

The Shakespeare Issue

All We Know About William Shakespeare,

by Mark Twain.

"He was born on the 23rd of April, 1564.

Of good farmer-class parents who could not read, could not write, could not sign their names.

At Stratford, a small back settlement which in that day was shabby and unclean, and densely illiterate. Of the nineteen important men charged with the government of the town, thirteen had to 'make their mark' in attesting important documents, because they could not write their names.

Of the first eighteen years of his life, *nothing* is known. They are a blank.

On the 27th of November (1582) William Shakespeare took out a license to marry Anne Whateley.

Next day Shakespeare took out a license to marry Anne Hathaway. She was eight years his senior.

William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. In a hurry. By grace of a reluctantly granted dispensation there was but one publication of the banns.

Within six months the first child was born.

About two (blank) years followed, during which period *nothing at all happened to Shakespeare*, so far as anybody knows.

Then came twins - 1585. February.

Two blank years follow.

Then - 1587 - he makes a ten-year visit to London, leaving the family behind.

Five blank years follow. During this period *nothing happened to him*, as far as anybody actually knows.

Then - 1592 - there is mention of him as an actor.

Next year - 1593 - his name appears in the official list of players.

Next year - 1594 - he played before the Queen. A detail of no consequence: other obscurities did it every year of the forty-five of her reign. And remained obscure.

Three pretty full years follow. Full of play-acting.

Then - in 1597 - he bought New Place, Stratford.

Thirteen or fourteen busy years follow; years in which he accumulated money, and also reputation as actor and manager.

Meantime his name, liberally and variously spelt, had become associated with a number of great plays and poems, as (ostensibly) author of the same.

Some of these, in these years and later, were pirated, but he made no protest.

Then - 1610-11 - he returned to Stratford and settled down for good and all, and busied himself in lending money, trading in tithes, trading in land and houses;

shirking a debt of forty-one shillings, borrowed by his wife during his long desertion of his family; suing debtors for shillings and coppers; being sued himself for shillings and coppers; and acting as a confederate to a neighbour who tried to rob the town of its rights to a certain common, and did not succeed.

He lived five or six years - till 1616 - in the joy of these elevated pursuits.

Then he made a will, and signed each of its three pages with his name.

A thorough-going business-man's will. It named in minute detail every item of property he owned in the world - houses, lands, sword, silver-gilt bowl, and so on - all the way down to his 'second-best bed' and its furniture.

It carefully and calculatingly distributed his riches among the members of his family, overlooking no individual of it. Not even his wife: the wife he had been enabled to marry in a hurry by urgent grace of a special dispensation before he was nineteen; the wife whom he had left husbandless so many years; the wife who had had to borrow forty-one shillings in her need, and which the lender was never able to collect of the prosperous husband, but died at last with the money still lacking. No, even this wife was remembered in Shakespeare's will.

He left her that 'second-best bed'.

And *not another thing*, not even a penny to bless her lucky widowhood with.

It was eminently and conspicuously a business-man's will, not a poet's.

It mentioned *not a single book*.

Books were much more precious than swords and silver-gilt bowls and second-best beds in those days, and when a departing person owned one he gave it a high place in his will.

The will mentioned *not a play, not a poem, not an unfinished literary work, not a scrap of manuscript of any kind*.

Many poets have died poor, but this is the only one in history that has died *this* poor; the others all left literary remains behind. Also a book. Maybe two.

If Shakespeare had owned a dog - but we need not go into that: we know he would have mentioned it in his will. If a good dog, Susannah would have got it; if an inferior one his wife would have got a dower interest in it. I wish he had had a dog, just so we could see how painstakingly he would have divided that dog among the family, in his careful business way.

He signed the will in three places.

In earlier years he signed two other official documents.

These five signatures still exist.

There are *no other specimens of his penmanship in existence*. Not a line.

Was he prejudiced against the art? His granddaughter, whom he loved, was eight years old when he died, yet she had had no teaching, he left no provision for her education although he was rich, and in her mature womanhood she could not write and couldn't tell her husband's manuscript from anybody else's - she thought it was Shakespeare's.

When Shakespeare died in Stratford *it was not an event*. It made no more stir in England than the death of any other forgotten theatre-actor would have made.

Nobody came down from London; there were no lamenting poems, no eulogies, no national tears - there was merely silence, and nothing more. A striking contrast with what happened when Ben Jonson, and Francis Bacon, and Spenser, and Raleigh, and the other distinguished literary folk of Shakespeare's time passed from life! No praiseful voice was lifted for the lost Bard of Avon; even Ben Jonson waited seven years before he lifted his.

So far as anybody actually knows and can prove, Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon never wrote a play in his life.

So far as anybody knows and can prove, he never wrote a letter to anybody in his life. *So far as any one knows, he received only one letter during his life.*

So far as any one *knows and can prove*, Shakespeare of Stratford wrote only one poem during his life. This one is authentic. He did write that one - a fact which stands undisputed; he wrote the whole of it; he wrote the whole of it out of his own head. He commanded that this work of art be engraved upon his tomb, and he was obeyed. There it abides to this day. This is it:

Good friend for Iesus sake forbear
To digg the dust enclosed heare:
Blest be ye man yt spares thes stones
and curst be he yet moves my bones.

In the list as above set down, will be found *every positively known* fact of Shakespeare's life, lean and meagre as the invoice is. Beyond these details we know *not a thing* about him. All the rest of his vast history, as furnished by the biographers, is built up, course upon course, of guesses, inferences, theories, conjectures - an Eiffel Tower of artificialities rising sky-high from a very flat and very thin foundation of inconsequential facts."

