

# BACONIANA

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## **Editorial**

*In Memoriam*

Thomas Bokenham

Nigel Cockburn

Andrew Lyell

John Michell

Jean Overton Fuller

Francis Carr

The previous edition of *Baconiana Online* announced the death of Nigel Cockburn Q.C., author of by far the best presentation of the case for believing that Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare. It is my sad but inspiring duty as editor to pay tribute to several other eminent members of the Francis Bacon Society. All will be remembered for their deep knowledge of, and devotion, to Francis Bacon's works, and their informed ability to cast light on the 'greatest of literary problems' from quite different angles. The editorial team must also apologise on behalf of the Society to its members and our wider circle of readers for the delay between the previous issue of *Baconiana Online* and this one. In our desire to do justice to the various recently deceased members, we have waited as long as possible to receive submissions for themed editions. This has not proved possible. It is intended to follow this issue with a follow-up publication before too long. In the mean time, we hope you will enjoy the current issue which is in many ways a summary of Baconianism past and present.

John Michell, a polymath most famous for his researches into lost knowledge revealed by the investigation of ancient astronomical science and building norms, wrote the most readable and fair-minded book on the authorship question in print. Jean Overton Fuller was a well-known author, whose biography of Francis Bacon is far better written, and more sensitively aware of his character and aspirations than any other. Francis Carr was an indefatigable *Baconiana* advocate, the longest serving active member of the Francis Bacon Society and a council member for many years. Andrew Lyell had written one of the most interesting pieces to be published in *Baconiana* in recent years.

The Society had previously planned to devote this issue of *Baconiana Online* to a commemoration of the previous Chairman of the Society, Thomas Bokenham. Mr. Bokenham, or 'Bokey' as he was affectionately dubbed, steered the Society through what long-standing members felt was a particularly challenging period in its history. He achieved this through remarkable diligence, a deep conviction in the Baconian case, and a tireless search for 'cipher' materials in Shakespeare that might identify Bacon as the true author.

Even those of us, like the present editor, who reject cryptograms in general, must admire the rigour and diligence with which Thomas Bokenham went about his task. He worked closely with Ewen Macduff, author of two of the most credible books in the 'cipher' literature. A future issue will consider how, even if many of the premises and inferences used in cipher arguments do not hold up, they may be pointing at something important on the principle that 'there is no smoke without fire'. The question is, what is on fire and where is it!

The consensus of those who knew Bokey's work over a long period was that his article from *Baconiana 190* on symmetrical patterns in the Sonnets, was a tour de force that captured much of his best work. So it is our great pleasure to republish this piece, which should prove intriguing for doubters and believers alike, along with some notes on his life and work provided by his widow and Baconian colleagues.

One of the great cipher doubters was Nigel Cockburn. A full appreciation of Mr. Cockburn's life and work will appear in the next *Baconiana*. Cockburn was in many ways an anomaly in Baconian history. He entirely rejected two elements fundamental to much of Baconianism in the 20th century: the assumption that Bacon's authorship would be proved by the uncovering of cryptograms in the Shakespeare plays, and the view that Bacon was 'primus inter pares' of a team of genius writers: the so-called Group Theory.

Indeed, founder members of the Francis Bacon Society were decades ahead of mainstream academics in perceiving that what may be called Rosicrucian thought is central to Bacon's philosophy and Shakespeare's art. One strand of Baconianism developing from this, mixed cryptograms and early forms of conspiracy theory into a heady brew that intoxicated the few and repelled the many.

Cockburn stressed, quite correctly, that, interesting though Rosicrucian philosophy may be, it should not lead to an easy slide towards 'group theories', let alone the misguided hunt for ciphers for which Cockburn had no time whatsoever. The theory that "Bacon wrote Shakespeare" is a literary question to be resolved by examining the lives of Shakespeare, Bacon and any other 'candidates' on the basis of their lives, relevant facts about anonymous and pseudonymous authorship in Elizabethan times, and material evidence such as Bacon's *Promus*.

In many ways, Cockburn's work marks a return to the great early phase of highly educated and intelligent amateurs, some of whom like Reverend Begley were scholars of talent, even genius. Cockburn's approach was ruthlessly logical; his exposition is extremely well written and remains not merely the best book written by anyone on the Baconian case, but the most closely argued work on the literary aspect of the authorship question, bar none.

But the best general introduction to the Shakespeare authorship question is without doubt John Michell's *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* Of course, John Michell was not only a much-loved member of the Bacon Society. He was a literary giant. There is no doubt that when the historians of the future look back at the gradual acceptance of unorthodox ideas by the mainstream in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Michell will be seen as a central figure. His ability to write in a warm, lucid and witty way about various subjects, wearing his formidable learning lightly and entertaining the reader whilst opening his or her mind, make *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* a gem.

The Bacon Society has always fostered and prized diversity. For example, the present editor remains agnostic about the authorship question, mainly because he has never seen convincing proof that Shakespeare could not, and did not, write at the very least some of the works. But he owes to Michell's book the understanding of why the topic is interesting and accessible even to agnostics: Michell has a special talent for showing the human dimension of the perennial philosophy, from its profound to its sometimes comical elements such as Dr. Orville Owen's cipher wheel.

It is a very great delight to publish two pieces by Christine Rhone, a friend and collaborator of John Michell. The first is an interview originally conducted for RILKO (Research Into Lost Knowledge Organisation). John Michell, among his many other achievements, is surely the single most important figure in reviving popular interest in Ancient Wisdom so beloved of Francis Bacon. Through his work on the numerical proportions of ancient buildings such as Stonehenge, he did more than any other 20th century writer to show that the ancient mathematics and philosophy of Plato and Pythagoras has roots which go back even further into the prehistory of civilisation. Long before the creation of mankind's earliest written records, sacred mathematics, geometry and architecture reached heights we are only now starting to understand and recover. This interview is an entertaining and accessible introduction to Michell's interest in the authorship question and captures his characteristic voice.

The second piece is an eloquent and profound tribute to Michell. Nothing needs to be added except that readers will doubtless want to read, or reread much of what Michell wrote, starting with *The New View Over Atlantis*, and *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* and emulate Michell by combining study of the perennial philosophy with a lively scepticism and openness to surprise of discovery.

Michell maintained an impartial yet engaged treatment of all the major authorship candidates – but his sympathy for some kind of group theory emerges. Group theories can be developed in various ways: either through the view that Bacon personally masterminded the collaborative authorship of 'Shakespeare', much as a Master Builder or architect would oversee the building of a Temple without needing to lay every last stone. Or they may stress the theory that the name Shakespeare was at that time an available mask used by different writers who wished to remain anonymous.

The latter emphasis is actually quite sensible: Shakespeare as an actor in the public theatre was in a position to fulfil a role similar to pop singers today, that of the public face of songs whose writers often remain unknown – indeed these often sign away their copyright to record companies. William Shakespeare was a shrewd businessman: by fulfilling the roles of company shareholder and performer simultaneously, he made his fortune at a time when creative writing was not yet a commercial proposition. In our time, many pop stars insist that the copyright is assigned to them by the true author, for financial reasons and also for the kudos of being considered 'creative'.

Those who wish to argue for a connection between the life of the 'candidates' and the evidence of the plays, poems and sonnets require a deep knowledge of Elizabethan history, literature and philosophy, and the ability to synthesise these into judgments in the relatively new science of literary forensics.

Here, amateur researchers have actually have advantages over tenured academics, as well as the more obvious disadvantages. For one thing, as Cockburn cruelly but accurately stated "...regrettably, sound judgment is not always among the qualities which achieve eminence for a scholar. An aptitude for sitting in libraries, digging out information, is distinct from an ability to evaluate the evidence so

unearthed...certainly, professional scholars have no monopoly of judgment and one often wonders if they have their share. So Professors of Literature should resist the temptation to pull rank”.

Regrettable or not, academic studies usually require a narrow focus with accuracy in a small field supported by huge, unexamined premises. The fact is that most literary experts simply believe standard history, and have no deep knowledge of philosophy, while historians have often underestimated the importance of ideas to those who ‘make history’, especially ideas they personally do not consider true or important.

Amateur scholarship sometimes leads to obsessions, flights of fancy and shallow work. But the interdisciplinary focus of the best Baconians is in its element in researching the equally interdisciplinary reality of Elizabethan renaissance culture, particularly its supreme genius Sir Francis Bacon. The combination of Baconian breadth with academic rigour and resources will mark a new phase in literary studies. Michell and Cockburn’s books will be seen as seminal texts and models for future work.

Specialist academic disciplines aim to eliminate the freedom to make mistakes which is the danger of an over personal approach, and rightly so. But the personal, friendly or even fraternal aspect of a literary society like the Francis Bacon Society means that the work of individualists can be incorporated into the body of knowledge. A literary society can use and benefit from personal predilections in a way impossible for those who work in the narrow confines of academic sub-disciplines. The true wealth of a society is its members who embody its collective memory. The Society’s collective organisational memory is an important, irreplaceable adjunct to electronic texts such as the *Index to Baconiana*.

The Society received a particular blow in the loss of Francis Carr, a tireless and long-serving Council member of the Society. A full eulogy of Francis’s life and work will appear in the next issue, but it is my present task as editor to highlight some of his many qualities. Francis had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the traditional arguments for Bacon’s authorship. He was an exceptionally clear and engaging writer, as will emerge from the article on Mary Fitton he submitted to this *Baconiana* shortly before his final illness. For many years he published a newsheet which served as a round up of all coverage of Shakespeare or Bacon in current literature and the press. His passionate conviction in the Baconian case, and the full implications of this theory for our culture, made his work quite different to the cool, focused work of Cockburn. He was a singularly vital and stimulating member of the Society.

In short, Francis was the embodiment of one aspect of the Baconianism. He can be seen as maintaining the tradition of authors such as Alfred Dodd and E.D. Johnson, who related to Bacon personally as a revered teacher, genius or even a ‘general’ in the battle for culture and civilisation. The authorship question mattered to these writers, and to Francis, in a way that is hard for later generations to emulate behind the comfortable agnosticism of our computer screens.

The future of the traditional Baconianism which Francis represented is at present not clear. We are heirs to a confusing tangle of convincing, possible and absurd arguments that will require much patient work to unravel. Francis’ work involved study of a range of subjects, from Mary Fitton, to the Venus and Adonis mural at Gorhambury, to the claim that Bacon actually wrote *Don Quixote*, and that what the world has believed to be Cervantes’ masterpiece was actually a Spanish translation of the English original. To stand by such arguments requires a bravery that has no fear of public ridicule.

