best exemplifies perhaps opposition

to the eroticism and excess of Antony and Cleopatra. She is a mere pawn, summarily married off to Antony in hopes that the political union will be thus preserved. Caesar advises Antony,

Most noble Antony,
Let not the piece of virtue which is set
Betwixt us as the cement of our love
To keep it builded be the ram to batter
The fortress of it . . .

(3, 2, 27-31)

Octavius calls her "my dearest sister" (39) and "a great part of myself" (24); Antony addresses her as "Gentle Octavia" (3, 4, 20). Octavia recognizes herself as "most weak, most weak, your reconciler" (29-30), but she cannot reconcile Antony and Caesar, for Antony cannot leave Cleopatra. We see Octavia only twice with Antony, saying very little and lamenting her own unhappiness:

A more unhappy lady,
If this division chance, ne'er should between,
Praying for both parts.
The good gods will mock me presently
When I shall pray, "Oh, bless my lord and husband!"
Undo that prayer by crying out as loud,
"Oh, bless my brother!"

(3, 4, 12-18)

When Octavia returns modestly to Rome, it is her brother who breaks the news of Antony's decision. In this noisy play, Octavia's restrained voice provides contrast to the shrill, the martial, the exaggerated.

It is certainly a busy play, far ranging in time and place, filled with messengers and meetings, with confrontations and shifting alliances. Egos are easily bruised — pride perhaps the unifying feature of this large cast. The stage is almost always crowded. Certainly, everything about Cleopatra is public. We never see her alone. Let's consider this crowded stage from a dramatic and thematic standpoint: Hamlet broods, Macbeth hallucinates, Lear rants, Iago schemes, Juliet pines. At some point, all speak soliloquies; Shakespeare's plays are replete with characters that give us interesting moments of self-realization, self confession, self delusion. But this play has precious few soliloquies! Cleopatra has none. An accurate count in some forty-five scenes yields seven soliloquies. Anthony has four, Enobarbus two, and Scarus one (Appendix A). Of course, a director can always pull the actress playing Cleopatra to one side of the stage during a seemingly public scene, or have her clearly not speaking to anyone, thereby creating a soliloquy. One example might be at the close of the play when she is imprisoned. A guard announces that "a rural fellow" has come to deliver figs, and she says, "Let him come in" (5, 2, 236). It is for her next words that I suggest the soliloquy mode. Cleopatra could turn away from Charmian, Iras, and the other women as she plans her own death:

What poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! He brings me liberty.

My resolution's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me. Now from head to foot
I am marble-constant; now the fleeting moon
No planet is of mine.

(5, 2, 241)

Such a fine irony. At the play's end, the extravagant Egyptian has taken on the stance and logic of the most stoic Roman. Her Antony is dead. No more can the lovers seek to fill each moment with pleasure. She throws off her sensuality and she recasts herself in marble.

Oxfordians, of course, ask about the possible correspondences. Is Queen Elizabeth I to be equated with Caesar? Both are ultimate victors. Or is Elizabeth to be equated with Cleopatra? From the sheer length of her lines, from her dominance, on and off the stage, we know that Cleopatra stands for power. Keith Rinehart, writing in *Shakespeare Quarterly* more than thirty years ago, found a number of similarities between the English monarch and the "serpent of the Nile":

. . . both were queens regnant, both used courtship as a mainstay of
their statecraft, and both attained apotheosis of a sort as female
deities
. . . Both treated courtiers and maids of honor roughly; both
affected
illness or other shams to give false impressions; both were
marvelously
facile in foreign languages; both governed their kingdoms with
skill;
both desired amusement and revelry; both wore gorgeous ap-
parel; both
were witty . . . (81)

Rinehart believes that Elizabeth is clearly the model for one scene, a scene that is not mentioned in Plutarch (Rinehart 83). Cleopatra grills her messenger, who has just returned from Rome, about Antony's new wife, Octavia, wanting to know everything about this potential rival: "Is she as tall as me. . . Did'st thou hear her speak? Is she shrill-tongued or low? . . . What majesty is her gait? . . . Guess at her years. . . Bear'st thou her face in mind? Is't long or round?" (3, 3, 9-32). Similarly, as reported by Scotland's ambassador to England, Sir James Melville, Queen Elizabeth asked many of the same questions about Mary, Queen of Scots (during negotiations for a possible marriage of Mary to Sir Robert Dudley). When Cleopatra asks, "Is she as tall as me?" the messenger responds, "She is not, madam" (11), and Cleopatra concludes triumphantly, "Then she is 'dwarfish'; similarly, when Elizabeth heard that Mary was the taller, Elizabeth noted, "she is too high; for I myself am neither too high nor too low" (Rinehart 83).

Today, we can laugh at the vanity and humor in this womanly spite. As for the comparison between Shakespeare's Cleopatra and England's Elizabeth, pros and cons surface. Elizabeth was fair, Cleopatra quite dark; Cleopatra is labeled a strumpet; for any author to call Elizabeth a whore would surely be courting danger.

In terms of strategy, both women gambled on a sea victory; but Cleopatra fled from the Battle of Actium, and Elizabeth's naval forces proved victorious over the Spanish Armada. Both women seem well aware of the burdens borne by public figures:

Cleopatra: Be it known that we, the greatest, are misthought
For things that others do; and when we fall,
We answer others' merits in our name,
Are therefore to be pitied.

(5, 2, 176-179)

Elizabeth: For we Princes are set as it were upon the stages,
in the
sight and view of the world. The least spot is soon spied
in our garments, a blemish quickly noted in our doings. It
behoveth us therefore to be careful that our proceedings be
just and honourable.