This short Shakespeare biography by Mark Twain is a psychological masterpiece, though not entirely fair. The poor poem on Shakespeare's tomb was hardly written by himself, and the two named ladies of his youth were probably one and the same with different spellings, since people in Stratford at that time didn't well know how to spell - mistakes must have been common. But the interesting detail is the masterful analysis of the will. This document is the only existing writing by Shakespeare that is proven his - it can't be disproved, even if he only dictated it. Since the same William Shakespeare has been given the honour of having written the finest collection of dramas in world literature, this will must be of singular interest, which Mark Twain duly has observed and analyzed in that context. And what are his conclusions? His logically irrefutable conclusion is that the will is composed by a consummate business man with only trivialities on his mind, the consequence of which conclusion is that this banal, dry and materialistic business man hardly could have written the greatest plays in world literature.

Mark Twain's observations have never been opposed, and logically it's impossible to refute them. It's a fact that the will doesn't mention one single book or play or poem or manuscript while it carefully details only mundane items of no human interest at all.

And Mark Twain is right also in his other remarks: there are no other facts known about Shakespeare, and all the stories about him that reached later ages were invented in the 18th century without grounds, like the ones that he was a poacher as a young man and therefore compelled to leave Stratford, that the Earl of Southampton, Henry Wriothesley, had given him £1000, that Shakespeare had played the Ghost in "Hamlet" and played it well, and that he would have fallen ill after a drinking bout with Ben Jonson visiting Stratford which would have resulted in his final illness and death, and all other spurious anecdotes. Not one of all the stories about Shakespeare which no Shakespeare biographer has forgotten to repeat has any bearing on reality. No evidence of Shakespeare's authorship to the works in his name has ever existed.

And he includes also the most suspicious circumstance of all, that no one reacted on Shakespeare's death. No one wrote any obituary or dirge, no one came down to visit Stratford, no one broke the universal silence, as if everyone very well knew what an opportunistic freak and bad husband he had been. Only after seven years Ben Jonson broke the compact silence, who was well known for writing anything and extolling anyone if he only was paid well enough.

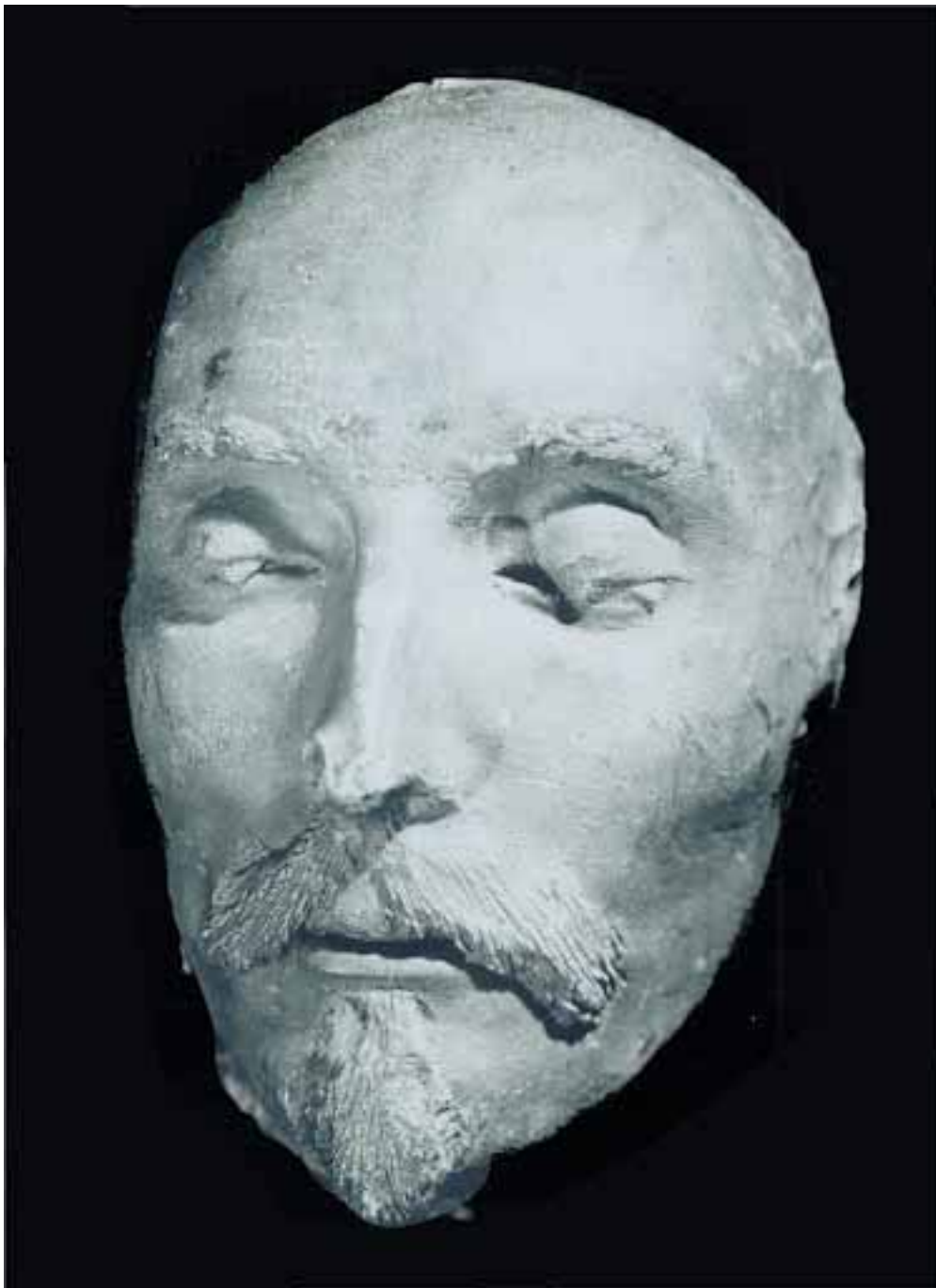
Mark Twain proves nothing, but his elucidation of the obvious probability that William Shakespeare surely was a good businessman but hardly a poet can't be ignored. In fact, his will could be regarded as the one flaw in a perfect set-up for a phoney authorship. If William Shakespeare hadn't made that will, his authorship might never have been disputed, at least not by Mark Twain.