There are those in the Society, including Cockburn and Michell, who deplore (sometimes with wry amusement) the tendency for enthusiastic Baconians to go ‘overboard’ in their claims in what is already a sufficiently contentious area. But, as mentioned above, literary-historical detective work involves the search for specific ties between the lives and writings of the candidates and the Shakespeare (or even other) writings. Francis excelled in this kind of research. His principled agnosticism about the religious and spiritual subjects that have exercised many other Baconians enabled him to focus with passion and clarity on the humanist elements of in Baconian tradition. His passionate appreciation of great literature, music and art are an exemplary call to Baconians, and indeed all academics and general readers, to remember why scholarship and the access to culture is central to our humanity.

Many great Baconians have been women. In fact, it may be the case that the Baconian argument was neglected by some in early days on simple grounds of gender prejudice. Baconianism was popularised in the 19th century by Delia Bacon (no relation of Lord Bacon) and

the Society was founded by Mrs. Constance Pott and her acquaintances. Several others, including the underrated cipher writer Natalie Rice Clarke, have played a notable part in the development of Baconian theory.

Two glittering stars in the Baconian firmament were the famous novelist Daphne Du Maurier, and the acclaimed historian Jean Overton Fuller whose beautifully written biography of Bacon is a masterpiece. It makes an extremely strong case for Bacon's sole involvement in at least some of the Shakespeare works and weaves in the Rosicrucian and political elements so important to the 'secret history' of Bacon's life with a light hand. And it captures the flavour of the Francis Bacon Society at its best, discussing esoteric subjects with no prejudice to clear thinking and balanced argument. If the editor had to recommend one book as an introduction to Baconianism, it would be this.

After over 100 years of unorthodox scholarship challenging the Stratfordian position is shown, it is clear that no final answers have been reached, but our understanding of Elizabethan literature and history is infinitely richer than it would have been otherwise. A coherent vision has arisen of a circle of men and women united – and occasionally divided – by powerful cultural and political ideals. These were people of action and passion, not professional writers scribbling in the comfort of their study for a wage.

Unlike the professional writer of the mid-19th century onwards who demanded payment and sole recognition of their authorship, it is becoming increasingly clear that different views of ownership and of the purpose of publication prevailed in Elizabethan times. Now at the turn of the 21st century, the Internet is paradoxically bringing a return to Elizabethan literary norms, through analogous phenomena such as the reuse of materials, anonymity, questions of plagiarism and identity and mass collaboration on huge works beyond the scope of one person. We await the balance between an egocentric view of authorship and ownership, and the impersonality that takes peoples writings with no respect for their intentions and is justly termed piracy. The Bacon Society has always maintained this balance, and there is little doubt that the circle of writers and political figures associated with Bacon worked in the same way – all for one and one for all.

There are different voices, different concerns in Shakespeare. There may be grounds for connecting Shakespeare, Bacon, Earl of Oxford or the Earl of Derby with different texts. It is therefore with regret that we must make a final memorial for Andrew Lyell, whose "Who Were Shakespeare" published in the 2007 edition of *Baconiana*, was well received by readers. Lyell's article involved an intelligently argued plea for cooperation and collaboration between rival anti-Stratfordians, rather than polemics which muddy the waters and distract attention for the shortcomings of the Stratfordian position.

The more this work proceeds, the more obvious it becomes that the man at the centre of all the ideas, movements and human contacts highlighted by historical research was in fact Francis Bacon. Cockburn acknowledged that it is possible that William Shakespeare wrote the plays, but on current evidence much more likely that Francis Bacon was the sole author. Be that as it may, if it were proved tomorrow that William Shakespeare wrote every word attributed to him (which would be hard, since even conventional scholars have repeatedly changed their mind about this), Shakespeare would have had to be an expert on Rosicrucian philosophy, the law, several European languages, inside intrigues in the court of Elizabeth and the philosophy and terminology of Francis Bacon.

If Shakespeare was the author, he almost certainly received assistance from Bacon. If a group of authors were responsible, they were almost certainly guided by Bacon. And the context to this work was most likely Rosicrucian in the sense developed by Frances Yates and earlier by the Bacon Society. Though sadly, almost as many suspect books have been published on that subject of Rosicrucianism as on the Shakespeare authorship question.

As this picture continues to unfold, the future work of the Society may take on a different colouring, more focused on research into the esoteric tradition, though authorship studies remain no less important. As such our chairman Peter Welsford's masterly and succinct sketch of the history of the Society provocatively hones in on Rosicrucianism as a key to the past and future of the Society. Peter's article wittily suggests that the reason for the Society's small size is that a larger number would not have been conducive to the intimate and discreet work of overseeing the vast body of knowledge it represents.

To a degree, this must be right. Even though the Internet makes it possible for anyone to copy and publish (even without permission) the works of Baconians such as Bacon Society members, the appropriate context for research work is deep respect for individuals' contributions and indeed their intellectual property. The Society is increasingly being forced to take a hard-line, to ensure respect for

authors' intentions and the maintenance of standards, just as this was an issue in Francis Bacon's time. We are delighted to be able to offer a sound version of the *Index to Baconiana*, which has been circulating in an imperfect form, and in the coming years it is intended to make Baconian research available through digital means, in a way that supports the Society, giving recognition and reward to collaborative spanning a period of over 100 years.

As in previous issues, we are reflecting the social element of the Society by enclosing an extract from some correspondence between Council members and Rod Tresseder, one of our most active members. Rod points to the importance of St. John's doctrine of the Logos, its relation to sacred geometry and their importance to Francis Bacon.

The present editor maintains a polite but agnostic stance on the authorship question. His particular interest is in Bacon as a highly underrated, still important philosopher of science, and he has researched the connections between Bacon's thought and 16th and 17th traditions in philosophy, religion and science. His findings agree with Rod Tresseder's, though approached from a different angle, and reveal the surprising proposition that the key to the seemingly anomalous elements in Bacon's philosophy and use of hermetic tradition may actually be his deep involvement with a form of Kabbalistic Christianity which sees the Bible as the key to Ancient Wisdom. A very small segment from a forthcoming book written with the assistance of the Society is published here for the first time.

The Francis Bacon Society is small, with around 100 members. The knowledge and broad range of interests that those we are commemorating possessed took decades to develop. Our small membership over the preceding decades has been fortunate to include independent researchers of considerable talent and incentive. The 19th and 20th centuries also had certain qualities that created favourable conditions for this kind of multidisciplinary approach, at a time when the academic world was bound by over-specialisation. But the traditional interest in 'great men' such as Shakespeare and Bacon became unfashionable from the middle of the 20th century onwards, apart from popular celebrities, media figures and 'gurus'. This is in many ways a good thing, but as the old values which fired Baconians in the past begin to fade, we ask ourselves what will sustain literary societies in the future, specifically in a future where people expect free information to be available instantly.

It may seem that figures like Thomas Bokenham (or Jean Overton Fuller) are a 'dying breed' – energetic, principled thinkers with the patience to devote large amounts of the leisure time to concentrated research. This was before the age of the Internet; researchers, especially those studying unusual subjects, often had to verify information for themselves. As the relevant documents were scattered in libraries and collections across the world, unorthodox amateur research was a process that took many years and had no guarantees of success.

Let us hope that the Internet sparks a global Instauration, a brotherhood of researchers. Francis Carr liked to call the Internet the Invisible College in our time. It may turn out to be that, but it must reflect for the full range of human incentives that encourage researchers to pioneer daring approaches to truth and not take 'no' for answer. The Francis Bacon Society will continue to stand for the fraternal values that combine individual and collective striving, without slipping into egoism or the 'wild-west' anarchy that is a new danger in the age of the Internet. We will continue to balance making information available electronically, with personal contact through older and more intimate means of letters and Society meetings which give the personal touch that promotes true incentive.

It is a truism that 'as a man is, so he sees'. But Truth can, and must be seen from different angles. Thomas Bokenham, Nigel Cockburn, Francis Carr, Jean Overton Fuller, Andrew Lyell and John Michell had widely different incentives to study Baconianism and the Shakespeare authorship question. All are valid – the subject is vast and multifaceted enough. The Society – and the wider world that benefits from its work whether or not they are as yet members – will continue to benefit from what they have contributed, with gratitude.

The Editor, Sep 2009

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**Interview with John Michell**

The RILKO Interview

by Christine Rhone

John Michell on Who Wrote Shakespeare?

William Shakespeare (1564-1616), the most revered dramatist of the English language, is arguably the most iconic author on earth, as English continues to spread world-wide as a lingua franca. Teaching English to speakers of other languages and tourism represent a significant portion of the British GNP. Stratford-upon-Avon, enshrined as Shakespeare's Birthplace, remains a major item on the cultural itinerary.

John Michell, professor emeritus and a founder member of RILKO, began writing in 1967. He is the distinguished author of more than twenty books on philosophy, sacred number, landscape geometry, Fortean phenomena and other high mysteries. *The Washington Post* called his *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* of 1996 "The best overview yet of the authorship controversy".

CR: John, we're in my garden in London on the 9th of October 2008. The title of your *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* is a short question like *Is Shakespeare Dead?* by Mark Twain. You call Twain's book the most enjoyable item in the Authorship literature. Why do you like his book so much?

JM: Well, Twain was a brilliant writer. Everything he wrote was entertaining, and his book *Is Shakespeare Dead?* is by far the funniest, and one of the shrewdest of books on the whole Authorship question – and an early one, too. He describes how he became converted to the Baconian view simply because the master of the steamship he was working on wanted an argument. The master was a great Stratfordian – that is, a believer in William Shakespeare as the author – and he wanted an argument. So Mark Twain studied up the Baconian view to give him an argument and he said, "The more I looked into it, the more I was convinced of it, and now it's a faith I'd die for."

Of course, that leads right to the very gist of the question: Why is it that everyone in the subject is so certain – the Baconians, the Marlovians, the Oxfordians, and all these people? Once they get into a camp, they become convinced by it, and it becomes, as Mark Twain said, a faith they live by. And of course the Stratfordians, the orthodox believers in William Shakespeare, they do the same thing – and if people question that view, they get quite angry. So Twain himself took up the case and then found himself being drawn into it and converted to it. He describes it in a most amusing, very finely written way. It's really an excellent book.