(Chamberlin 242)

Keith Rinehart calls attention to similarities in their temperaments, particularly in their quickness to anger. Cleopatra's outburst to her messenger, which included striking him roughly, can be matched by Elizabeth's slapping her maids of honor, once handling a maid so roughly, ("liberall bothe with bloes and yevell words"), that she broke the maid's finger (Wilson 107). And, like Iras and Charmian in the scene quoted above, one of Elizabeth's chief gentlewomen "loved to dabble in the dark mysteries of the occult" (7-8). Rinehart also sees similar ambiguities in the theme of love. He compares Elizabeth's vacillations about marriage to the question of whether Cleopatra's love is for Antony himself or for his imperial power.

Yes, both Cleopatra and Elizabeth employed feminine wiles to gain political advantage; yes, both were highly dramatic and flamboyant--but these are general and, most likely, necessary traits for any powerful queen, no matter how many hundreds of years apart they lived.

By the utter public nature of their love and by the power of their language, Cleopatra and Antony are among the writer's finest achievements. Audiences and readers cannot fail to be moved by their love. After the shame of Actium, Antony asks, "Oh, whither hast thou led me, Egypt?" (3, 11, 50), and she replies, simply, "Oh, my lord, my lord, Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought you would have followed" (53-55). Any doubt we may have held about his love for her is now dispelled:

Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th' strings,
And thou should'st tow me after. O'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

(55-60)

She begs his pardon, she cries. And one of her tears, he exclaims, is worth "All that is won and lost" (69).

But at Alexandria, Antony doubts, again, and impulsively rails:

"All is lost! This foul Egyptian has betrayed me" (4, 12, 9-10); "O, this false soul of Egypt!" (25). Confused by his rage, Cleopatra rushes to her monument and follows the advice of Charmian to send Antony word that Cleopatra has died. And, again, Antony reacts impulsively, falling on his own sword. Brought to the monument, he is hoisted up and dies in her arms. Her words remind us of the youthful Juliet:

Yet come a little,
Wishers were ever fools. O, come, come, come!
And welcome, welcome! Die when thou hast lived;
Quicken with kissing. Had I my lips that power
Thus would I wear them out.

(4, 15, 37-41)

And her grief must be expressed publicly:

Oh, see my women,
The crown of the earth doth melt. My lord!
Oh, withered is the garland of the war . . .
(64-66)

And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon.

(69-70)

At the close of the play, Cleopatra's voice has gained lyricism. True, she can return to the familiar hyperbole--ranting, for example, that she has no intention of being paraded about as a trophy in Rome, "Rather a ditch in Egypt be gentle grave unto me! Rather on Nilus' mud lay me stark nak'd . . ." (5, 2, 56-58). We see that she is driven by two thoughts: first, her determination not to be shown as an "Egyptian puppet" (5, 2, 208); and, second, her intense desire to join the dead Antony. Her words reflect her complete love and admiration for Antony:

His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
Crested the world; his voice was propertied
As all the tuned spheres . . .

(80-82)

Still the performer, still the powerful queen, Cleopatra is even at the end surrounded by people. She deals with her women, with the clown who brings her "figs," and Caesar himself. I believe that she finally achieves nobility.

Give me my robe. Put on my crown. I have
Immortal longings in me . . . methinks I hear
Antony call; I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act . . . Husband, I come!
Now to that name my courage prove my title!
I am fire and air . . .

(280-81; 283-84; 287-89)

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Appendix A: Soliloquy Lines in Antony and Cleopatra

1. Antony (2, 3, 33-44). "I will to Egypt; And though I make this marriage for my peace, In the East my pleasure lies." Reference to Octavia.
2. Enobarbus (4, 6, 12-20; 31-40). "I have done ill . . . I will go seek some ditch wherein to die."
3. Enobarbus (4, 9, 6; 9-12; 15-26). "Forgive me . . ." His suicide.
4. Scarus (4, 12, 3-9). On omens.
5. Antony (4, 12, 18-30; 39-49). "Fortune and Antony part here . . . The witch shall die. To the young Roman boy she hath sold me . . ."
6. Antony (4, 14, 44-54). "I will o'ertake thee. . . the torch is out." Believes Cleopatra to be dead.
7. Antony (4, 14, 95-104). "I will be a bridegroom in my death." Response to death of Eros; Antony falls on his own sword.

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

authorship question, the case for Oxford and other candidates, etc. We don't want to duplicate what's already available. This new group is specifically for members of the SOS to share ideas and suggestions about the Society itself—our management, strategies, direction, policies, activities, publications, and programs. Any topic touching on the SOS itself is fair game.

One of our main goals with this new discussion forum is to create a greater sense of community and involvement and ownership among SOS members. Through open discussions, I believe we can become a much more dynamic, vibrant and connected organization. We can all learn a great deal from one another. Through this discussion group, I hope we'll begin sharing ideas about all sorts of things ... how to invigorate the society; how to attract more members; how we should celebrate our 50th anniversary; how to form and sustain local groups; how to work more closely with the Shakespeare Fellowship and other authorship groups; how to create local speakers bureaus; how to get local and even national media attention; how to go about raising money for the SOS; and how to create new programs or publications as part of our outreach effort. The range of potential topics is virtually endless.

I hope you'll decide to join, and participate actively in, the new Shakespeare Oxford Society discussion group on Yahoo!

That's about all for now. Again, hope to see you in Ann Arbor. Be sure to register soon and secure your tickets to see the Royal Shakespeare Company. Send in ideas about the 50th Anniversary. Recruit new members under the special "Sponsorship" program I described in the previous Newsletter. All members should take an active interest in growing and enhancing the Society. Finally, be sure to sign up for the Yahoo! discussion group so as many members as possible can begin sharing ideas and communicating regularly.