He was not only a splendid author of boys' books but also a prominent pioneer in the field of criminology, especially by his novel "*Pudd'nhead Wilson*", in which he stresses the importance of fingerprints long before they were criminologically used. His views therefore should be regarded with as much respect as if they had been presented by Sherlock Holmes. Mark Twain does not go any further, though, than to name only one person who he believed not to have written the works of Shakespeare.

One comment:

"Mr Samuel Clemens was unfortunately prejudiced against all things British, which bias most clearly shines through in "*A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*", in which Americanisms are favoured in an almost inhumanly tasteless way while the English are ridiculed. If Mr Clemens was so prejudiced against England, naturally Shakespeare was included in that attitude, which his Shakespeare remarks could be regarded as rather obvious symptoms of.

Which doesn't mean that his views should be ignored. On the contrary, they should be considered with the highest respect, like all other views on the subject aiming at reaching a solution to the problem of who really wrote Shakespeare. One thing you never brought up in your debate, which I consider of the utmost importance, namely, that no Elizabethan poet could with any certainty be pinned down for any of the plays. Certain works are attributed to Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Thomas Kyd and others, but there is no evidence whatsoever as of who wrote what among at least 220 plays produced during the Elizabethan era in England."



It has been asked why Shakespeare retired from the stage so early at the age of only 47, while he produced nothing at all during his last five years. Almost all great geniuses could not stop being prolific at an advanced age, like Verdi and Tolstoy even in their 80s, while Michelangelo still worked on a new *pietà* sculpture at 89. It almost appears like a standard for geniuses of Shakespeare's kind to never be able to stop working, while Shakespeare differs from this pattern, which calls for a closer investigation of the Shakespeare case from a purely medical view.

The Hammerschmidt-Hummel investigation presents the three authentic portraits of Shakespeare: the Chandos portrait, the Flower portrait and the death mask. The Droeshout portrait is a later copy of the Flower portrait. Professor Hildegard Hammerschmidt-Hummel discovered on both the authentic portraits a swelling on the left eye-lid, which suggested a problem with the lachrymal ducts, which could be a sign of a malign cancer. Further a small carbuncle tumour was found in the inner corner of the left eye, and in the Flower portrait (painted ten years later) a bump above the left eyebrow, which by a dermatologist was diagnosed as a probable bone tumour. All these indications of cancer were confirmed by even more obvious similar symptoms on the death mask, which thereby could be identified as genuine. This death mask was purchased by a German in London in the later half of the 18th century and is now in Darmstadt. These established symptoms could explain Shakespeare's early retirement from the stage and his death at only 52.

Mark Twain's brief critical Shakespeare biography shows the theatre man's career as mainly a petty businessman who in his death neither left a single book, a single manuscript not a single letter and whose six signatures indicate that he hardly could write.

The American Pat Dooley's brutal statistics present ample documentary evidence for 20 of Shakespeare's dramatic colleagues that these were all "poets by profession" while there is not a single such written writer's certificate or evidence for William Shakespeare. There are more proofs of his existence than of any of the others by legal documents, transactions and other unliterary deeds but not one providing any evidence that he was a "poet by profession" while such proofs abound for 20 of his colleagues. Sonnet 23 is perhaps the most personal and self-revealing of all the 154 sonnets, which gives the impression of the poet as anything else than a central figure commanding his surroundings, but rather of a shy and modest background figure without ability to express himself except in writing, a man who loved too well for expression – a melancholy case of insufficiency, which picture does not fit any dominating stage personality and successful businessman.

The first one to question the authorship of Shakespeare was James Wilmot, a clergyman in the later half of the 18th century, who in the intention to produce the first detailed and comprehensive Shakespeare biography travelled widely around Warwickshire to gather material and mementos of the poet without finding anything at all. Still there were a number of families living close to Stratford who had lived there for generations and long before Shakespeare's days. There were no stories, no traditions and no trace of any memories of any bard. Since he also could

find no trace of any Warwickshire dialect nor any geographical reference to Stratford or Warwickshire in the plays, James Wilmot arrived at the conclusion that the poet was not at all from Warwickshire. What he found was that there was much in the Shakespeare plays pointing at deep knowledge in jurisdiction, medicine and science, which rather were Sir Francis Bacon's fields of initiated knowledge. Before he died at an advanced age, he committed all his heretical documents on the matter to the flames but entrusted a certain James Cowell of Ipswich, another dedicated Shakespeare biographer who also had hunted Warwickshire for Shakespeariana, his suspicions that Shakespeare had not written Shakespeare. James Cowell presented this to his philosophical society in Ipswich but met with such an uproar of outrage, that he never again dared to discuss the matter with anyone. Not until in 1932 the documents about this were discovered in Ipswich. James Wilmot could thereby be said to have been the first Baconian.

Then we have the Cambridge issue, that a great deal in the Shakespeare production clearly indicates that the author was at the university of Cambridge. Here are some examples:

In "Timon of Athens" Timon tells Apemantus:

*"Hadst thou like us from our first swath proceeded
The sweet degrees that this brief world affords*

.....

Thy nature did commence in sufferance."