**CR: Different estimates place Shakespeare's vocabulary at around 21,000 words, more than double that of any other writer in the English language. Milton's was only 7,000. How do the Stratfordians explain that?**

JM: I don't think they give a particular explanation. It is a strange phenomenon from someone who had no known education, who shouldn't have had such a large vocabulary. Of course, it gives ammunition to the believers in a group who were behind the work – perhaps a group of idealists of the time, who combined together to produce the writings subsumed under the name Shakespeare. But really there's no explanation for this large vocabulary.

**CR: Unlike other plays of their time, the First Folio edition of the plays of Shakespeare contains no dedications, addresses to friends, prologues or epilogues, in which he shows his own thoughts and character. What does this mean?**

JM: It's all part of the problem – that we have absolutely nothing written by Shakespeare – nothing personal. We have the six rather different and inadequate signatures, the authenticity of which is sometimes doubted. But as to anything personal, there's practically nothing that Shakespeare ever wrote or that anyone in his lifetime said about him which sheds any light upon who he actually was.

**CR: "The mystery of Shakespeare's non-existent library and manuscripts led to the first occurrence of Baconism." How did this happen?**



**JM:** One of the first people to research Shakespeare himself was a local clergyman – the Rev. James Wilmot – who was struck by the scholarship in the works and realized that the author must have had a large library. So he thought he’d look for it and he went through all the books in the Warwickshire libraries and he found nothing which belonged to Shakespeare. This set his suspicions going and he began to wonder who this Shakespeare actually was, who had left so little, virtually no trace of himself or any possessions, and that led to the first instance of Baconism, because this clergyman thought that only Francis Bacon could have had the knowledge and scholarship necessary for the plays.

**CR:** You write, “The Baconian cult at its most luxuriant is an awesome and awful thing. Its adherents credit Bacon not only with the whole of Shakespeare, but with all the great literature of his time, including the works of Montaigne and Cervantes.” I can’t think of any other cult like this one, can you?

**JM:** Come to think of it, nor can I. The Baconians have been searching for a long time now and they’ve developed their theories into all kinds of fantastical directions. Of course, the excesses and the fanatics – that doesn’t devalue the Bacon theory as such. But at one time it became almost a Machiavellian cult, with Bacon taken as the father, even the inventor of the English language, the father of English literature, and the father of English thought and so on, and a man of universal knowledge, who alone could be capable of writing something so great as the work of Shakespeare.

**CR:** I quote again from your book: “The movement for deciphering Shakespeare can be seen as one of the many offshoots of Spiritualism.” When did that movement begin?

**JM:** Spiritualism, the mania for spiritualism, began in New England in the nineteenth century, didn’t it? At the same time people who are interested in one odd theory or unusual activity often pass it on to others, as an alternative worldview of hereticism. And so many of the Baconians were interested in communicating with Shakespeare – by the means of calling up Bacon, Shakespeare, and so on – and this led to some amusing literature. People were incredibly ingenious at decoding Shakespeare, many of which were done by channelling and scrying and such. Of course, the trouble with all these cases is they may convince one or two people, but usually they only convince their author.

**CR:** How did a man named Looney bring the Earl of Oxford into the Authorship Question?

**JM:** Thomas Looney was a north country schoolmaster, who decided to solve the Shakespeare question and he wrote down what could be attributed to the man who wrote Shakespeare: He was a foreign traveller, had knowledge of Latin and Greek and other subjects ancient and modern, and he possessed all this wealth of knowledge. So Looney wrote down the characteristics he attributed to the author of Shakespeare, and when he’d done so, he then looked for the person who fitted them, and he found they fitted the Earl of Oxford - Edward de Vere - like a glove. And he then wrote a book, the first Oxfordian book, which incidentally influenced Sigmund Freud, who became very interested in the Shakespeare Authorship question. He agreed with Looney – whose name is actually pronounced Loney – that the hypothetical author of the works perfectly fitted the character of Edward de Vere. Freud published this and the English didn’t like it, and so he took it out of his works, but he still insisted that Edward de Vere was the most likely character to be the author of *Hamlet* and the *Sonnets* and so on.

**CR:** What is the relationship between the Earl of Oxford’s family crest and the name Shakespeare?

**JM:** The Earl of Oxford’s crest shows a lion shaking a broken staff, a shake-spear or break-spear.

**CR:** You say, “Upholders of Orthodoxy often complain that anti-Stratfordian theorists have no grounding in Elizabethan literature and are not qualified to give opinions on the Authorship question.” How did Professor Abel Lefranc fit into this picture?

**JM:** Of course, that’s a good question. The Stratfordians say that no one with any academic, literary qualifications has ever doubted the Authorship, but that of course is quite wrong and misleading. Many learned and highly qualified people have doubted it and have written books about it. Abel Lefranc was a French professor who specialized in literature of the period of Shakespeare. He said that *Love’s*

*Labour's Lost* describes the court of Navarre and that the author of *Love's Labour's Lost* understood it so well, it must have been by personal experience. He captured the spirit of the fast, witty way in which the French courtiers liked to speak – no one else but an insider who had actually known that court could possibly have done it. Lefranc was a qualified man and many others similarly qualified have shared doubts in the Shakespeare Authorship.

But of course the great reason for the Authorship doubts is the huge gap between the mind of the man who wrote Shakespeare and the character of the man from Stratford to whom they're attributed. The first was said to be a universal genius with command of all the world's scholarship of the time, whereas the man himself was apparently a man of not much education, who was quite unqualified to have written these things. Lefranc said that we study the lives of authors to shed light on their works, but uniquely in the case of Shakespeare, there's absolutely no connection at all between the man as we know him and the writings.

**CR: "Recent Shakespearian writers, more aware than their predecessors of the mystical, philosophical ideas which entered English minds in the latter part of the sixteenth century, have recognized *The Tempest* as a product of the perennial esoteric tradition that resurfaced to create the Renaissance." How is the island in this play related to Platonic philosophy and how does John Dee fit in?**

**JM:** The island is ruled by Prospero, who is a mystic perhaps steeped in the Platonic tradition, and he rules it in the ideal spirit of the

It's full of all kinds of illusions, and it's very beautiful place, magical as well as mystical. Who knows what role Dr. Dee and other mystic philosophers of the time might have had upon the man who wrote Shakespeare.

**CR:"Many of the leading Shakespeare candidates were so closely related by birth and marriage that they could have formed a 'magic circle' guarding the secret of their literary activities from outsiders. Most likely to have been 'in the know' was Francis Bacon who moved among them and generally organized their affairs." What are the claims of the Group theorists?**

**JM:** It's certainly true that Bacon was a man behind the scenes of that time. He knew everyone's affairs, particularly those of the aristocracy and government people, and the Group theory of course is a natural reaction, meaning a compromise between all the various candidates. Each group is, in some way, qualified to be Shakespeare and, in other ways, not. So one way proposed for this problem is that there must have been a team working together, and that was quite usual at the time. And it's still usual today, after all, the soaps are written by teams of writers. So it wasn't such an unusual thing, and the problem that arises here is – OK - there was a group and other people contributed to it, but who was the leading Shakespeare? Who is Mr. Shakespeare himself?

Francis Bacon is by far the leading contender for that. And there are other contenders, like Mary Sidney, the wife of Lord Pembroke of Wilton, who had a literary salon. She entertained many of the people involved in the Shakespeare mystery - her friends and others, at Wilton House, which is incidentally on the River Avon in Wiltshire. She has been suggested as perhaps the leader or hostess of an esoteric group, who set out to produce a philosophical and social reform by means of traditional philosophy. So yes – a group is a very plausible suggestion, but when it comes to who was the leading Shakespeare, then of course opinions vary.

**CR: "One thing that is clearly proved by the Shakespeare controversy is that, as Charles Fort put it, 'For every expert there is an equal and opposite expert'." Could you comment on the graphology and signature experts?**

**JM:** All the handwriting experts really have to go on in the case of Shakespeare is the six signatures, three of which were attached to his will, and the others on various documents. The trouble is they're all shaky and take different forms. So there's not much that they have in common for the graphology experts to get their teeth into. Some people say that the signatures on the will might have been written by the lawyer, which was sometimes the case in those days. And some people think that they show he was almost illiterate – could hardly write – and other people have different views. So really, as is the case with most other expert examinations of Shakespeare – really, it all comes to nothing.

**CR: "Despite their superior airs, the Stratfordians are no less victims of their own beliefs than the Baconians or other dogmatists. They too are 'theorists'..." Why does the Authorship question remain a not quite respectable pursuit?**

Well of course the belief in William Shakespeare of Stratford as the author – it goes back to the seventeenth century and the time of Shakespeare, and Shakespeare is the official author. In many subjects, I've found that the orthodoxy of a subject is based on very little other than presumption, and it's the case here that the Stratfordians can't really defend their case, because there are so many questions to be asked about how this man from Stratford could have written the works of Shakespeare. So usually – very often – to their discredit, they have recourse to abuse and personal defamation of people who doubt the theory, and this becomes quite unpleasant. Something I noticed very early on in other controversies is when the authorities on a subject abuse their opponents, instead of arguing with them, then that's a significant find. It means there really is a problem.

**CR: John, in closing, I'm wondering how you first became interested in the Shakespeare Authorship question?**

Well, I read an article once, I think it was in *The Spectator*, by A. L. Rowse, a scholar who was commenting on some questions raised about the Authorship of Shakespeare. And Rowse answered one or two questions reasonably enough, and then he got angry and began abusing the questioner and the whole movement. This awoke my attention, because I've always found that when the authorities – instead of arguing or proving their point briefly to an interested questioner – instead of doing that, they become angry and start abusing people who question their faith, then it's always a sign they're on weak ground.

Then I went further into the Shakespeare Authorship question and got some of the books on the subject and found they are indeed on weak ground. It's very much an open question who possibly could have been the person – or the people even – who wrote Shakespeare. And then I carried on and found it a most delightful subject. I think more people should take it up, because it really does open you to the writings of Shakespeare seen from another angle, without being inhibited by the idea of William Shakespeare himself, and it enables you to see for yourself what profound philosophy and learning there is in it, as well as humour.