Sincerely,
Matthew
914-245-9721
matthew@ovations.com

Review: "Searching for Shakespeare" Exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery

by Derran Charlton

To mark its 150th anniversary, the National Portrait Gallery's Foundation staged in London a most comprehensive exhibition from the 2nd of March to the 29th of May 2006 titled "Searching for Shakespeare." This fascinating exhibition is now being shown at the Yale Centre for British Art, 1080 Chapel Street in New Haven Connecticut through September 17, 2006.

Information can be found by calling (203) 432-2800 or e-mailing at ycba@yale.edu.

The primary aim of the exhibition, conceived and organized by Tarnya Cooper, curator of the 16th century collection at the National Portrait Gallery in London, was to examine the Sixteenth and Seventeenth-century evidence concerning William Shakespeare's life, and to cast new light on the search for his authentic appearance. Many of the details of Shakespeare's life have been lost, according to Ms. Cooper; and there are few original objects connected to him: no existing letters, musical compositions, or play manuscripts in his hand. Absolutely nothing!

According to the exhibition guide booklet: "...determining what Shakespeare actually looked like is not straightforward. The most important evidence emerges after his death in 1616. Two posthumous portraits provide what must be reasonable accurate likenesses. Around 1620 a memorial bust was erected in the parish church of Shakespeare's home town of Stratford-upon-Avon. In 1623 an engraving showing a younger man accompanied the first edition of his plays. These two images must have been commissioned by Shakespeare's friends and family and probably derive from earlier sources. The search for an authentic portrait produced in Shakespeare's lifetime has been frustrated by lack of conclusive evidence. It is highly probable that Shakespeare did have his portrait painted during his lifetime. Portraits exist of numerous other authors at this time, and as an acclaimed writer Shakespeare may have either commissioned his own image, or, like Ben Jonson (1572-1637), his portrait may have been painted for a patron."

In 1856, the first portrait, known as the "Chandos", was presented to the Gallery by Lord Ellesmere. This compelling work is thought by Stratfordians to represent Shakespeare in his late thirties or early forties. Since the mid Seventeenth Century this image of a middle-aged Jacobean man has been considered to represent William Shakespeare. No other painting has had such a long history as a reputed portrait of Shakespeare. But does this portrait actually represent the 'playwright'? While there is much speculated evidence to support this claim- such as the early history and provenance of the picture and the development of author portraiture in this period- there is no conclusive proof of the identity of the sitter.

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The Chandos portrait of William Shakespeare wearing a gold earring has been identified as the image of the Stratfordian playwright most likely to have been painted from life. The painting, one of six under scrutiny, has never been subjected to modern scientific analysis until now. With new scientific evidence, including X-ray, infrared and ultraviolet examination, macro and micro photography and paint sampling, the "Searching for Shakespeare" exhibition proved to be a most impressive and percep-

tive contribution to historical, cultural and literary studies.

The identification of a portrait of this date without an inscription or coat of arms is always complicated, and without a lifetime portrait of Shakespeare or further documentary evidence, the Stratfordian claim that the Chandos portrait represents Shakespeare is likely to remain unproven.

We have instead only two posthumous sources, the stylized 1623 Droeshout engraving and the memorial bust, to provide an approximate comparison. Furthermore, the Chandos portrait is in a damaged condition, yet enough of the original survives to show a plumpish, unassuming brown-eyed man gazing towards eternity, making direct eye contact with the viewer. His near-shoulder-length hair and high forehead are heightened by a receding hairline. He wears a mustache, a small-pointed beard and a gold earring. His opened collar is rakishly untied. It is these few features that have inspired numerous copies to be engraved and painted, and generations of devotees to believe in the identity of the portrait.

The trail to identify the sitter leads back to a documentary source that records the early owners of the painting. The notebooks of the Eighteenth Century writer and antiquarian George Vertue (1684-1756), written in 1719, provides two early references to its early whereabouts. Vertue's evidence indicates that the ownership can be traced to a contemporary of Shakespeare. Yet his comments date from over 100 years after Shakespeare's death, and it is clear that the early history of the picture relies on hearsay, half-remembered facts and assumptions by Robert Keck, the owner in 1719, and, significantly, upon the past reminiscences of those who had previously owned the portrait: Sir William Davenant (1606-68) and Thomas Betterton (1635-1710). Vertue states that the portrait passed into the hands of a painter called John Taylor, either during the lifetime or at the death of Shakespeare.

Vertue's claims represent a number of unanswered questions and uncertain links. For example, William Davenant decided

that this particular picture was a portrait of Shakespeare and not another fashionable Jacobean urban dweller. William Davenant, who was only ten when Shakespeare died, is perhaps the weakest link. Davenant claimed to be Shakespeare's godson, but he was also known to embroider his association with Shakespeare.

In 1864, J. Hain Friswell wrote, "One cannot really imagine our essentially English Shakespeare to have been a dark, heavy man, with a foreign expression, of decidedly Jewish physiognomy, thin curly hair, a somewhat lubricious mouth, red-edged eyes, wanton lips, with a coarse expression and his ears tricked out with earrings." M.H. Spielman, the foremost art critic of Elizabethan portraiture, held a similar view and commented in 1907 that "...it is hard to believe that this dark face, of distinctly Italian type, represents one of the pure English Shakespeare stock of the Midlands."

The earrings in the sitter's left ear was once considered to be a later addition, but recent analysis by the gallery's analysts, has confirmed that it is an original part of the portrait, having been painted with a metal-based pigment (known as "lead tin yellow"), although some of the beard and hair had been added later. This is consistent with the age of the paint on the portrait, which has been dated to between 1600 and 1610. Detailed notes of its history, which were written in the Eighteenth Century, record that it was painted by John Taylor, an actor and friend of the playwright. Tradition has it that the portrait was painted by Richard Burbage, who gave it to John Taylor. Tellingly, Taylor joined the King's Men after Burbage's death. In fact, Taylor replaced Burbage, and died intestate. Importantly, neither the memorial bust nor a death-mask of Shakespeare indicate that he ever wore an earring.