Only Cambridge students 'commence' in a faculty, which ceremony is called *the Commencement*'. If he moves on to higher exams, it's called that he '*proceedeth*'. The same distinct Cambridge university language is to be found in "Henry IV" and in "King Lear", where Lear furious tells Regan:

'Tis not in thee to scant my sizes."

Whatever does he mean here by 'sizes'? 'Size' happens to be a very specific Cambridge term. It's a small portion that the Cambridge student obtained in the pantry of his college. To be '*scanted of sizes*' was a punishment and humiliation for becoming students of such tremendous proportions that it could make anyone (in this case King Lear) utterly outraged. It was a unique Cambridge occurrence, which you could only be initiated in the hard way by happening to it yourself, only as an aspiring student and only at the university of Cambridge.

There are a number of doctors in the Shakespeare plays, but there is only one who is made a fool of, and that is doctor Caius in "*The Merry Wives of Windsor*". This doctor Caius existed in reality, his name was John Caius of Kay, he founded Caius College in Cambridge and died in 1573, the same year in which the brothers Bacon came to Cambridge while Oxford was there in his most active period as a student. Doctor Caius of Cambridge was not just any doctor though. He had during many

years been the private physician of the Queen, and as an authority he was without equal in the entire realm. But he took himself too seriously. He had travelled extensively on the continent and acquired some foreign manners, which the Queen found ridiculous. The doctor Caius of the play is a French doctor and a very pertinent caricature of an eccentric with affected foreign manners. He was not popular with the students, and the students were not popular with him: he made a system of relegations and turned it into a personal sport, and not less than 20 students were directly relegated by him. He was the perfect old sourpuss and fogley for students to ridicule and make fun of behind his back, which must have been a treat for Oxford to share in, and which the brothers Bacon must have heard many stories about after the old man's death. The legends about him ought certainly to have survived even until Marlowe came to Cambridge ten years later.

But what possibility did William Shakespeare have to associate with the inner circles of the Cambridge university to be able to get a clear picture of the old eccentric twenty years after his death, if he ever came to Cambridge? There is no indication that Shakespeare ever came to Cambridge. The Cambridge society "*the Parnassus*" was acquainted with the Shakespeare plays, since they mention them, but their contact was the old veteran actor Kemp, who was one of the players in Shakespeare's theatre company and not Shakespeare himself.

Then we have the problem with Shakespeare's two daughters. Like we have six cramped signatures by William Shakespeare himself, obviously produced with cramped effort, we also have his daughters' signatures. Susanna, who was happily married to doctor John Hall in 1607, could write her name, but her autograph is like that of a five year old child: she writes the same letter in different ways, she gets the letters mixed up and sometimes writes them backwards, and the handwriting is shaky and very uncertain, which all indicates that she never learned to write properly. After her husband's death she was on one occasion asked about some notes he had left, by which she showed signs of great confusion: she could not identify her own husband's handwriting or understand that it was his.

The second daughter Judith could not even write her own name. She made a mark like of a two year old child.

This all indicates that their father did not give his daughters any education. This appears in sharp contrast to all the ladies in the Shakespeare production, who regularly are cultivated and intelligent, learned and next to academic. On one occasion he writes straight out, that "*ignorance is the curse of God, while we on the wings of knowledge we fly to Heaven*". In 16th century England the ladies were regularly offered more than just an elementary education, and it was commonly regarded as a self-evident duty for the parents to give them that. From this rule the actor-businessman of Stratford appears as a blatant exception.

Our conclusion is that William Shakespeare from Stratford simply was in such a golden practical position that he could take economic and social advantage of that the real poet at any price wished to remain anonymous and unknown.



2. *Sir Francis Bacon —attempt at a survey*

In his extensive and very enlightening work *"The History of a Character Assassination"* Nieves Mathews describes the most remarkable fate that Francis Bacon met with after his death. For two hundred years he remained unanimously admired and honoured as a philosopher, scientist and politician until the outstanding stylist Thomas Babington Macaulay (of all people) got the idea that Francis Bacon's honour should be challenged. About the same time others started to suspect Bacon of being the real author of Shakespeare's works. These two schools developed on a parallel basis: Bacon's adversaries, that culminated with Lytton Strachey's *"Elizabeth and Essex"* where Bacon is described as an infernally insidious and calculating betrayer of a friendship, by which he placed his benefactor's head on the block, and the growing fellowship of the Baconians, also culminating in the 1920s, when Bacon was not just depicted as the Shakespeare author but also as the author behind most (if not all) the works of Heywood, Peele, Greene, Marlowe, Ben Jonson, John Lyly, Edmund Spenser and most of Shakespeare's dramatic colleagues plus Miguel de Cervantes, whose *"Don Quixote"* Bacon would have had no difficulty in writing in Spanish. Another bizarre expression of this Bacon mania was the notion that all these works were crowded with crypted secret messages in which Bacon revealed deep esoteric secrets which only the most profoundly initiated could

understand if anyone at all. In brief, there was no end to the fantastic Bacon conjectures.

In order to first deal with the first school, the Bacon adversaries, all responsibility in the case of Essex must exclusively be ascribed to this romantic and capricious earl himself by his lack of judgement and his almost obsessive self-destructiveness. Bacon did actually all he could to save him, and all investigations of the case have arrived at the same obvious conclusion, that Bacon cannot be charged with any responsibility at all for anything in the tragic case of Essex.