**CR: Wonderful answers, John, thank you very much.**

**JM:** Thank you, Christine.

**Interview by Christine Rhone, 2008**

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## **An Appreciation of John Michell**

by Christine Rhone

It is easy to be haunted by the shade of John Michell. He was not so much a material being as he was a spirit, even when alive. His death on 25 April 2009 happened less than an hour past the end of Saint George's Day, commemorating the patron saint of England – or still on that day, discounting daylight savings time. John always did like a close shave. He had a great love of many kinds of boundaries and of pushing them. From this playful exercise, he often made a higher truth emerge. His child-like, puckish person had a gentlemanly air, but John was a daimon in disguise.

John inhabited a "between" world, a liminal space, with all the riches of his gifts a treasure-trove – razor-sharp intelligence, artistic and literary talent, delightful wit and humour, uncanny insight and perception, and many others. Harnessing his gifts with great energy and purpose, driven by the conviction that he was the recipient of a divine revelation, John worked for decades between midnight and four in the morning, producing some twenty books and countless articles and letters. Some were paradigm shifting, deeply influencing the post-war generations, like *The New View over Atlantis* and *The Dimensions of Paradise*. From book to book, John took risks and landed squarely on his feet.

The two main poles of his thinking were Plato and Charles Fort, the positive-negative tension between them a minefield of brilliant ideas. From Plato, John drew upon the wisdom of the ancients, which he channelled especially in his writings on number, proportion, metrology, and plane and landscape geometry. In the *Laws* and the *Republic*, John found traces of the blueprint for the ideal city and was able to reconstruct the whole pattern, which he saw mirrored in the layout of Stonehenge and other sites. He called this geometrical pattern the New Jerusalem diagram, after the description of the heavenly city in the Revelation of St. John the Divine.

Charles Fort (1874-1932) was an American thinker, dreamer, and intellectual iconoclast. He spent much of his life in the libraries of New York and London, collecting thousands of reports of strange events and phenomena – like teleportation, poltergeists, and UFOs. These anomalies did not tally with rational doctrines or established theories. Scholars and scientists conveniently ignored them, interested only in data supporting their own concepts. Fort concluded that “exclusions” underpin all theories and belief systems. He subverted the prevailing scientific view by creating his own “expressions”, his own utterly different pictures of reality, based on precisely the same empirical evidence as official theories but selecting the evidence very differently.

If Plato was John Michell’s vertical pole, Fort was his horizontal. John acted as daimon in the centre. Plato was his pole of immutable values, the pre-existent Forms and Numbers that were angels, or angles, manifest in creation. Plato was his pole of idealism and orthodoxy. Upon it, he found peace and stability, as well as refuge. When events on the horizontal became chaotic, he would scale the pole and survey from high above. Fort ruled the horizontal realm of nature – nothing in our fluctuating world is permanently real; all “explanationism” will fail; the nearest thing to reality is the Universe itself, a view like traditional mysticism.

Is it possible to maintain such contradictory views at the same time? John thrived on polarity and provocation. Like Fort, he saw apparently separate phenomena as a chain of islands, outcrops from the same submerged bedrock, in an immensely vast, irrational continuity. Like Plato and his teacher Socrates, John was a revivalist or re-collector of ancient knowledge, whose work was to remember truth, in Greek *aletheia*, a word that means ‘not forgetting’. As a writer, John had the skill and inspiration to mediate between the world of archetypes and that of humanity. At his best, he was a messenger of the *Anima Mundi* or William Blake’s *Divine Imagination*.

John was, in other words, a daimon in the Platonic sense. As a visionary author, John had genius, although everything he did in life was not necessarily a positive product of that fact. As a Fortean, his interest in the iconic genius of Shakespeare produced the book *Who Wrote Shakespeare?* The subject may well seem cranky at first: after all, the plays and sonnets are so fine, why worry about who wrote them. Only when we realize how few facts we know about his life, added to the magnitude of the commercial and literary industry that has grown around “Shakespeare”, do we see the validity of the question.

Francis Bacon – whom John mentions briefly in several other books – comes up for extended discussion, as one of the main contenders for the true author of Shakespeare’s works. John excels here at giving all sides maximum chances at credibility, providing a highly regarded overview of the authorship controversy. Exploring the various claims, he qualifies one as “a curiosity, one of the many promising clues that seem to be leading towards the centre of the Shakespeare Authorship mystery but never actually reach it”. The tentacles of this octopus never seize its prey. Bacon remains a key figure, perhaps of a group, and a large piece of the puzzle.

Now, just for fun, let us ask this question: Is there any connection between Francis Bacon and John Michell? We can say yes, both were Platonists and major idealists of their times. Both used “Atlantis” as a metaphor to convey their philosophical visions. If Francis Bacon was the father of empiricism, a foundation of the scientific method, then John Michell, as a Fortean, stood for a re-examination of empiricism and a constant querying of scientific orthodoxy. Interestingly, although Bacon wanted to rid natural magic of its superstitions and an occultism that he despised, he remained open to enquiries about the reality of *vis imaginativa* – the power of imagination.

John Michell the visionary was a revivalist of what he called ancient science. He believed that modern society is in a state of decadence from a lost Golden Age, and that his role was to communicate a perennially recurrent, unifying vision of harmony. The depth of intuition and power of commitment behind his writing gave it far-reaching impact and influence. As a daimon at the solitary crossroads of Plato and Fort, his role was unique. An obsession with arithmosophy cohabited with a great charm and a love of beauty in John Michell, whose very soul seemed part of the English landscape. We will sorely miss his gentle voice.

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# Notes on the History and Future of the Society

By Peter Welsford

## ORIGIN

The Francis Bacon Society was founded in 1886.

In face of great opposition its founder, Mrs Henry Pott, had devoted her life to research in an endeavour to lift the veil that enshrouded the life and work of that remarkable and mysterious man who later became Baron Verulam and Viscount St Alban.

By the time the Francis Bacon Society was formed, Mrs Pott had become an authority on the literature of the 16th and 17th centuries, as well as on the writings of Francis Bacon. Since the time of the founding of the Society many authoritative and devoted members have helped to lift the veil further and build up a store of valuable knowledge.

From these investigations it would appear that ~

The Shakespeare plays and other great literary works of the period were really the work of Francis Bacon and a group of secret associates.

One great mind ~ Francis Bacon's ~ assisted by many of the ablest scholars, poets, statesmen and craftsmen of the day, brought the whole Renaissance to fruition by conceiving and setting in motion a new and precise method for the upliftment and enlightenment of mankind, and bequeathed this method and work to posterity.

## OBJECTS

The Society's objects are . . .

To encourage for the benefit of the public the study of the works of Francis Bacon as Philosopher, statesman and poet; his character, genius and life, his influence on his own and succeeding times; and the tendencies and results of his writings. To encourage for the benefit of the public the general study of the evidence in favour of Francis Bacon's authorship and to investigate his connection with other works of the Elizabethan period.

## LOCATION

The headquarters of the Society are at Canonbury Tower, Islington, London, N1 2NQ, England. This ancient building forms part of the property, once called Canonbury Manor, belonging to the Marquis of Northampton. It is here that emblems appear in the oak carving in some of the rooms.

The Francis Bacon Society and The Emperor

The creator, founder members to begin with were Mrs Constance Pott and her family with a few friends, who formed up The Francis Bacon Society on 18 December, 1885. Interestingly enough, the first President was W.H. Smith who in 1857 had produced the first English book, highlighting the Shakespeare authorship controversy. After two years there were some eighty members and, according to a comment in 1984 by Noel Fermor an energetic Editor, we are the oldest national literary society in England.

The result of Mrs Pott's extensive research appears in her remarkable book: Francis Bacon and His Secret Society published 1891 in Chicago, setting out main details, namely:

Doubts connected with Bacon's personal history, actual works and aims.

Deficiencies of learning in the times of Elizabeth I and James I.

The Rosicrucians, their rules aims and methods.

The Vital Spirit of Nature.

Her views on Masonry.

Lastly, with details of paper marks as symbols, .~ all linking together a variety of the works attributable to Bacon. This list, according to Mrs Pott in her book, was: "in an attempt to collect and unite the lost links of a long and strong chain"

Many of her references in this book may be said to be currently very relevant, today:

"Who can read the scientific works of Bacon, or try really to understand his philosophy, without perceiving that, whatever he may have discovered, revived, instilled or openly taught, his main object was to teach men to teach themselves? To get at general principles, to find out first causes, and to invent the art of inventing arts, and of handing down as well as of advancing the knowledge acquired ~ these were his aims".

Bacon advocated ~ Study The Laws of Nature ~ Take All Knowledge for your Province.

"He gives the keys and expects others to decipher the problems by means of those keys. And that axioms to be true must be "drawn from the very centre of the sciences."

Mrs Pott believed that Bacon was behind the creation of the secret Rosy Cross brethren. She develops this idea in her book and bases some of her theories about them by transcribing some of the portions:

"Men of the most opposite worldly creeds, of diverse habits, and even of apparently remote ideas, have ever joined together, consciously or unconsciously, to glorify the good, and despise although with pity, the evil that might be reconciled to the good. But in the centuries of unrest which accompanied the evolution of any kind of civilisation, either ancient or modern, how was this laudable principle to be maintained? This was done by a body of the learned, existing in all ages under peculiar restrictions, and at one time known as the Rosicrucian Fraternity. She goes on to outline the three-fold objects of that fraternity, as published by the Society:

1. To purify religion and to stimulate reform in the church.
2. To promote and advance learning and science.
3. To mitigate the miseries of humanity and to restore man to the original state of purity and happiness from which by sin, he has fallen.

And to look a little further into the rules of the Rosicross brethren, Bacon's "Sons of Science," of whom we believe him to have been "The Emperor" or supreme head:

Of Bacon's life says Mrs Pott, "I am persuaded that no man will ever form a correct idea, unless he bears in mind that from very early youth his heart was divided by these three objects, distinct, but not discordant."

Eighteen years later our Society was incorporated as a limited Company, on 23 August, 1903, with charitable status.

Details of the extensive activities of the Society thereafter, its chronicles, history and books until the turn of the century are available for those still interested, as they were collated and fully recorded in a separate edition of Baconiana, the periodic Journal of the Society

titled: A Subject and Author INDEX 1886-1999 (by A.M.Challinor assisted by Dr J. Alabaster), distributed to all members, at the turn of the last century.

By then, The Chairman of the Society was Thomas Bokenham, an ex Bank of England official, who had run the Society with a small group of council members, virtually single handed for a number of years, but for the continuing help of Gerald Salway.