Likewise, the portrait of an unknown gentleman, known as the Grafton portrait, 1588, owned by the John Rylands Library, Manchester, shows a young man aged 24, dressed in a sumptuous slashed scarlet doublet. In particular, the wearing of scarlet cloth was prohibited by sumptuary laws, reissued in 1579, for everyone except the nobility. It has also been noted by the N.P.G. that recent X-rays have now

indicated that the original age of the sitter was 23. Consequently, there is no evidence that the Grafton portrait represents William Shakespeare.

The portrait of an unknown gentleman, known as the Sanders portrait, 1603, dates from within Shakespeare's lifetime. Extensive technical analysis undertaken in Canada has confirmed the materials and pigments used are consistent with an earlier Seventeenth Century date. The panel has been identified as being derived from a tree felled around 1595. The sitter is possibly in his late twenties or early thirties and appears to have soft grey eyes and light-brown hair. Although any assessment of age is subjective, the sitter appears too young to represent William Shakespeare, who was thirty-nine in 1603. By tradition, the picture has been considered to be the work of a painter called John Sanders, who was supposed to be in some way connected with Shakespeare's company, although no evidence of this connection has been found. Over four decades later there is a record of an artist called John Sanders (or Saunders) in the Court of Minutes of the Painter-Stationers' Company as a painter of coats of arms. He completed his apprenticeship on 13 July 1647 and was thereafter licensed to work as a professional painter. At this date he would have been in his early or mid twenties and thus cannot be the painter associated with the Sanders portrait of 1603.

A portrait of an unknown gentleman, possibly Thomas Overby (1581-1613), known as the Jansenn Portrait, circa 1610, long claimed to be a portrait of Shakespeare from life, proved conclusively in 1988 that the original hairline and much of the hair had been over-painted to make the sitter appear Shakespearean, and that the "AETE 46/1610" inscription had been placed on top of this over-painting. The N.P.G. assessment of this portrait proved it to be a "likeness and myth."

The portrait referred to as "William Shakespeare", known as the Flower portrait, circa 1820-40 by an unknown English artist, deriving directly from the Droeshout engraving (painted on top of a Sixteenth Century Italian painting depicting a Madonna and Child with John the Baptist, dating from between 1540 and 1560) was categorically identified by the N.P.G. in

2005 as a product of the early Nineteenth Century.

In summation, essentially all of the six previously claimed portraits of William Shakespeare (Shakspere) have failed the National Portrait Gallery X-rays, infrared and ultraviolet examinations, macro and micro photography and paint samplings. In 2006 there is no conclusive proof as to the identity of the sitters. Absolutely none.

While the spurious portraits are central to the exhibition, the additional 117 materials, many unique, included: copies of the first printings of the plays, sonnets and poems by Shakespeare, and by his contemporaries, books, pamphlets, theatre materials, letters, parish and public records, the actual parish register of the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, recording the baptism of Shakspere, his three children, the marriages of his two daughters, the burial of his father and mother, and his own burial; the original will, the draft Grant of arms to John Shakespeare (1595); detail of the Swan Theatre in London, circa 1596-7; relevant extracts from George Vertue's notebook, 1719; Christopher Saxton's map of Warwickshire and Leicestershire, 1576; the Minute Book of the Stratford-upon-Avon Corporation, showing the election of John Shakespeare as bailiff, and much more. Of particular interest to Oxfordians is the Welbeck copy of the 1575 portrait of Edward de Vere, the original having been "lost."

Our Mission:

Founded in 1957, the Shakespeare Oxford Society is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to exploring the Shakespeare authorship question and researching the evidence that Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford (1550 – 1604) is the true author of the poems and plays of "William Shakespeare."

From the Oxfordian Archives

Worcester's, Oxford's and The Admiral's

By Gwynneth Bowen

[Reprinted from the Shakespearean Authorship Review, No. 29 Summer 1974]

Little is known of Worcester's men and still less of Oxford's before their amalgamation, and we do not even know when they were amalgamated. As everyone would agree, it was before the end of March, 1602, for we first hear of the amalgamation in a letter from the Privy Council to the Lord Mayor, dated "the last day of March 1602."¹ The amalgamated company are now to be licensed to play at the Boar's Head, and nowhere else; but they had already played at the Boar's Head, for it was the place "they have especially used and do best like of" and their offence lay in changing their place of playing "at their own disposition." We now know that Worcester's had in fact played at the Boar's Head in 1599-1600 and then left, breaking their bonds to their own leader, Robert Browne, lessee of the Boar's Head inn and theater;² and if they had returned before the date of the letter, it seems that they must have left again. Since the servants of the Earl of Oxford share the blame for all this with those of the Earl of Worcester, it follows that they must have been on company at least since 1599.

From 1602, anyway, the company seems to have gone by Worcester's name alone, till it was taken over by James I's consort, Queen Anne, in 1603 or early 1604. In 1602-3 Worcester's men were in financial relations with Philip Henslowe, owner of the *Rose* playhouse, who is our chief source of information about many of the Elizabethan players. He had a special relationship, of course, with the Admiral's men, who played at the *Rose* from 1594 to 1600, and afterwards at Henslowe's new theatre, the *Fortune*, but nearly all the players in London, with the notable exception of William Shakespeare, borrowed money from him at one time or another. On 17th August, 1602, he opened an account for Worcester's company, and though there is no complete list of members in his famous "diary", Sir Edmund Chambers compiled his own list from separate entries. At this

time they included John Duke, Thomas Blackwood, Christopher Beeston, Robert Pallant, and a certain Cattanes, whose first name is not recorded and of whom nothing more is known.³ There are some well-known names among them, but as Chambers notes, it is impossible to say which came from Worcester's and which from Oxford's.