Concerning Bacon's own fall as a statesman, when he was accused of corruption and was sentenced to the deprivation of everything except his life and banished from all public life, views differ, and the fact is that still today no clarity has been reached in the matter of this mess. It is quite clear though, that his fall came most of all as a surprise to himself, and he admitted that he had committed mistakes, which he deeply regretted and repented. Still he appears as a politician as one of the most honest and impeccable statesmen of the age who sincerely strived to attain justice and balance and was a member of the parliament for almost 30 years of slow but continuous political advancement as a jurist and royal counsellor in consistently increasing trust from above, culminating in the fact that he became the most powerful man in England in the reign of king James – until this king pleased to discard him. The rumours of who really was behind this are being spread still today. Some attribute Bacon's fall to the intrigues of the duke of Buckingham, while others claim the brain behind it all to have been the handsome Henry Wriothesley, the earl of Southampton (to whom several Shakespeare works were dedicated) who was of Sir Walter Raleigh's party.

That obliges us to include Sir Walter Raleigh in this context, Queen Elizabeth's most colourful and durable favourite who survived all the others and held his most sovereign position when the Queen passed away – whereupon he immediately attracted king James' intensive displeasure and was almost at once confined by him in the Tower to languish there for thirteen years as a result of false accusations and judicial murder, while he authored his *"World History"*, one of the most remarkable works of the Elizabethan period, in which he among other matters unreservedly and admiringly speak of his colleague Francis Bacon. With Bacon's help and support Walter Raleigh had his last expedition organized and furnished and obtained amnesty himself (procured by Buckingham) to be able to sail with it to South America to find the Eldorado for king James. The king's real intention by this appeared later: that Sir Walter Raleigh never should return to England alive. Because of Raleigh's enormous popularity, he had not dared to execute him, whereupon, after Raleigh against all odds had survived thirteen years in the Tower, the king sent him to Venezuela instead and warned the Spaniards about it, so that they easily could trap him and dispose of him. Now it didn't quite turn out as the king had intended.

Instead there was a tragedy of Shakespearean measures that befell at Orinoco. When a reconnoitring expedition was sent up the river, the ship was taken by

surprise by a new Spanish fort which hadn't been there before and which opened fire. In spite of Raleigh's express orders to avoid any fighting with the Spanish, such a fight became unavoidable, and the English had to take the fort of San Tomé, but in this fight Sir Walter Raleigh's son was lost. On the same occasion the English found letters in the Spanish camp from the Spanish king to the governor which made it clear how the English had been betrayed in advance to the Spanish by the English king himself. Their entire expedition plan with all its details had been forwarded to the Spanish by the king's own authority. Sir Walter Raleigh had not only been sent out by his monarch to be executed as far away from home as possible, but also he had not himself become the victim of the plot but instead his son. Sir Walter wrote in his diary, "My brains are broken," and then could never write anything again.



The expedition had ended in disaster and failure, and all Sir Walter could do was to return to England, well aware that he had nothing good to expect of a king who had betrayed him to the archenemy of his own nation. Francis Bacon himself had ensured him though of immunity and that he had nothing to fear if he returned with or without his expedition. Here the versions of the later development of events then start to differ.

According to Sir Walter Raleigh's followers it was Francis Bacon who gave the king the legal possibility to have Raleigh executed: "You can now with ease condemn him to death for the crimes he was already sentenced for fifteen years ago." If this is true Francis Bacon was a character of double standards, who while he guaranteed Sir Walter personal security gave the king a legal mandate to have him executed.

Bacon's followers defend Bacon by that Raleigh was a hopelessly reckless and impossible nature with whom you could not reason and who dug his own grave, in the same way as Essex. But Bacon's possible accountability in the case of Raleigh

cannot be as easily explained away as in the case of Essex. It is a fact that Raleigh could have found refuge in France instead of returning to England, but he trusted Bacon's warrants and wished above all to prove his loyalty to the king, no matter how much he had been betrayed by him. When he later was offered the opportunity to escape to France to get away from his definite execution, he refused to take that opportunity, since he valued his honour more than his life. It is quite possible that the case of Raleigh is the only stain on Bacon's entire career, and that stain will in that case not be possible to remove. Raleigh, the most brilliant of the Elizabethans and the foremost survivor, was as is well known decapitated in the Tower on October 29th 1518. He was 67 years old and had in his career provided the British crown with colonies like Virginia (named by himself to the honour of his Queen in 1584, the first and decisive British colony in North America,) Trinidad (conquered from the Spanish) and British Guyana. He introduced whisky (imported from Ireland) and tobacco in England, and his collected work of letters comprise eight volumes. He has also sometimes been suggested as a candidate or at least as a collaborator in the works of Shakespeare. As a leader of the esoteric "*School of Night*" of the English free-thinkers, he was Christopher Marlowe's first protector and mentor.

The second school, the advocates for Bacon as the author of Shakespeare, was joined by many respectable and leading literary authorities like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry James, Mark Twain, Coleridge, Disraeli, Bismarck, Freud, Bernard Shaw and Daphne du Maurier among many others. And not only had Bacon written all the works of Shakespeare but also the works of Marlowe, Kyd, Jonson, Heywood, Spenser, Lyly, Greene, Peele, Webster, Cervantes and Lope de Vega's 200 plays, Michel de Montaigne's volumes of essays and the works of many others. And not only was he the leading philosopher, writer and politician of his age but also of royal blood: he was of course the Queen's own illegitimate son with the earl of Leicester! He had actually been the rightful heir to the throne of England and would have got it, if he hadn't compromised with James Stuart of Scotland, his cousin, whom others preferred to have on the throne for political reasons. And of course queen Margot of France, the wanton bride of Henry IV, which marriage led to the massacre of St. Bartholomew, had been the young Francis Bacon's sweetheart. That was what "*Love's Labour's Lost*" was all about. And not only had Bacon been the Shakespeare author and the rightful heir to England's throne and a poet in seven languages – he was also the founder of both the freemasons and the Rosicrucians and their first and highest initiator and ruling master, who didn't die at all of a cold in 1626 but who survived until he was more than a hundred. He had mastered also Hebrew and Caldean and was a constantly returning reincarnation who safeguarded his interests in life after life, especially within the freemasons and other secret societies of the esoteric kind. He was thus a reincarnation of both God, the Devil, Jesus and his own mother, that is Queen Elizabeth, and the main initiator and founder of the great philosophic tradition as it had been manifested in earlier incarnations like Pythagoras, Socrates, Thomas

Aquinas and so on. The hysteria of the Bacon admirers has always kept on bolting along constantly more sensational tracks.