'Bokey' (sadly deceased) was a dedicated enthusiast with a particular interest in cryptography, having decoded not only the monument of Shakespeare in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey but also, ~ no less than 30 of Shakespeare's sonnets revealing the name of Bacon. Much of his work was separately corroborated by Penn Leary an American attorney. All this became the subject of Radio (Channel 4) BBC Television programmes, thanks to Gwyn Richards (decd.), a Senior Producer at BBC Pebble Mill. Filming also took place in Canonbury Tower by permission of the Marquis of Northampton, where Francis Bacon had leased rooms during his life-time for about ten years, whilst living in London. By this time there had been a re-shuffle of the Council when Prof John Spiers and Dr J. Alabaster were recruited and Peter Welsford took over as editor of Baconiana from Clifford Hall, a lawyer, who resigned to take up an appointment overseas.

Shortly afterwards following, the death of Bob Cowley, Chairman of The Research into Lost Knowledge Organisation (RILKO) and a council member, he was later replaced by James North, an Oxford graduate, interested in Bacon and his ideas who has since developed the Society's website, with his wife Dr Sally North becoming our librarian. Also appointed was Nick Young an author and playwright who had been trained under Sir Peter Hall, had worked at The Globe Theatre and directs 'Shakespeare's' plays. Whilst for many years the venue for the Society's quarterly meetings was Nevern Square, Earls Court, the home of the Bramelds (Mary Brameld is currently the Society's Vice President), thanks to the connections of Prof John Spiers, the Society started to hold talks in the University of London where there is housed the extensive collection of Bacon's books in The Durning-Lawrence Library, dedicated to Bacon. As the latter is undergoing refurbishment, the Society presently holds its meetings in Canonbury Tower.

In an endeavor to fulfill its aims and objects including investigating, the authorship question, the Society's interests extend to a possible Oak Island Treasure, where one of our members, Mark Finnan in Canada is closely involved and he has promised to give us Talks about progress, in the future. Petter Amundsen a Norwegian has nearly finished a major documentary he is making in Germany, covering the same area of activity. There are several other investigators involved in similar enquiries. (Details can be found at [www.baconsocietyinc.org](http://www.baconsocietyinc.org)).

The membership of the Society in spite of wide coverage by the media through the BBC Radio and Television programmes, nevertheless has barely increased since its inception over 100 years ago. Why is this we must ask ourselves'?

We remain a very discreet Society, dedicated to pursuing our objectives whose task is principally, the custodianship of a huge amount of information, directly or indirectly appertaining to Francis Bacon, his life and his works, ~ for those interested to pursue this subject or indeed any in-depth study in the Rosy Cross, for whatever reason.

Currently, the international (global) atmosphere is not very conducive to honest, academic research into these honourable aims ~ other than it seems, by the few '144,000', 'critical mass' of dedicated people ~ whom we are always hopeful to recruit. Therefore, we remain alert and stand by as ready as we can be, to carry out this task.

That is until ~ in the final search for Bacon's whereabouts, his missing papers and consequently, some sufficiently 'cast-iron' evidence of international importance as to the authorship problem ~ actually comes to Light.

Then it may be that at some future point 'the spotlight of consciousness' (being 'a Sunlight by itself!') ~ will really creep up and overshadow us?

So, we need be sure at this particular Time that we are truly ready for our next mutation!

AFTERWORD AND THOUGHTS ON THE LIVING ROSICRUCIAN TRADITION

Westminster Abbey:

The William Shakespeare Memorial inscription, in Poets Corner

Prospero “Our revels now are ended. These our actors, As I foretold you, were all spirits and Are melted into air, into thin air, And, like the baseless fabric of a vision, The Cloud-capp ‘d towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn TEMPLES, the great globe itself, Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff As dreams are made of; and our little life Is rounded with a sleep....”

“This monument was erected from public subscriptions and sponsored by Richard Boyle the third Earl of Burlington the great patron of the Arts, Dr Richard Meade who was a patron of Literature, a Mr Martin of the society of Antiquities and Alexander Pope the poet and satirist.

Two of these men were members of the Royal Society many of whose founder members were members of the Rosicrucian Fraternity, and Thomas Bokenham. a past Chairman of The Francis Bacon Society, believed that at least the Earl of Burlington and Dr Meade were certainly members”.

By a skilful rearrangement of the above lines on the scroll beneath the memorial to William Shakespeare, Thomas Bokenham found the following encipherment spelling out: FRANCIS BACON AUTHOR.

Shakespeare’s finger is pointing to the word: TEMPLES.

See: [Bacon, Shakespeare and the Rosicrucians, a booklet by Thomas Bokenham, 1994].

... Sir I am vcx’ d; Bear with my weakness; my old brain is troubled; Be not disturbed with my infirmity; If you be pleased, retire into my cell And there repose; a turn or two I’ll walk, To still my beating mind.” [The Tempest].

“We scientists of the human spirit shall experiment, experiment, experiment, ever experiment. Through centuries of trial and error, through agonies of research, let us experiment with laws and customs, with money systems and governments, until we chart the one true course.”

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## Shakes-Speare’s Sonnets Unmasked

by T. D. Bokenham

### Note by 4in1.ws editor.

Since all illustrations here were lost and didn't even survive in the web archive, it's recommended to refer to the original article in Baconiana Nº190.

If you happen to have a copy of this issue with the pictures intact, please contact us via the email provided on the website.

A great many attempts have been made to unlock the secrets of these essentially enigmatic poems. Critics widely differ about their meanings, the dates when they were written and to whom they refer. For example, Sir Sidney Lee told us that a large proportion of the sonnets give the reader the illusion of personal confessions. He also suggested that:

“the thoughts and words of the sonnets of Daniel, Drayton, Watson, Barnaby Barnes, Constable and Sidney were assimilated by Shakespeare and that the latter was indebted to Petrarch, Ronsard, De Boef and Desportes or of English disciples of the Italian and French masters.”



Lee was careful to avoid any suggestion that Shakespeare read any of these classical poets in their native tongue, nor did he remind us that Daniel, Drayton, Constable and Barnaby Barnes were of practically the same age as Shakespeare who was probably their master. Baconian scholars such as W.F.C. Wigston, Alfred Dodd and others have produced enlightened books on the *Sonnets* and I am indebted to them in compiling this article which concerns some interesting cipher discoveries found in some of these sonnets. An author who, for good reasons, wishes to conceal his authorship for a number of years has only a few options. Obviously, he would need to find a suitable pseudonym, but also it would be necessary to tell his secret to certain close friends who could be relied on to pass this on to a later generation. He could write a carefully worded book, or article, about this for a later publication, or he could encipher his story in his pseudonymous work in the hope of a future decipherer while, at the same time, demonstrating the cipher system used either in one of his other books or in an authentic book on cipher which might later be studied by someone who was aware of his interest in the subject. In fact, the true author of the Shakespeare works did all of those things and, in my opinion, these precautions give absolute proof that that author was Francis Bacon.

The use of codes and various cipher systems have been essential for diplomatic and military purposes for ages and numerous books on this subject have been written from time to time. In 1624, a few months after the appearance of the 1623 Shakespeare *Folio*, a large manual called *Cryptomenytices et Cryptographiae* was published in Germany. I have a copy of this book and one cipher system demonstrated in it shows how a specially prepared text when set out as though on squared paper, can produce a group, or groups, of letters which spell out the concealed message.

The message, given by the marked letters, appears below and it tells us that Hrabanus, who was an Abbot of Mainz in the ninth century, invented this cipher system. I have found, however, that those marked letters also contain a symmetrical group of letters which informs us that this particular demonstration was supplied by Francis Bacon. This led me to examine the strange epitaph on the Shakespeare monument in the Church at Stratford. By squaring this text, I found a clear message FRANCIS BACON AUTHOR.

Later, I looked at the epitaph on the Shakespeare monument in Westminster Abbey which was completed in 1741, some 115 years after Bacon's recorded death. The scroll consists of an adulterated version of the famous speech from *The Tempest* and it contains some curious spelling mistakes which seem to have been intentional. The words "Cloud cupt" should have been "clowd-capt" and the word "fabrick" in line seven is spelt with an N. The words "Shall Dissolve" with their capital letters have been given a line to themselves, which suggests that they are important.

This prompted me to start my squaring with these words which consisted of thirteen letters. This amazing group of letters was found which spell FRANCIS BACON with a spare H, set out in the shape of an arch or doorway whose central letter is the incorrect N of the word "Fabrick" of line 7. Sometime later were found letters which included the spare H in column \* which spell AUTHOR in columns 8 and 12. The Id of this word is the incorrect U of "cupt".

It must now be pointed out that this squaring system is controlled by two strict rules. The groups found must be symmetrical in shape and they must be contained by lines and columns whose numbers, or their initial letters, add to a number which is the count of a word, or words, which relate to the message found. For instance, the Abbey message is contained by lines 3-8 which numbers add to 33 which, in the Elizabethan alphabet of 24 letters, is the count of the name BACON where B=2, A= 1, C=3, O=14 and N=13 which numbers add to 33. The column numbers 6, 7, 8 and 12 also add to 33.





We will now turn to the sonnets which Sidney Lee believed were personal confessions. However, we are introduced to a “beautiful and lovely youth”, the famous “Dark Lady” and a so-called rival poet who seems to have usurped the poet’s claim to fame. Critics have tried to identify these beings as Shakespeare’s friends and acquaintances, but these interpretations are far from the truth.

In 1884, W.F.C. Wigston published his *A New Study of Shakespeare*. He was a classical scholar who became one of the founder members of The Bacon Society, later called The Francis Bacon Society so as to disassociate it from the butchery trade. That book contains a number of chapters on the *Sonnets* many of which Wigston believed were influenced by Plato. He also pointed out that Sonnet 53 concerns the Sun which brings “the spring and foison of the year”, foison being a word meaning bounty. This Sonnet also introduces us to Adonis whom we meet again in Sonnet 54 and who, in ancient mythology, represented the Sun, and the letters of lines 3-7 actually spell Adonis, that is, S A D I O N.



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Though this sonnet (53) introduces us to Adonis, the cipher message in it is rather different. When squared, Sonnet 53 produces a symmetrical group of letters which spell AUTHOR. Interwoven with it are the letters F, D, R and T which now spell FRA TUDOR AUTHOR. The entire group is contained by lines 8-12 and columns 7-10 whose numbers add to 133 the count of THINE AUTHOR. On the Right is a group which spells ROYAL in lines 9-13 and columns 12-14 adding to 94 the count of MY (35) QUEEN (59). Sharing the R of ROYAL is a further group of letters spelling HEIRE. The lines (24) and columns (60) gives 84 the count of MINE (39) SON (45).

