

Two First Folio Poems and Three Other Texts Encrypted by John Dee

by Lyle Jennings Colombo, Ph.D.

Outline

Introduction: The Philosophy behind John Dee's Encryptions

I. The Encryption of *Shake-Speare's Sonnets* of 1609 (A. Waugh)

II. The First Folio Poem, "To the Reader" (S. O'Donovan, L. Colombo)

III. The Funerary Monument at Stratford (A. Waugh, L. Colombo)

IV. The Dee Signatures as Keys to the Encryptions (L. Colombo)

V. The Epitaph on Shakespeare's Gravestone (L. Colombo)

VI. Hugh Holland's First Folio Poem (L. Colombo)

VII. Conclusion

For a PDF of the full presentation
that includes the acrostic ciphers
and annotated references:



<https://tulane.box.com/s/rx5a3j3y0s6eqivxq7q1xqqmy704ceot>

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ANNOTATED REFERENCES

In Order of Mention

For Alexander Waugh's research on John Dee's encryptions, the learned men of Shakespeare's day who knew who he really was, and the scandal of the Sonnets:

Alexander Waugh's YouTube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@alexanderwaugh7036>

Mathematical evidence that the encryptions in the Sonnets and funerary monument do not occur by chance:

Peter Sturrock & Kathleen E. Erickson, "Behind the Mask – An Inquiry into the Shakespeare Authorship Question." *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 34 (2) 2020.

<https://philpapers.org/rec/STUBTM>

John Dee as a major instigator of the Rosicrucian movement in Europe:

Frances Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*. Routledge: 1979, p. 199.

Edward de Vere signs his name "Double V":

John Lily, "Pappe with an hatchet Alias," 1589, p. 4. ProQuest,

<https://www.proquest.com/books/pappe-with-hatchet-alias-figge-my-god-sonne/docview/2248515915/se-2>.

Dee mentions the three main techniques of Cabala: Notariqon (acrostics), Gematria (assigning numbers to letters), and Tsiruf (anagram):

John Dee, *Monas Hieroglyphica*. Frankfurt am Main: 1591, p. 19.

Dee on the number of one's name:

"...that we may be able to find the number of our own name, gloriously exemplified and registered in the book of the Trinity most blessed and eternal."

Euclid, Thomas Rudd, and John Dee. *Euclides Elements of Geometry the First VI Books, in a Compendious Form Contracted and Demonstrated... Whereunto is Added the Mathematicall Preface of Mr. John Dee*. London: Printed by Robert and William Leybourn: 1651, p. C1.

The significance of homophones for Cabala: John Dee states his preference for the letter "L" because its sound is the same as the divine name "El":

Christopher Lionel Whitby, *John Dee's Actions with Spirits: 22 December 1581 to 23 May 1583*. 1982, pp. 256, 344. Sloane MS 3188, p. 91b, lines 52-53.

The significance of homophones for Cabala: "Vilanova's fascination with the sound... of each sacred letter":

Joaquín Carreras y Artau, "Arnaldo de Vilanova, apologita antijudaico." *Sefaras* 7 (1947), pp. 60-61. Cited by Catherine Swietlicki, *Spanish Christian Cabala*. University of Missouri Press: 1986, p. 5.

The significance of homophones for Cabala: Reuchlin remarked that for the Cabalist, "single words... syllables, long marks and points are full of secret meanings":

Reuchlin, *De arte cabalistica* (1517), in Pistorius's facsimile edition (1:639). Cited by Catherine Swietlicki, *Spanish Christian Cabala*. University of Missouri Press: 1986, p. 88.

The significance of homophones for Cabala: Fray Luis de León lists "What concerns the sound" of a name as one of three ways words are compared in Cabala:

Luis, Fray, *De los nombres de Cristo*, ed. Cristóbal Cuevas García, Madrid: Cátedra, 1977, pp. 162-63. Cited by Catherine Swietlicki, *Spanish Christian Cabala*. University of Missouri: 1986, p. 88.