From an earlier list of Worcester's men we must go back to 14th January, 1583, when William Somerset, 3rd Earl of Worcester issued a license to his players. There were eight of them, but we need to remember only four- Robert Browne, Richard Jones, James Tunstall, and Edward Alleyn, then aged sixteen.⁴ Performances by Worcester's men are recorded in the provinces during 1583 and 1584, and up to March 1585, and then no more- till after the death of the 3rd Earl, which occurred on 22nd February 1589.

But at the onset of 1589, Robert Browne, Richard Jones, Edward Alleyn and his elder brother, John, held a common stock of "playinge apparels play Bookes Instruments and other commodities." Then, shortly before Worcester's death, by a deed of sale dated 3rd January 1589, Jones parted with his share to Edward Alleyn.⁵ No company is named, but it is natural to suppose that, at the time of the transaction, all four men were members of a single company, as, with the exception of John Alleyn, they certainly had been in 1583. Sir Walter Greg was of the opinion that Edward Alleyn had remained with Worcester's till the death of the third Earl and then joined the Admiral's, but Chambers dissented from this view on account of the hiatus in the known history of Worcester's, and suggested that the entire company had passed into the service of the Lord Admiral in 1585: "On Dr. Greg's theory as to the date at which Alleyn took service with the Lord Admiral, the organization in whose properties Richard Jones had an interest would naturally be Worcester's men; on mine it would be the Admiral's, and it would follow that Jones and Browne, as well

as Alleyn had joined that company."⁶

The main point in favor of Chamber's theory is that the first period of activity of the Admiral's men was from 1585 to 1589. "I suspect", he says, "that in 1589 or 1590 they were practically dissolved."⁷ This coincides, of course, with the gap in the known activities of Worcester's, but on the other hand, there is no evidence that any of the four men concerned did join the Admiral's in 1585, or at any time before the date of Richard Jones's deed of sale, so at least the way is open for a possible alternative: either that Worcester's survived somewhere, however obscurely, or that they entered the service, not of the Admiral, but some other Lord. The question is important since it affects the provenance of the plays with which the reconstituted Admiral's men began, at the *Rose*, in 1594.

Chambers goes on to say that there is nothing to show whether the Alleyns bought up Robert Browne's share as well as that of Richard Jones, but he evidently harboured suspicions about that too:

"At any rate Brown began in 1590 that series of continental tours which occupied most of the rest of his career. Jones joined him in one of these adventures in 1592, and it is possible that John Bradstreet and Thomas Sackville, who went with them, were also old Admiral's men. But I do not think it is accurate to regard this company, as Dr. Greg seems inclined to do, as being under the Admiral's patronage. It is true that they obtained a passport from him, but this was probably given rather in his capacity as warden of the seas than in that of their lord. His name is not mentioned in any of the foreign records of their peregrinations."⁸

It may prove worth our while to follow them part of the way in their peregrinations, or rather, to join them at Frankfurt

for the autumn fair of 1592, where it is on record that they gave performances of the antiquated farce of *Grammer Gurton's Needle* and, by way of contrast, some of Marlowe's plays. It so happened that the traveler, Fynes Moryson, was also visiting Frankfort and saw them play. He has left us the following description:

"When some of our cast despised stage players came out of England into Germany, and played at Franckford in the tyme of the Mart, having nether a complete number of Actours, nor any good Apparell, nor any ornament of the stage, yet the Germans, not understanding a worde they sayde, both men and women, flocked wonderfully to see theire gesture and Action, rather then heare them, speaking English which they understoode not, and pronouncing peeces and patches of English plays, which my selfe and some English men there present could not heare without great wearysomenes. Yea my selfe coming from Franckford in the company of some cheefe marchants Dutch and Flemish heard them often bragg of the good market they had made only condoling that they had not the leasure to heare the English players."⁹

There may have been other English players at Frankfort at the time and doubts have been raised as to whether this was, indeed, Browne's company, for he was a reputable actor. But Fynes Moryson does not criticize the acting and what he does criticize is precisely what we should expect: the inadequate number of actors; their lack of good apparel and stage properties; and the fact that they did not present whole plays, but "peeces and patches." As T.W. Baldwin comments, "their plays must have been assembled from parts, written or in their heads."¹⁰ The description is in complete accordance with what we know of the circumstances of this itinerant company, and especially if the Alleyns had acquired Browne's share of the common stock as well as Jones's. From the point of view of the players, however, Frankfort Fair was obviously a success and they were back the following August, after which, as Chambers says, the company seems to have

broken up,¹¹ an event which is probably not unconnected with the tragic fact, also related by Chambers, that Browne's wife and all her children and household "died of the plague in Shoreditch about August 1593."¹¹ Bradstreet and Sackville may have stayed on in Germany, where they both eventually settled. There is no trace of Browne or Jones for a while, either in Germany or in England, but it is surely a reasonable conjecture that Browne set out on his homeward journey as soon as the news reached him, and that Jones went with him. Jones is next heard of in London, on 2nd September, 1594, when he bought "a manes gowne of Pechecoler" from Henslowe.¹³ This is the earliest of many references to him in Henslowe's diary and he certainly joined the Admiral's company, but there is no evidence that he was a member before he went abroad. As for Browne, the first clue we have to his whereabouts since August 1593, is the record in the parish register of St. Saviour's, Southwark, of the baptism of his eldest son by his second wife, named after him, on 19th October 1595.¹⁴ It may be significant that he had moved from Shoreditch, where he presumably lived with his first wife, to Bankside- from the neighborhood of the *Theatre* to the neighborhood of the *Rose*- but there is no evidence that he ever had been, or ever became, a member of the Admiral's.