This clever series of letter groups confirm the long held belief that Francis Bacon was, in fact, the eldest son of Queen Elizabeth who secretly married Robert Dudley whom she created Earl of Leicester. The marriage appears to have taken place a few months before Francis was born. As a child, he was brought up in the household of Sir Nicholas and Lady Bacon.



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In this sonnet (54) we meet the beautiful and lovely youth who is compared with sweet roses which do not fade. Squared, we have a diagonal line of letters which spell F. Bacon on either end of which are the letters H and A.

Diagonally alongside the central C and F are the letters T U D R. We now have letters which can spell FRA TUDOR BACON AUTHOR with four shared letters. This group is contained by lines 1-8 and columns 17-24 which numbers add to 200, the reverse count of FRANCIS BACON and, as it happens, the simple count of FRANCIS ROSICROSSE. Below, on lines 9-11, is a symmetrical ADONIS group. These line numbers add to 30 which, with the central column of this inverted triangle, makes a total of 59 the count of ADONIS who is presumably the beautiful youth mentioned in line thirteen. In fact, this is confirmed in Sonnet 76 which follows.



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This sonnet (76) contains the lines often quoted by Baconians,

*Why write I still all one, ever the same, And keepe invention in a noted weed, That euey word doth utmost fel my name, Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?* which clearly tells us that its author's name was a concealed one. The word "fel" in line 7 is a word connected with weaving and is, perhaps, the word which we should first examine. It starts with an F in column 24 under which is an R. so that we already appear to have been given a lead. Above the F are the letters O R T D which, with the U in column 22, spell TUDOR. Symmetry demands that the H in column 26 must be used. With the A below the O we now have a symmetrical group of letters which spell FRA TUDOR AUTHOR.

The remaining lines of this sonnet speak of the author's "Sweet love" who must surely be the 'beautious and lovely youth" of Sonnet 54. Centrally placed under these words are a D and an O from which diagonals of letters complete letters which spell ADONIS. The initial letters of lines 10-12 plus the column climbers 9-13 add to 92 the reverse count of ADONIS and below this group of letters are the words "the sun is".



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Sonnet 126 is the last of the "lovely boy" sonnets and here he is accompanied by the "Dark Lady" who, "As thou goest onwards still will plucke thee back". She seems to be some sort of temptress. Now, if Wigston is rights this lady was probably one of those Goddess Mothers like Diana of Ephesus whose statue is said to have been made of a black substance, possibly ebony. Her Greek name was Artemis and on the right of the squared text is her name contained by columns 18-22 which numbers add to 100 the FRANCIS BACON count. Below, in these same columns is an ADONIS group of letters contained by lines 10-12 which add to 33 the BACON count. The initial lettes of lines 4- 8 which contain the ARTEMIS group add to 59 the count of ADONIS. Clearly. these two mythical persons are to be linked in some way and later we will deal with Sonnet 20 which will amplify this.

Lines 6-9 contain an AUTHOR group in the shape of a cross, while above, in lines 1-4 and columns 14-19 is a group of letters which give FRANCIS BACON with a spare E in line 4. The column numbers plus the initial letters of the lines add to 157 the count of FRANCIS BACON which name, with shared letters, is also contained in this group, thus using the spare E.



The first part of this sonnet (127) concerns the shame and disgrace of bastardy in which “Sweet Beauty hath no name no holy boure.” Based on column 6, this group consists of symmetrical groups of letters which spell PRINCE FRANCIS THE TUDOR HEIR with a shared E of PRINCE. The word AUTHOR can be found in the A of FRANCIS and the R U T H O of TUDOR HEIR group. Later, we are introduced to the author’s Mistress with her raven black eyes and, at the end of those curiously spelt words “My Misterse” in line 9, we have a symmetrical group of letters which spell ARTEMIS. This group has been placed in lines 8-11 which numbers plus their initial letters add to 158 the reverse count of THE GODDESS. There seems to be no reason for misplacing the R of “Misterse” as far as this group is concerned, but this R forms part of a group of letters on the left which spells MOTHER. There is one further group of letters which appears to have been an intended encipherment. Centrally spaced above the word MISTERSSE in line 9 are the words “if not”

IFNOT

MISTERSSE



With a shared T this group of letters spells MISTRESSE FITTON, the lady whom many people believe was “the dark lady of the sonnets”, and this group is contained by lines and columns whose initial letters add to 80 which is the count of FITTON. Mary Fitton gave birth to a son by young William Herbert in 1601 when he would have been about twenty one years of age and she probably a little younger. It may be asked why her name should have been enciphered in this sonnet with that of Artemis and I would like to suggest a possible explanation.

The sonnet clearly concerns the humiliation of bastardy which Francis Bacon had suffered when he first learned that the Queen was his mother. Here, he seems to condemn those who “slandered beautie with a bastard shame” so that “sweet beauty hash no name no holy boure, but is prophan’d if not lives in disgrace”. In other words, he is incensed by the Queen and her Court which poured abuse on this striking beauty, a Court which indulged in many such covert relationships. To him, “Mistersse Fitton” (note that the word “my” in line 9 is not part of the symmetrical group) was not his mistress but one of nature’s children who charmed and fascinated men with her looks and her dancing skills. In this sonnet he contrasts his mistress, Artemis, who was no beauty but black, with this beautiful girl whose hair was auburn but who had been made black by a hypocritical Society.

Later was found confirmation of this theory in a group of letters below the words IF NOT in line 8. On either side of these words is a D and an L. These letters are joined below by the letters S A N D S which with the L, E and R above give letters which spell SLANDERS.



With shared letters, the above group can spell the words DETESTED SLANDER. The line and column numbers which contain this group add to 139 which is the count of HATEFUL (70) SLANDER (69), while their initial letters add to 81 which is not only the count of ARTEMIS but the word SHAMEFUL This sonnet then, introduces an ethical purpose which asks us to curb our darker instincts inherited from Artemis.

This sonnet (20) is the one which alludes to the mysterious “Master Mistris” of indeterminate sex. The meaning of this being has been somewhat distorted by most of our earth-bound critics. Wigston had this to say of him/her:

“Note the androgynous character of the object of the poet’s passion, ‘Master Mistris’, pointing out very plainly that this is the duo-uno paradox of the Phoenix and the Turtle. The eye that ‘more bright than theirs – gilding the object whereupon it gazeth’ is the Sun, namely ‘the man in hew, all hews in his controlling.’ Spirit is always masculine as Nature is feminine with the ancients. These are the poet’s two spirits, the one ‘a man right fair’ and the other ‘a woman coloured ill.’ The Sun and Moon were the classical protagonists of heaven and earth.”

(Beryl Pogson, in her essay on “Falstaff and the Prince” published in Lewis Creed’s new edition of her “In the East my Pleasure Lies” (page 260) stated “The Moon was know to govern the lower nature and the Sun the more spiritual part of Man and they had chosen the Moon’s influence and acknowledged her as mistress”.)



This sonnet then, according to Wigston, concerns the two sides of human nature, the light and dark, that is, our spiritual aspirations and our earthly origins or instincts, represented in these sonnets by Adonis and Artemis.

In lines 6-12 and columns 21-23 is a group of letters which spell PRINCE FRANCIS TUDOR AUTHOR and these numbers add to 129 the count of PRINCE FRANCIS. On the left is another group of letters which with a shared S, spell ADONIS – ARTEMIS. They also contain letters which can spell the words MASTER MISTRIS as spelt in this sonnet. This is quite an achievement and the lines 9-11 and columns 8-13 add to 93 while their initial letters add to 66. Together they give a total of 159 the reverse count of FRANCIS TUDOR.



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This sonnet (107) has generally been taken to refer to the “eclipse” of Queen Elizabeth as “the mortal Moone” and the succession of James as King in 1603. This was an anxious time for Francis Bacon owing to the “incertenties” regarding his own future and that of his “true love”.

Some critics, however, have thought that “the mortal moon” referred to the crescent formation of the Spanish Armada as it passed through the Channel in 1588. Alfred Dodd thought it referred to Francis himself and that his “eclipse” referred to his impeachment. It must be remembered, however, that the moon is always feminine and line five endorses this by using the words “her eclipse”.

Squared, a group of letters was found in lines 3-6 and columns 15-18 which includes the final E of “Moone” and which spells MAIESTY. These line and column numbers add to 84 which, believe it or not, is the count of ELIZABETH.

On the same lines and in columns 7-14 is another group in the shape of a V which spells OURE LATE. These column numbers also add to 84 or ELIZABETH, while the line numbers together with their initial letters add to 59 which is the count of QUEEN.

Line seven has the strange word “Incertenties now crowne themselues assur’de” and the first five letters of the words “now crowne” are part of another group of letters on lines 7- 10 and columns 13-17 which can spell IAMES NOW WEARS CROWN. The initial letters of these lines together with the column numbers add to 110 which is the count of the words ENGLISH (71) KING (39).

Towards the end of lines 10-14, the author’s claim to authorship appears in columns 26- 31. Firstly, we have a symmetrical group giving FRANCIS BACON. The entire group, however, can spell PRINCE FRANCIS BACON AUTHOR HEIR TO THRONE, and the line and column numbers add to 231 which can be made to spell FRA TUDOR (98) THINE (54) AUTHOR (79).

This leaves us with the question concerning the words “my true loue” in line three. Lines 3-6 of the group on the right spell FRATER, while the entire group give us the word FRATERNITIE. The initial letters of these lines and of columns 20-24 add to 129 the count of the word FRATERNITY, this time spelt with a Y. Later, we will find that this was the author’s ROSE FRATERNITY. It seems that the last four lines of this sonnet which starts “Since spite of him” refers to the new King who “insults ore dull and speechless tribes” meaning the Scots! Later, however, in a speech in the House of Commons, Bacon praises the Scots as an asset to this country owing to their fighting skills.






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Alfred Dodd believed that this lovely sonnet (18) expressed Francis Bacon's love and admiration for Marguerite of Navarre, whom he met as a young man in France. Roderick Eagle thought this sonnet referred to the author's "better half", his higher self. The group on the left contains letters which can spell FRA TUDOR AUTHOR. The right hand group contains letters in Lines 5-8 which spell MARGUERITE while the lines 1-4 spell OF THE VALLEY, that is "de Valois". The lines and columns which contain the entire group plus their initial letters total 271 the count of LADY MARGARET (118) QUEEN (59) OF NARRE ( 94 ).