In brief, anything similar cannot be found among any of the other Shakespeare candidates. Bacon is not only the self-evident author of Shakespeare's works but the Master above all, not only supreme philosopher, poet and politician but almost a western Buddha. The other candidates, like Shakespeare himself, Marlowe, Oxford and Derby, have never appeared as anything but just human.

Against the argument that Bacon would have written Shakespeare stands the rather obvious fact, that Bacon's own literary works (published in his own name) do not display the same quality as Shakespeare's. What's missing above all in Bacon is the special dramatic intensity of Shakespeare. If Bacon wrote Shakespeare he has given the works of his pseudonym a considerably higher quality than what he could give the works (written mostly in Latin) for which he was hoping for eternal fame.

Francis Bacon has been compared with the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, who secretly used a number of pseudonyms to express himself in literature. Towards the end of his life and shortly before his death he revealed all his pseudonyms and thereby was posthumously recognized and acknowledged. Bacon never revealed his pseudonyms but brought them with him into his grave. Some of them could have been Marlowe, Lyly, Shakespeare, Spenser and others, and he could have borrowed Ben Jonson's name.

There is only one contemporary illustration to "*Venus and Adonis*". It was found not in Stratford but in St. Albans, Bacon's home town and not far from his home, a wall painting al fresco in the tavern "*The White Hart*".

3. *The Oxford case*

Each one finds his own Shakespeare candidate in the personality that fits her best. Thereby Shakespeare could have been anyone, and science has perhaps not even yet reached the trace of the right candidate.

The main authorities on the case of the earl of Oxford is Thomas Looney by his book 1923 and Carlton Ogburn 1984. Thomas Looney was a teacher in Wales on the subjects Shakespeare and literature and arrived like so many others at the conclusion that the character of Shakespeare as it appears in the plays was not compatible with the man from Stratford, while he only found it compatible with the 17th earl of Oxford, a wonder child who early produced numerous poems and plays and was commonly acknowledged as an outstanding if not a leading poet before 1576 above all by his art of composing sonnets – there are some 30-40 of them preserved from this period, like the remarkable "*Women*", which long before Shakespeare's time is like taken directly from "*Hamlet*" or some other great Shakespeare tragedy. The poet Gabriel Harvey wrote in a poem to Oxford: "*Thy countenance shakes a spear...*" The pen name Shake-speare occurs in printing always with a hyphen, which never occurred within the Shakspeare family from Stratford.



The Shakespeare plays generally display an extremely careless attitude to money, while the Stratford man was a solid and petty businessman. Oxford was the contrary: he wasted his inheritance and cared nothing about money. The Queen rewarded him with a life rent of a thousand pounds a year, which today is the equivalent of about 270,000 pounds, without any reason being known why, perhaps just because he was a romantic poet who appealed to her sense of extravagant romanticism, while he also belonged to the oldest nobility in the country.

Both the misogynic and love-despising Bertram in *"All's Well that Ends Well"* and Hamlet could be said to be obvious self-portraits of Oxford. In his youth also Oxford pierced a servant in his guardian's house in the belief that it was his guardian himself (Lord Burleigh, Elizabeth's prime minister and the prototype of Polonius).

King Richard II had an earl of Oxford as a homosexual favourite, but he has been excluded from the play.

The Oxford family had ample reasons for enmity towards king Henry VII, which could have had some bearing that there is no Shakespeare play about him.

Already in 1583 Oxford wrote *"Romeus and Julia"*, the first dramatization of the famous love drama.

During the period 1594-1604, when all the greatest Shakespeare plays were written, Oxford lived in almost total seclusion, which should have been a necessity for the concentration and dramatic intensity that all these plays demanded, while the Stratford man at the time worked as an actor all days and only could have written plays in candlelight during the night, which ought to have been a most tedious and slow labour, especially after long and stressful days of work on stage. The work of writing the Shakespeare plays must have demanded a maximum of freedom and spare time, which the Stratford man least of all had any access to.

Already Oxford's father had a theatre company of his own which Edward de Vere continued. His father was also the protector of John Bales, the first one who started to write English chronicle plays, which also was the first genre of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare must have had access to a magnificent library. Oxford was brought up in a family that owned the best library in England which was also one of the foremost in all Europe.

Shakespeare's intimate knowledge of the political mechanisms and how the law works has always bewildered the Shakespeare scholars, since it isn't even certain if the Stratford man ever went to school, while Oxford was brought up in Cecil House by the prime minister of the country and had the most learned scholars in the country for his tutors, like Lawrence Nowell and Sir Thomas Smith, twice ambassador in Paris and later the Queen's private secretary.

The three persons that have Shakespeare works dedicated to them, the earls of Southampton, Pembroke and Montgomery, were all three candidates for marriage with Oxford's three daughters, and one of them, the earl of Montgomery, did marry Oxford's daughter Susan.

Two writers that are considered intimately linked with Shakespeare's works were Anthony Munday and John Lyly. Both were Oxford's private secretaries. Munday was also part of Oxford's theatre company, and John Lyly produced plays together with Oxford.

Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *"Metamorphoses"* is considered a major influence on Shakespeare's style almost as much as the Geneva version of the Bible. Oxford owned a personal edition of the Bible, which is crammed with marginal notes by himself, that remarkably well match Shakespeare's biblical quotations in the plays. Arthur Golding was Oxford's uncle, with whom he lived together in his teens, and Golding has testified to Oxford's deep knowledge of history.

By Thomas Nashe's preface to Greene's *"Menaphon"* we know that *"Hamlet"* was performed at large already in 1489, while the Stratford man was still sitting in Stratford. Thus Shakespeare could not have written *"Hamlet"*, while there is neither any evidence that Thomas Kyd did, who generally has been considered the author of the *"Ur-Hamlet"*.

George Baker published in 1576 a medical handbook called *"The New Jewel of Health"* which is regarded of importance for Shakespeare's medical knowledge. George Baker was Oxford's domestic physician.

All the geographic places of Europe that occur in the Shakespeare plays were visited by Oxford, while the Stratford man as far as anyone knows did not visit one of them. In Italy Oxford borrowed money from a certain Baptista Nigrone (500 coronas), and in Padua he borrowed even more from Pasquino Spinola. In *"The Taming of a Shrew"* Catherine's father is a rich man whose name happens to be Baptista Minola – a combination of Baptista Nigrone and Pasquino Spinola.

In a letter to Oxford's guardian Lord Cecil (Burleigh) in May 1573, two of Oxford's earlier companions accuse Oxford and his friends of having attacked them

on the way between Gravesend and Rochester. In the first part of "*Henry IV*" prince Hal with Falstaff and more friends attack precisely such a travelling company on the road between Gravesend and Rochester.

The greatest objection against Oxford as Shake-speare has been that he died already in 1604, when a considerable number of important Shakespeare plays not yet had been written. Here his son-in-law William Stanley, earl of Derby, enters the context. Oxford was described by his contemporaries as "the best writer of comedies" without anyone knowing what comedies he possible would have written. It was also testified that Derby was industrious in writing comedies, but neither in his case you know what comedies he might have written. Derby married Oxford's daughter Elizabeth, whom the earl of Southampton originally should have married. Also Derby like Oxford had a theatre company of his own, the difference in age between them was only ten years, both were equally great theatre lovers and enthusiasts, and Derby could have been present at the first staging of "*Hamlet*" at Kronborg Castle by Elsinore in 1585.

4. *The most important arguments for the earl of Derby*

About 85% of Shakespeare's dialectal words and expressions belong in Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cheshire in north England, about 10% come from even further north like Scotland, while only very few belong in mid- and south England, where Shakespeare was at home (in Warwickshire). Among the Shakespeare candidates Derby was the only one who came from north England. He was the son-in-law of the earl of Oxford and as ardent a theatre enthusiast as he. He was even more catholically involved than Oxford, since he was the candidate of the Catholics to the throne – he was no more distantly related to the Queen than king James of Scotland. His elder brother Ferdinando, the fifth earl of Derby, also he very active in the theatre, schoolmate with Marlowe and the producer of his plays, was probably poisoned by the Catholics in April 1594 when he refused to join their stand against the Queen. Thereby William Stanley, the 6th earl of Derby, had every reason to keep a low profile and avoid any limelight. Of the three candidates Bacon, Oxford and Derby he had the strongest reasons for concealing his authorship if he wrote such famous plays as those of Shakespeare.

"*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*" was probably written for the earl of Derby's wedding on January 26th 1595, and no one would have been more motivated to write it than himself. The character of Theseus with his interests in sports is a portrait of him, and the astrological details of the play bind it to the date of this wedding.

In "*Love's Labour's Lost*" there is the character Holofernes, a pedantic teacher, who is a caricature of Richard Lloyd, who was Derby's tutor and guardian on his at least three year long grand tour of Europe including among other places France, Spain and Navarre. That Holofernes is a caricature of Richard Lloyd is proved by the inclusion of "*The Nine Worthies*" which is made fun of towards the end of the

play, which in reality was authored by Richard Lloyd, published in 1593 but only performed in public in north England. No one else would have been motivated to caricature Richard Lloyd than his over-protected private student William Stanley, who suffered from his tutor's function as chaperon during all of his maybe five year long European tour.

Derby visited or passed through all the countries and places that occur in Shakespeare's plays, which often are described with accurate or intimate local knowledge.

The first night of "Hamlet" occurred most probably at Elsinore on June 13th 1585, and its first version could have been written in school German by an Englishman, since German was the language spoken at the Danish court. Among those present were the actors Kemp, Bryan and Pope, the core of all the Shakespeare theatre companies, from Lord Strange's men (the company of the elder brother Ferdinando's theatre company) to Lord Chamberlain's Men, who produced almost all the plays with Marlowe and Shakespeare as author's names. Already the "*Ur-Hamlet*" is distinguished by exact and intimate knowledge of circumstances at the Danish court in 1585, which indicates that the play was probably written on the spot for the special occasion of the festive inauguration of the Kronborg Castle, which took place on this day. At this point Oxford, Bacon and Shakespeare were all at home in England, Marlowe is assumed to have been in Rheims in France at the time, while Derby was in Germany with errands at Wittenberg and could have followed the English actors to Denmark for this from a theatrical-historical view exceedingly interesting occasion.

The consistently noble character in all of Shakespeare's works, which only gets nobler by the years, demonstrates clearly that their author must have been a nobleman. In "*Richard III*" the crown is offered to the earl of Richmond, later Henry VII, by an earl of Derby. This has not been taken up by the historical accounts. Among the candidates only the earl of Oxford was of as noble blood as Derby.