John Alleyn, who was about ten years older than Edward, was not a member of Worcester's in 1583, but may have joined them by 1585, or for that matter, at any time before 1589- so long as Worcester's existed; or he may not have joined them at all. In any case, he never distinguished himself as an actor, but seems to have been primarily an innholder, as his father was before him. In 1580 he is described as a servant to Lord Sheffield and an innholder; and in 1587-8, as "of St. Botolph's without Bishopgate, innholder."¹⁵ James Tunstall, on the other hand, was a member of Worcester's in 1583, but not a joint owner of common stock in 1589. In November, 1590, however, these two are to be found together at the *Theatre* in Shoreditch, where they became involved in the notorious quarrel between James Burbage, owner of the *Theatre*, and Mrs. Brayne, widow of his former partner. We cannot, here, enter into the main cause of the quarrel, but it led to a law-suit as a result of

which, certain relevant facts are recorded. It appears that at least two companies were playing at the Theatre at this time, one of which was the Admiral's. The other is generally agreed to have been Strange's, though Baldwin questions this.¹⁶ Anyway, Tunstall was present when John Alleyn accused Burbage of detaining some of the money due to the players, saying they would complain to their lord and master the Lord Admiral; so we may take it that Tunstall, as well as John Alleyn, was by now a servant of the Lord Admiral. But Edward Alleyn is not even mentioned in connection with these events at the *Theatre*, and Baldwin suggests that John Alleyn and James Tunstall were in fact the only active members, and that Edward "was not present and active in the company in November, 1590. However, both brothers were still collecting apparel, for on 23rd November 1590, Tunstall witnessed the sale of a cloak to John Alleyn, and on 6th May 1591, that of another cloak to both John and Edward."¹⁷ By 1592, the "Admiral's" were co-operating with Lord Strange's men at the *Rose*, and in October of that year Edward married Henslowe's step-daughter. Then, on 6th of May 1593, when the London theatres were closed on account of the plague, a special license to play in the provinces was granted to Edward Alleyn "servant to the right honorable the Lord Admiral" and five other men- "William Kemp, Thomas Pope, John Heming, Augustine Phillips, and Georg Brian, being al one companie, servaunts, to our verie good Lord the Lord Strange." It would seem, then, that Edward Alleyn, alone of the Admiral's company, was now acting with Strange's; and from this list of 1593, Baldwin goes on to infer that Edward Alleyn was in fact "the Admiral's company which co-operated with Strange's from February 1592."¹⁸ This may, of course, be an exaggeration, but though the names of some members of the combined company of 1592 have been preserved, they do not include those of John Alleyn or James Tunstall. As for Robert Browne and Richard Jones, whether or not they had ever been members of the Admiral's it is significant that they procured the passport for their continental tour on 10th February 1592, just nine days before Strange's (and the "Admiral's") began their season at the *Rose*, where their repertory included *Or-*

lando Furioso, *Friar Bacon*, *The Jew of Malta*, and a play called *Harry the Sixth*, which had an exceptionally long run. And now, let us turn back the calendar to the year 1585, when the company of the third Earl of Worcester is believed to have passed into the service of the Lord Admiral.

The last recorded performance of this company was in March 1585, and on 28th October of the same year, John and Edward Alleyn bought from their mother and step-father "four messuages in Busshopgate Streete without Busshopgate in the suburb of London lying next the house of the Earl of Oxford."¹⁹ The sale was witnessed by James Tunstall and it is interesting to find him at this early date, in his usual role as witness, this time to a private transaction within the family circle of the Alleyns. Edward Alleyn and he may, or may not, still have been members of Worcester's as they were presumably were only seven months before; John Alleyn may, or may not, have joined the company; and the company, itself, may, or may not, have broken up; but amid all these uncertainties one fact is clear. The property bought by the Alleyn brothers from their mother and step-father was next-door to the house of the Earl of Oxford. Many years later, in 1615, Edward Alleyn drew up a lease for "two-messuages...lying nest the mansion-house of Fisher's Folly, in Bishopgate Street, with an alley and garden and eight small tenements adjoining", and this lease is endorsed "Pye Alley in Bishopgate Street, now Mr. Phillips."²⁰

Fisher's Folly, so-called after the builder and first owner, Jasper Fisher, who died in 1579/80, was in the fifteen eighties the residence of the Earl of Oxford. It was later to become Devonshire House and Thomas Fuller (1608-1661) informs us that Edward Alleyn "was born in the aforesaid parish (i.e. St. Botolph's, Bishopgate) near Devonshire House, where now is the sign of the *Pie*. He was bred a Stage-player..."²¹ At the sign of the *Pie*, one would naturally expect to find an inn, which of course, would have given its name to the alley, not the other way around; so in spite of Fuller's "now", the inn must have existed, under that name, at least as early as 1615. *Pie* (or *Magpie*) Alley was just south of Devonshire Street, leading to Devonshire House (See map of Bishopgate Ward in Strype's edition of Stow) and *Pie*

Alley presumably led to the *Pie* Inn, which was, therefore, not only "near" but "next" to Devonshire House. As G.F. Warner writes in his Introduction to the *Catalogue of MSS. And Muniments of Alleyn's College, Dulwich*: "Fuller's often-quoted statement that he (Edward Alleyn) was born near Devonshire House, where now is the sign of the *Pie*, is fully confirmed by the mention of *Pye Alley* and *Fisher's Folly*, the old name of Devonshire House, in close connexion with his father's property."²²