Alfred Dodd claimed that this sonnet (21) was written as a wedding gift to Alice Barnham, Bacon's young wife, in March 1606. Its meaning is a little obscure and most critics seem to have fought shy of it. The first six lines seem to tell us that the author is not now referring to his Muse which in this instance is inspired by the Sun and Moon, "the protagonists", as Wigston put it, "of spirit and phenomena, heaven and earth". The next eight lines appear to refer to the beauty of Spring with its first born flowers and of another love which is "as faire as any mother's child" though not, perhaps, as bright as heaven's stars. On lines 5-8 and columns 21-25 is a group of letters which can spell FRA TUDOR THE AUTHOR and these line and column numbers add to 141 which is the count of FRANCIS TUDOR. Lines 7-11 contain another symmetrical group of letters in which the names ALICE and FRANCIS, who borrows her A, I and C, are interwoven; a delightful little trick which must have intrigued this young girl. The initial letters of these lines and of columns 11-13

which contain this group, add to 92 which is the count of the words "YOU AND ME". And here, it seems, Francis played another little trick since 92 in reverse is 29 which is the count of the name ALICE.

It so happens that the initial letters of the lines of this sonnet add to I68 which is the reverse count of FRA ROSICROSSE.



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Sonnet 136 is one of the "Will" sonnets and in it this word is repeated seven times. Its meaning is somewhat obscure to say the least and it contains the conundrum which starts in line 8, "among a number one is reckon'd none" and ends with the strange lines:

*Make but my name thy love, and love that still, And then thou lovest me for my name is Will.*

I have never been able to unravel this number puzzle, and those last two lines have naturally been quoted by orthodox scholars who oppose our Baconian beliefs. However, I have found that some of these words respond to Bacon's simple cipher and the squared text amply justifies these counts.

Lines 5-6 tell us: *Will, will fulfill the treasure of thy love, I fill it with wils and my will one.*

These lines clearly refer to two different persons. Surely, we are being introduced to "I", the author, and "Will" his pseudonym, who "will fulfill the treasure of thy love". The words "thy love" seem a little incongruous here, but Bacon's simple cipher tells us that the count of these words is 100 the count of FRANCIS BACON. This suggests that Will will complete, or bring to fruition, my literary treasures.

The last two lines of this sonnet are even more enigmatic. They not only repeat the words "thy love", that is Francis Bacon, which are followed by the words "my names", but the words "my name" add to 66 the count of ROYAL while the following words "is Will" add to 79 the count of AUTHOR! And the sonnet number is 136 the count of BACON- SHAKESPEARE.

Squared, this sonnet produces a symmetrical group of letters in lines 9-14 and columns 18-24 which spells, with shared letters, PRINCE FRANCIS TUDOR AUTHOR. These line and column numbers add to 216 the count of AUTHOR (79) A TUDOR PRINCE (137).

In a letter to King James, dated the 25th March 1621, Fr St Alban protested his innocence of taking bribes and gifts to pervert justice, and adds "however I may be frail, and partake of the abuse of the times". He ends this remarkable letter by writing, in reference to the King's command that he should neglect his defence and so admit his guilt:

"and now making myself an oblation to do with me as may best conduce to the honour of your justice, the honour of your mercy and the use of your service, resting as clay in your Majesty's gracious hands."

Is it not a little strange that in lines 9-12 of this sonnet 125, these words are not only paraphrased but, in the last two lines of this sonnet, mention is made of a "subbornd Informer" and the word "impeacht".

Alfred Dodd, in his estimation of Sonnet 125, interpreted the words "I bore the canopy" as referring to Bacon's high office, "the canopy of State", while "my extern the outward honoring" referred to his title "Francis St Alban".



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This interesting sonnet produces a symmetrical group of letters which spell FRANCIS ST ALBAN AUTHOR. The lines and columns which contain this group plus their initial letters number 318 the count of FRANCIS ST ALBAN (132) POET (53) THINE AUTHOR (133).

which, with our enciphered message confirms that this sonnet was written after 1621 when Francis was awarded the title. It also shows, as Alfred Dodd and others claimed, that these sonnets were not published in 1609 as suggested on their title pages.

It will now be noticed that the F of the word “Forgoing” in line 7 is printed with an unnecessary capital letter. This F is the F of FRANCIS in our message, while the curious C in the word “oblacion” in line 10 is needed for the C of FRANCIS.

It has been pointed out by Maurice Barbotin, a French member of the Francis Bacon Society, that this particular sonnet has some further “counts” of considerable interest. The line numbers 6-11 (51) together with their initial letters (67) add to 118 which is the count of GUILTLESS. Moreover, the count of the word SUBBORND in line 13 adds to 90 which is the count of the name CHURCHILL who was the “subborn’d informer”. This number is the reverse count of the words NOT GUILTY.

Alfred Dodd found that a number of the sonnets deal with Francis Bacon’s impeachments, the false charges made against him and the King’s command to neglect his defence. Sonnet 90 refers to “a purposed overthrow” and Sonnet 89 contains the line “Against thy reasons making no defence”. These sonnets were written as though addressed to King James who shamefully participated in his “purposed overthrow” of his trusted friend and Chancellor Francis St Alban.

There may be many who are not prepared to recognise the validity of these cipher disclosures and, in particular those concerning this sonnet. It should be mentioned, however, that Hepworth Dixon, a Barrister who was one of Bacon’s biographers, stated in his *The Story of Bacon’s Life* (1862) at pages 380-81:

“The right of impeachment by the House of Commons lay a dormant and disputed power in the Constitution. Men had been impeached by that House for various crimes, Latimer had been the first, Suffolk the last; one in 1376, the other in 1449.”

It was revived by Coke for this occasion. Is there anyone living in Shakespeare’s time who could have referred to Bacon’s letter to King James and have found it applicable to mention this out of date practice of impeachment together with a “subborn’d informer”? Perhaps Francis Bacon, with his irrepressible wit, may have chosen to number this sonnet 125 which is the count of the words FRANCIS HANG HOG.



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Four symmetrical groups of letters have been found in this sonnet (66), two of them spelling FRANCIS and FRA TUDOR AUTHOR. The one top left, contained by lines 1-7 and columns 11-15 produce a count of 89 which is the count of FRA ST ALBAN which suggests that this sonnet was written after 1621. Lines 6-10 and columns 22-26 which contain the second group add to 160 the count of PRINCE FRA TUDOR while their initial letters add to 79 the count of AUTHOR.

Like Sonnet 125, this sonnet clearly concerns the tragic circumstances of St Alban's impeachment and here he proclaims the injustice of the authorities, particularly King James who should have stood by his loyal Chancellor. Sardonic references are made about him in these cries of anguish and, at the end of the last three of them in lines 10-12, is another group which spells KING. Its line and column numbers add to 123 which is the count of OUR MASTER.

Finally we come to the words "I leave my love alone" of the last line, which has been identified in lines 12-14 and columns 17-21. This group of letters spells MY FRATERNITY and these column numbers plus the initial letters of these lines add to 133 the count of ROSICROSSE. It is this Fraternity which was so dear to him and it will be found that the last three words of this sonnet "my loue alone" add to 129 which is the count of the word FRATERNITY.

#### The Dedication

Having now found a number of sonnets which encipher their author's name as FRA or Francis Tudor, we are in a better position to tackle the problem of the curious dedication to this book of sonnets which has puzzled critics for a great number of years. The stops which appear between each word, and the peculiar phrasing which distorts its meaning, make it clear that it has been so worded to contain a cipher message. If the author's name is enciphered in this dedication, it will be noticed that in it there are no C's or K's. This means that the names Francis, Bacon or Shakespeare will not be found. It should also be noticed that the only two F's in the text are the last letter of the first line and the first letter of the last line. Looking now at the sonnet text, the letters near the F in line 1 do not seem very promising, but the square of letters formed by the first three letters of lines 10, 11 and 12 contain letters which can spell FRA TUDOR, with a shared R, and the numbers 10, 11 and 12 add to 33 which is the count of BACON.



If we now look at the square of nine letters above our first square, it will be seen, with the A in line 10, it contains letters which can spell THE AUTHOR. By completing the symmetry of each square and add the I in line 8 and the S in line 11, we now have a symmetrical group of letters on lines 7-12 which can spell THE AUTHOR IS FRA TUDOR. These lines add to 57 the count of FRA BACON, while their initial letters add to 79 the count of AUTHOR.

According to Alfred Dodd, the letters T.T. which scholars have taken to refer to Thomas Thorpe who entered this book at the Stationers Register in 1609, “are the symbols for the two pillars of Masonry, and they predicate an invisible T. Conjoined, this gives the correct numerical Rosicrosse count of FRA BACON (3 x 19 = 57).

This admission of authorship is confirmed by the reference to Mr W.H. who is clearly the author of “these insuing sonnets” – a begetter in those days could only mean a creator or father – who must also be “our ever living poet”. There have been numberless guesses as to who -. was Mr W. H., but it has been found that, in simple cipher, MR = 29, W.H. = 29 and HANG = 29, HOG = 29 and, as we all know “Hang Hog is latten for Bacon” (*Merry Wives* IV 1.) It is suggested that “the well-wishing adventurer” in this dedication is he who adventures in deciphering the author’s name as well as the deeper philosophical messages intended for mankind. If my suggestion is correct, I am grateful for Francis’ good wishes and “that eternity” promised! It should also be added that the word TO which starts this dedication adds to 33 or BACON, and the word BEGETTER adds to 79 or AUTHOR, so that cryptically, the first two lines read ‘Bacon the onlie author of these insuing sonnets’. Now that we have confirmed that these sonnets were not published until after 1621, we can turn loathe the title page of their first edition.

The words SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS add to 221 which is the count of FR ST ALBAN (88) THINE AUTHOR (133).

These sonnets form only part of those examined for cipher. Others, which are of historical interest, concern the tragic execution of Robert Essex, which could have been stopped had the ring been delivered to the Queen, and what happened to Francis St Alban when his burial was reported in 1626. These have all been put on slides and are available for demonstration should anyone be interested.

[Ed: the author added the following text as a footnote: The words "never before Imprinted" add to 212 the count of W.S. (39) OUR (51) PAID (29) SERVANT (93) ]

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## Memories of Thomas Bokenham

The son of a doctor, “Bokey” as he was widely known, was the only boy of three children, and attended Epsom College as a boarder. He married Ruby (nee Yockney) in April, 1936, and they have two daughters, Antonia and Christine.