The poem "*The Phoenix and Turtle*" written at latest in 1591 is about members of the Derby family, more precisely William's half sister Ursula Halsall and her husband Sir John Salusbury of Llewenni in Denbighshire, himself a poet and sponsor of poets like Jonson and Chapman. The poem could have been written as early as in 1586 for their wedding.

There are no connections of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Oxford or Bacon to Lancashire.

The poet says himself in sonnet 136 that "*my name is Will*". Only Will Stanley (W.S.) had this name Will among the candidates besides Shakespeare.

When William Stanley, the 6th earl of Derby, died in September 1541 at the age of 81, all the theatres of England were closed, and the civil war broke out, in which the puritans did their best to destroy everything that belonged to the Elizabethan epoch. Among other estates, the property and castle of the Derby family were burnt with its famous library, which we thereby never shall know what secrets it might have contained. Since 'Shakespeare' had so obvious connections with Lancashire and the

Derbys, it's not improbable that a number if not all original manuscripts might have been kept there. No original manuscript by 'Shakespeare' has ever been found.



5. The Marlowe Case

Concerning the case of Marlowe we have the mystery and phenomenon of Monsieur le Doulx, one of Anthony Bacon's agents. In the archives of the Lambeth palace in London were in later years discovered the papers of Anthony Bacon, a massive and quite intact collection of historical documents and letters that belonged to Anthony Bacon, Francis Bacon's brother and responsible for the British Intelligence of those times. Among these were also found documents concerning the agent Le Doulx and among others an astonishing list of books purchased by him. These language books, historical books and religious books proved by closer examination to provide the basic material for most of Shakespeare's plays, more precisely Othello, Cymbeline, Macbeth, Measure for Measure, All's Well that Ends Well, The Tempest, King Lear, Hamlet, Coriolanus, Titus Andronicus, Julius Caesar, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Richard III, Love's Labour's Lost, The Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer-Night's Dream, The Taming of a Shrew, The Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, Merry Wives of Windsor, The

Winter's Tale, Timon of Athens, Troilus and Cressida, Antony and Cleopatra, that is all except King John, Richard II, Henry VIII, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, As You Like It, Romeo and Juliet and Pericles, to which though there were also other possible sources in these books, among which there were also the original stories of Venus and Adonis, The Jew of Malta, Tamburlaine the Great and even Edward III, plays ascribed to Marlowe or Shakespeare. In brief, the books acquired by Monsieur le Doulx provided the sources to almost all of both Shakespeare's and Marlowe's works. This could be regarded as definite evidence for Marlowe and Shakespeare being the same writer and that he worked under the code name of Le Doulx.

We know that Marlowe in the 1580s worked as a secret agent for the government and that he was efficient as such and rewarded for his accomplishments. On May 30th 1593 he was officially taken out of practice under such curious circumstances that they must raise suspicions that it was an arrangement to make it possible for him to abscond his arrest and interrogation by the Star Chamber, the English inquisition, which already had tortured his colleague Thomas Kyd and ruined his life. He would then have been able to leave England on a ship from Deptford, the scene of the "Marlowe murder", and been able to carry on as an intelligence agent from the continent, especially from Italy.

The Marlowe case and its history has been reconstructed and demonstrated by Calvin Hoffman and A.D.Wraight (*Anne Doris Warner-Wraight, called 'Dolly', 1920-2002*), the only book that has succeeded in binding the Shakespeare sonnets to any course of events in reality. Many sonnets are about exile and death, in fact a majority of them. Neither Shakespeare, Bacon, Oxford nor Derby could have had any reason for deeper reflections over these themes in relation to their own fates, while only Marlowe among them could have, provided that the assumption is correct that his death was staged to save his life if though the price for it became a permanent exile.

Conclusion. The only almost positively certain thing in the Shakespeare problem complex is that William Shakespeare did not write anything himself, but that he was used as the safest, most neutral and least controversial figurehead and trademark for the activity, by his excellent capacities as a neutral businessman and theatre entrepreneur. The one who created the English drama was Christopher Marlowe, and already by his very controversial "*Edward II*" the English drama is developed to perfection, a standard which then is maintained consistently through all the Shakespeare plays with the same exquisite language and form. After the accusations of atheism, homosexuality and coining to the Queen's Privy Council it became necessary for Marlowe to disappear, why a staging of his death appeared as almost a natural solution, and it was probably William Stanley, the 6th earl of Derby, who offered him a safe refuge in Lancashire. All the others, Oxford, who probably produced Marlowe's first play "*Scanderbeg*" (lost), Bacon (initiated in the Intelligence that employed Marlowe), Derby and even Raleigh, his first mentor, were probably more or less involved in the productions. Delia Bacon (1811-59), the first American who questioned the authenticity of Shakespeare's authorship, considered Sir Walter

Raleigh the most significant in the group of poets that made up Shakespeare. This group should also include the young Roger Manners, the earl of Rutland with intimate connections to Essex, the Danish court, France and Italy and married to Sir Philip Sidney's only daughter. Sir Philip Sidney is the portal figure to the whole venture, the young hero who made English poetry a serious thing and who was the one to first insist in anonymity, which example his followers then generally followed. He fell in battle against the Spanish in Holland in 1586 only 32 years old, but his sister Mary continued the tradition from him and became mother of the two earls that Shakespeare's works are dedicated to, Pembroke and Montgomery. She was perhaps the one who organised and made the first edition of Shakespeare's complete works, *The First Folio*, economically possible together with Francis Bacon and Ben Jonson.

But the style is the same in all the works, and that style is fully developed already in Christopher Marlowe and does not change during the years but remains unmistakably from one and the same poet personality all the way, if though the vocabulary, the knowledge, the psychology and the language constantly keeps developing.

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