Now, it is well known that Edward Alleyn was baptized at St. Botolph's without Bishopgate, on 2nd September 1566, and that his father was Edward Alleyn, of Willen, Bucks., Innholder and Porter to the Queen, but it seems to have been almost forgotten that he also had an inn in Bishopgate. The facts are clearly summarized by Warner (p. xvi). In 1555 and again in 1557 he is designated "of London Yeoman", but "in subsequent deeds, the first of which records his purchase of a house in Bishopgate in 1566...he uniformly appears as 'innholder' and is so described in his will, dated 10th Sept., 1570...The statement made by Malcolm (*Londinium Redivivum*, 1802, vol. i, p.345) and noticed by Hunter as 'a very curious fact' that in the entry of his burial at St. Botolph's, on 13th Sept., 1570, he is called 'poete to the Queene', may be readily dismissed. On referring to the register I found the word to be 'porter', and the title 'one of the Queen's Majesties porters is given him in a document...dated 1567.'

John and Edward Alleyn inherited from their father other property in the same parish,²³ but all the evidence goes to show that the four messuages they bought from their mother and step-father in 1585 comprised their late father's inn. That John, already an innholder in 1580, should wish to own it and that their mother should be willing to sell it is not surprising, and as for their step-father, he was a haberdasher by trade and may not have been interested in inns; but where does Edward come into the picture? Well, by the autumn of 1585, he was a talented and no doubt ambitious actor of nineteen, and at this period, plays were frequently performed at city inns. Whether or not, the *Pie* had already been used for this purpose- as it may have been even in their father's time- it is almost inconceivable

that it would not be so used under the joint ownership of John and Edward Alleyn. To present plays there, with John as landlord of the inn and Edward as principal actor, would be to their mutual advantage; moreover, that great patron of players, the Earl of Oxford, was their next-door neighbor and almost certainly their ground landlord, but Oxford had his own company of players and they could hardly have played there as servants of any other lord. Whether the whole company of the Earl of Worcester, as it stood in 1583, passed into the service of the Earl of Oxford in 1585 is immaterial, but I suggest that Edward Alleyn, Robert Browne, Richard Jones and James Tunstall did. John Alleyn, not having been a member of Worcester's in 1583, is a case apart, but as landlord of the inn where Oxford's men played, he would be in a unique position in relation to that company and a sharer in his own right, independently of his status as an actor. Nothing is known of the "*Pie*" as a playhouse, but then, there were many inns in London where plays were performed and little enough is known of any of them. Neither is it known where Oxford's men played, apart from the *Boar's Head* (after their amalgamation with Worcester's), but we do know that they flourished in the fifteen-eighties and that, broadly speaking, Oxford was living at Fisher's Folly throughout this decade. Shortly before Christmas, 1588, he sold it, and it was just nine days after Christmas that John and Edward Alleyn bought up Richard Jones's share of that common stock of play-books and apparel held jointly by these three and Robert Browne. When a company was dissolved it was the normal practice to distribute the common stock among the sharers, who could then each sell his own assignment as he pleased; in the case of play-books, generally to another company or a publisher. But the Alleyns could evidently afford, not only to keep what was due to them personally, but to buy in much, if not all, of the remainder, obviously with a view to making a fresh start, the only question being the identity of the company to which all four of the joint owners belonged on 3rd January 1589; if the Admiral's, they received it after a period of instability and uncertainty; if Oxford's they were obliged to seek a new patron, for Oxford was no longer available. In June, 1588,

his first wife, Anne Cecil, daughter of Lord Burghley, had died. Burghley had not only been Oxford's guardian during his minority, but was Master of the Court of Wards, and as Professor Joel Hurstfield puts it:

"The Earl had entered into obligations to purchase his marriage from the Court of Wards, a necessary procedure before he could be free to marry Anne Cecil. The full price of his marriage had never been paid and this, and other debts, had long hung over him in the Court of Wards. Then, early in 1589, shortly after the death of Anne, Burghley instituted proceeding against the Earl for this debt, and some of his lands were seized and held for payment."²⁴

It seems that he had sold Fisher's Folly just in time, and at about the same time he sold Oxford Place, near London Stone, to Sir John Hart who, as Stow tells us, kept his mayoralty there.

Oxford was certainly in no position at this time to maintain a London company of players, and a company of traveling under his name is last heard of at Maidstone in 1589-90. At about the same time, a company under the patronage of Edward, 4th Earl of Worcester (son of the third Earl) makes his first appearance, at Coventry. It was this company which, sooner or later, was amalgamated with Oxford's.

Meanwhile, on 14th July 1589, the Privy Council had written to Alderman John Hart and others, "requiring them to take order" for the relief of John Alleyn, "servante to me the Lo. Admirall", against a certain Dr. Martin, "who seeketh by indirecte meanes to make frustrate a lease of a certain teneement and a garden demised by one John Roise to the suppliant's father and mother and h'mselfe."²⁵ This letter, signed by Charles Howard (the Lord Admiral) and other members of the Privy Council contains what seems to be the earliest known reference of John Alleyn as "servant to the Lord Admiral." It is well known that he was in the Admiral's service "in" 1589 and I have, therefore, gone to a good deal of trouble to find out on what contemporary evidence this rather vague knowledge is based. According to *Shakespeare Encyclopaedia*, he was "listed

in 1589 as a member of the Admiral's Men and as part owner, with his brother Edward, of 'playing apparelles...' ", which implies that the source of both pieces of information was the same; but as I have said, Richard Jones's deed of sale names no company. The odds were, of course, heavily against finding any such allusion, dated 1589 and earlier than 3rd January, but the above letter was in fact written six months after the deed of sale.