Edward de Vere referred to three times as the "Fourth T" in the Sonnets' Preface:

Alexander Waugh, "Where is Shakespeare Really Buried (Part 1)," *YouTube*, 25 Dec. 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqV44taFNUc&list=PLJ05UbAScB_QFsVxHSLYct1Pc_5L47RJO&index=1&t=54s

The significance of the numbers 6-2-4:

Alexander Waugh, "Who Moved Shakespeare's Body?" *YouTube*, 3 Jun. 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Rv9J7OOWWYA&t=850s>

A four-minute video of the Sonnets' encryptions set to the music of Thomas Tallis:

Alexander Waugh, "In Contemplation of the Cryptic Mind," *YouTube*, 9 Apr. 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX_WMcGscCY&t=137s

Thorough treatment of the case for John Dee as cryptographer of the Sonnets and a detailed explanation of the Sonnets' encryptions:

Alexander Waugh, "The Incalculable Genius of John Dee," *YouTube*, 28 Jan. 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-PWR7-0Hp4&t=1317s>

Waugh explains De Vere's number, 1740:

Alexander Waugh, "What's in a Name? Shakespeare's Question Applied to Shakespeare," *YouTube*, 10 Apr. 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hl2UOPB4BZc&t=632s>

On the significance of the number 17 for Shakespeare:

Alexander Waugh has found numerous 16th and 17th century books of epigrams or inventories of poets in which Shakespeare is listed seventeenth. The identification of Shakespeare with the number seventeen occurs in works by William Turner, Samuel Sheppard, Thomas Bancroft, Thomas Hayward, E. Bolton, Michael Drayton, Antony Davenport, Francis Meres, and others. Many of these men were known or suspected Freemasons.

Alexander Waugh, "Revealing the Number that Unmasks Shakespeare." *YouTube*, 7 Aug. 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKjC1lddyHQ>

Dee cites the "Favourable letters" from the Earl of Oxford in defense against witchcraft:

BRITISH LIBRARY Cotton MS Vitellius C VII, f. 4v.

Crossley, James, ed., *Autobiographical Tracts of Dr. John Dee*. Chetham Society: 1851, p. 10.

On the connection between Shakespeare and Freemasonry:

Alexander Waugh, "The Freemasons Who Knew Where Shakespeare was Really Buried," *YouTube*, 14 Jan. 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4o_q9NtUnaU&t=14s
... , "John Dee, William Shakespeare, and the Triangular Lodge at Ruston," *YouTube*, 28 Oct. 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wk6inxzLHeo&t=26s>

On the acrostic cipher in "To the Reader":

Alexander Waugh, "Ben Jonson Knew," *YouTube*, 6 Jan. 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQThnv8c2ul>

The novelist Charlotte Armstrong solved the Sonnets' acrostic cipher in the 1960's:

Roger Stritmatter, "Witty Numbers: Ben Jonson's Shakespeare First Folio Jest in Focus." *YouTube*, 8 Apr. 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoZaS_4s7g
Charlotte Armstrong, *Seven Seats to the Moon*. Fawcett Crest/Ballantine Books: 1969, p. 295.

Sean O'Donovan solved the grid cipher in "To the Reader," using Waugh's methods.

Sean O'Donovan, "Shakespeare To The Reader—Code/Cipher Exploration," 15 Sep. 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1o5qKibLVA>

Detailed explanation of Waugh's decryption of the Stratford funerary monument:

Alexander Waugh, "MORE Monkey Business at Stratford-upon-Avon!" *YouTube*, 31 Mar. 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI4RY9Xj7HU&t=1170s>

On the Shakespeare double A headpiece and the number eleven:

John Anthony, "Edward de Vere: Twice Eleven and the Shakespeare AA," *YouTube*, 25 Feb. 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GMh4FRDoXU>

The drawing of the Stratford Gravestone:

I. B. Melchior, *Melchior A La Carte*. Bear Manor Media: 2009, p. 249.

Dee's triangle signature and the Latinization of his name as "Deus":

Glen Parry, *The Arch-Conjurer John Dee*. Yale University Press: 2013, p. 21. "Dee constantly harped on the triangular fourth letter of the Greek alphabet, 'delta', as the first letter of his name. It also signified alchemical fire. For Postel the number four connoted God, and Dee often Latinized his name as 'Deus'.

Robert J. Wilkinson, *Orientalism, Aramaic, and Kabbalah in the Catholic Reformation: The First Printing of the Syriac New Testament*. Leiden and Boston, MA: 2007, pp. 102-114, 125-9.

Robert J. Wilkinson, *The Kabbalistic Scholars of the Antwerp Polyglot Bible*. Leiden and Boston, MA: 2007, pp. 57, n. 24; 85.

J. Roberts and A. G. Watson, eds, *John Dee's Library Catalogue*. London: 1990, 1619, Cat. No. B267.