In the deed of sale, itself, John Alleyn was described as a "Citizen and Innholder of London", and though no parish is named, he was presumably still an innholder of St. Botolph's without Bishopgate; as he is known to have been just a year before, or less. I am not suggesting that the property referred to in the letter was identical with that bought by John and Edward from their mother and step-father in 1585, obviously it was not, though it may have been adjacent to it. Anyway, this dispute over the lease is worth noting for what it tells us of John's reduced circumstances shortly after the sale of Fisher's Folly. He was badly in need of a powerful friend at this time and found one in the Admiral who may have taken him into his own household, but there is no need to suppose that he became a member of the Admiral's company before November, 1590, when he and James Tunstall were playing at the *Theatre*. The dispute over the lease was apparently still unresolved in December, 1589, when Howard drafted a letter to Sir William Drury, D.L.C., "umpire in the above dispute, asking his friendship and favour in behalf of his servant, John Alleyn."²⁶ We do not know the outcome, and neither do we know what became at this time of those four messuages next to Fisher's Folly, though we may infer from the lease of 1615 that either John or Edward, or both, still owned "Pie Alley", but neither of them seems to have lived there after 1592, when John Alleyn describes himself as late of the parish of St. Botolph's without Bishopgate.

In 1594, when the Admiral's men, as a reorganized and independent company, finally settled at the Rose, under the leadership of Edward Alleyn, John did not go with them. This has been a puzzle to commentators, but if I suggest, his chief interest was his inn, and his chief service to his brother

and "the company" had been the provision and supervision of a place to act in, there was no point. He had been supplanted by Henslowe. A year or two later he died, as a resident of St. Andrew's, Holbourn.²⁷

I do not claim to have proved conclusively either that plays performed at the Pie in Bishopgate Street; or that Robert Browne, Richard Jones, both the Alleyns and James Tunstall were members of Oxford's company from 1585 to 1589; but there is enough mutually corroborated evidence for a working hypothesis and I am content to leave it at that for the present. It is the sustained inter-action of fact and hypothesis, leading to the discovery of "new" facts, that counts in the long term and the *Review* is our laboratory.

NOTES

¹ Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, Vol.4, p. 334.

² C.J. Sisson, *The Boar's Head Theatre* (1972).

³ *Elizabethan Stage*, 2, 226.

⁴ The complete list is printed by Chambers, *E.S.* 2, 222.

⁵ *Henslowe's Diary*, Eds. Foakes and Rickert, (1961), p. 273.

⁶ *Elizabethan Stage*, 2, 137.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Printed from Chambers, *E.S.*, 1, 343.

¹⁰ *Literary Genetics of Shakespeare's Plays*, p. 252, note 20

¹¹ *E.S.* 2, 275.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 277

¹³ *Henslowe's Diary*, (Foakes and Rickert), p. 35.

¹⁴ *E.S.* 2, p. 304.

¹⁵ Mark Eccles, *Christopher Marlowe in London*, p. 65.

¹⁶ *Literary Genetics*, 255.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 254

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 251.

¹⁹ Eccles, *Christopher Marlowe in London*, p. 65. G.H. Warner, *Catalogue*

Of MSS, and Muniments of Alleyn's College, Dulwich, pp. 251 and 252.

²⁰ Warner, p. 267.

²¹ *Worthies of England* (1662), by Thomas Fuller.

²² G.F. Warner, p. XV.

²³ Eccles, p. 65.

²⁴ The Queen's Wards, p. 253.

²⁵ G.F. Warner, P. 85.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.86.

²⁷ Eccles, p. 65.

Oxford Blackfriars (cont'd from p. 6)

- Chambers, E.K. *William Shakespeare*. 2 volumes. Oxford Clarendon Press, 1930.
 Clarke, Eva Turner. *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*. Kennikat Press, 1974.
 Hurstfield, Joel. *The Queen's Wards: Wardship and Marriage Under Elizabeth I*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958.
 Looney, J. Thomas. *Shakespeare Identified*. Cecil Palmer, 1920.
 Nelson, Alan. *Monstrous Adversary*. Liverpool University Press, 2003.
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 Ward, B.M. *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*. John Murray, London, 1928.

Review of Annual Meeting (cont'd from p. 9)

— 'Mr.W.H.' — Sir William Harvey, that we have them at all."

Following numerous questions, ably answered by Sir Ian, the Meeting adjourned for a splendid and convivial lunch in the Mansion House; kindly arranged by the owner of the castle and DVS member, Jason Lindsay.

Visitors were encouraged to explore the Castle and grounds, and view the excellent "The De Vere" exhibition prepared by Charles Bird and the Hedingham Heritage Society.

Elizabeth Imlay, Vice-Chairman and Newsletter Editor, appropriately presented "Edward de Vere and the Music of the Renaissance", in preparation of the 3rd Dutch Authorship Conference to be held during June in Utrecht. Jan Scheffer, of the Netherlands, promoted the upcoming Utrecht Meeting. The Meeting concluded with an absorbing talk, "Hedingham — Joining the Dots" by the local historian Charles Bird, during which he placed Edward de Vere in his landscape at his ancient manor of Henham-ad-Castrum. Essentially, everyone enjoyed the hugely successful Meeting and eagerly looked forward to the upcoming future events.

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Prince Tudor (cont'd from p. 18)

the Prince Tudor hypothesis: Diana Price critiqued Sears's book on whether the historical documents support the possibility of a concealed pregnancy and birth by the Queen in May-June 1574, Sears and Charlton Ogburn wrote replies, and Roger Parisius provided a valuable history of the controversy, while arguing against the Prince Tudor hypothesis.

Information on women's fertility can be found in a World Health Organization paper at www.PubMed.gov, sponsored by the National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. The odds for a pregnancy for a woman in her early forties are in Dr. Gillian Lockwood's paper at www.ivillage.co.uk. Several other web sites have similar papers.

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