Bokey’s working life began on the London Stock Exchange, but he later went to work for the Bank of England, where he remained until his retirement, after 40 years of service. He spent the Second World War at the Bank, as despite his best efforts, and 5 medical boards, he was passed as unfit for active service.

A man of wide interests, he particularly enjoyed music and the theatre, his wife Ruby is a professional musician. It was the chance purchase of a book at a bookstall that initiated his life-long interest in Francis Bacon and the Shakespeare authorship question. He made the acquaintance of the Brameld family: the twins Elizabeth and Mary and their redoubtable mother, Hope, and over the years attended many meetings of the Francis Bacon Society in their gracious home in Nevern Square.

He also met Noel Fermor, a Solicitor in the City of London, who was on the Council of the FBS and in due course Bokey was invited to become a member of Council himself. In time he became Chairman, a role which he graced for many years, doing a great deal of research and also handling administrative matters and guiding the Society through smooth times and the occasional rough patch too. His research often appeared in the booklets or articles in *Baconiana* which was published yearly under his aegis. He discovered a code in the Shakespeare Sonnets and in the inscription on the Shakespeare memorial in Westminster Abbey.

He kept up an extensive correspondence with his fellow Baconians and enjoyed a lively relationship with Ewen McDuff, best known for his books *The Dancing Horse Will Tell You* and *The 67th Inquisition*.

It might be said that over the years he became somewhat obsessed with the Bacon/Shakespeare enigma, but in the nicest possible way.

He regularly visited the Bank of England Sports Club in Roehampton, and on one occasion during his later years had to be rescued by the life guard and taken to hospital – during which experience he remained his usual imperturbable self!

After Bokey retired he attended an informal get-together at the Bank and met his old boss, “Eddie” George, a former Governor of the Bank of England, and reminded him “you were my student”. This was taken in good part, as Bokey was one of the few people at the meeting whom he recognised.

Apart from his considerable personal qualities Bokey will be gratefully remembered by the Society as a dedicated researcher and Chairman, who worked tirelessly on behalf of the Society for many years.

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## Mary Fitton

by Francis Carr

### Note by 4in1.ws editor.

Illustrations here were lost and didn't even survive in the web archive. If you happen to have a copy of this issue with the pictures intact, please contact us via the email provided on the website.

There is a fair measure of agreement among commentators that Sonnets 127-152 form a group concerned mainly with the poet’s relations, real or imaginary, with a dark woman. (See *Shakespeare’s Sonnets* ed. W. G. Ingram and Theodore Redpath. Hodder, 1964) The most plausible suggestion as to the identity of the Dark Lady is Mary Fitton, the Maid of Honour who was Pembroke’s mistress. (*Shakespeare – The Sonnets*, Peter Jones. Macmillan, 1977)

*And Beautie slanderd with a bastard shame*

Sonnet 127

Why did the poet choose this particular adjective?

In 1601 Mary Fitton, a Maid of Honour at the Court of Queen Elizabeth, was slandered, having given birth to the son of the Earl of Pembroke. When one remembers the penalties that lay in store for anyone indulging in sexual conduct with one of the Queen's Maids of Honour – imprisonment and expulsion from the Court – concealment was a device of great value. Lines 7 and 8 of this sonnet apply literally to Mary's situation at this time:

Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,  
But is prophan'd, if not lives in disgrace.

Pembroke, after three months in the Fleet prison, returned to Wilton in Wiltshire; he never regained the Queen's favour and returned to Court only after her death.

Mary went to Arbury Hall in Warwickshire, where her sister lived. The theme of this sonnet is our changing attitude to dark colours: In the old age blacke was not counted faire Black can here be taken as referring to the colour of hair and eyes or to darkness of complexion. As can be seen in the two portraits of Mary Fitton at Arbury Hall, her hair was dark brown. Her eyes seem to be grey or hazel.

In the sonnet we read *My Mistersse eyes are Raven blacke*

It could be that the author chose that colour for a special reason. A raven's eye is brown, but, because of its black plumage, it often seems to be black. In Gawsworth Church, where her family are buried, the effigy of Mary shows her as having black hair. Three of the earlier sonnets, 40, 41 and 42, give details of the poet's love of the Dark Lady, and of her affection for the poet's friend. Sonnet 41 contains these lines:

Thy beautie, and thy yeares full well befits,  
For still temptation followes where thou art.  
Gentle thou art therefore to be wonne,  
Beautious thou art, therefore to be assailed.  
And when a woman woos, what woman's sonne  
Will sourely leave her till he have prevailed.

Mary Fitton's nickname at Court was Mal, and we find this name in the Shakespeare plays – on each occasion with significant associations. In *Twelfth Night*, a story adapted from the anonymously written Italian novella, *The Deceived*, published in 1537, Shakespeare added a new character, Malvolio. To anyone at Court when it was first performed at Whitehall on January 6th, 1600, and again at the Middle Temple on February 2nd, 1602, after Mary had led Court in disgrace, this name would suggest 'I desire local' in Italian.

In Act I, scene 3, Sir Toby Belch says:

*Wherefore are these things hid?*

*Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em?*

*Are the like to take dust, like MISTRESS MALL's picture.*

*Why dost thou not go to church in a galliard and come home in a coranto?*

*My very walk should be a jig. I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg,  
it was formed under the star of a galliard.*

We know that Mistress Litton was very fond of dancing.

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, which was re-written by the author in 1598, two years after Mary had come to Court, the sonnet-writing Biron speaks of melancholy. In the first edition of this play, this word is twice misspelt 'mallincholie':

*O, but her eye, – by this light, but for her eye, I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes.  
Well, I do nothing in the world but lie, and lie in my throat.*

*By heaven, I do love: and it hath taught me to rime, and to be Mallicholie;  
and here is part of my rime, and here my Mallicholie.  
Well, she hath one of my sonnets already: the clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it.*

The clown mentioned here could be a reference to Sir William Knollys, who was in love with Mary Fitton. In Hamlet, probably written in 1600, a Spanish word is suddenly introduced. which would be unknown to an English audience. This is immediately admitted by the author. as he then translates it: *Marry, this is miching Mallecho; it means mischief.* (Act III, ii) This is the only appearance of this word in English literature. Quite clearly the author of the Shakespeare plays knew about, and knew, Mary Fitton, and, naturally, mentioned her in his plays.

### **Mary and Helena: All's Well That Ends Well**

'All is well that ends well' – Francis Bacon, *Promus*, Folio 103, 1597.

Helena in *All's Well*, is a new character in English literature, unlike any other character created by earlier or contemporary authors. We can see aspects of her personality, this charming combination of reserve and passion, in *Romeo and Juliet*, and *As You Like It*. Juliet and Rosalind express their love of Romeo and Orlando with the same surprisingly explicit intensity that we find in Helen's pursuit of Bertram. These three plays were all written during, or soon after the time when Mary Fitton served as a Maid of Honour, impressing the Queen, the Earl of Pembroke, Sir William Knollys, Sir Richard Leveson and others with her beauty and erotic charm. When Helena first appears at the Court of the King of France, the elderly nobleman, Lafeu, twice mentions her sexual vitality. In Sonnet 127 and in *Love's Labour's Lost*, we saw how *if it* and *fit* appeared above the letters t o n. The word 'fit' is repeated over and over again in the very next scene of *All's Well That Ends Well* ( Act II. Sc. ii):

Clown: I have an answer will serve all men.  
Countess: Marry, that's a bountiful answer that fits all questions.  
Clown: It is like a barber's chair that fits all buttocks.  
Countess: Will your answer serve fit to all questions?  
Clown: As *fit* as *ten* groats is for the hand of an attorney.  
Countess: Have you, I say, an answer of such fitness for all questions?  
Clown: From below your duke to beneath your constable, it will fit any question.  
Countess: It must be an answer of most monstrous size that must fit all demands.

This absurd exchange seems to have been written with one object only – to alert the reader or the audience that a certain surname is being mentioned. If that is not the message, the whole scene is pointless. There is no evidence that this play was ever performed, in public or at Court, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth or King James. It came before the public for the first time when the *First Folio* of the Shakespeare plays was published in 1623, and there is no record of a public performance until 1741. A reason for there being no public performance of the play during the author's lifetime could be his personal involvement with the man and young woman whose love affair is portrayed in the drama. It does not require much imagination to appreciate what a young woman without wealth or much social standing, like Mary Fitton, must have felt as a Maid of Honour, at the very centre of Elizabeth's brilliant Court, surrounded by the richest and noblest men of the land. It was a position no young woman can be in now. since we no longer have Maids of Honour, a privileged rank which was terminated in the reign of George V. It was indeed life at the top, lived in the golden age of Court entertainment, with lavish banquets, frequent balls, great tragedies, elegant and sometimes bawdy comedies, exciting jousts, grand progresses around the country, and opportunities in plenty for clandestine affairs. Helena, in *All's Well That Ends Well*, speaks for all those who have found themselves at a disadvantage because of their social position, wishing that they were able to add nobility and wealth to their physical attributes. If Mary Fitton's parents had been rich, she would have become the Countess of Pembroke, the wife of one of the "incomparable Pair of Brethren", to whom the Shakespeare *First Folio* was dedicated. Like Helena, she must have wished that the cards dealt to her at birth had been stronger:

*Helena* 'Tis pity  
That wishing well had not a body in't  
Which might be felt, that we, the poorer born,  
Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes,  
Might with effects of them follow our friends,



And show what we alone must think, which never  
Returns us thanks . . .  
Monsieur Parolles, you were born under a charitable star.

*Parolles:* I will return perfect Courtier . . . Get thee a good husband, and use him as he uses thee.

*Helena:* What power is it which mounts my love so high,  
That makes me see, and cannot feed mine eye?  
. . . Who ever strove  
To show her merit that did miss her lover?



In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Helena secretly leaves the French Court and, wearing a pilgrim's cloak, makes her way to Florence, where Bertram is living. Mary Fitton took the same steps to leave Whitehall *incognito* with her skirt pulled up and clad in a white cloak, to visit William Herbert. Arriving in Florence Helena asks an old woman where she might stay the night. "At the Saint Francis here beside the port" is the reply. Where Mary Fitton went to meet Herbert clandestinely is not known, but it so happens that Francis Bacon lived near Whitehall, at York House in the Strand. In German, Dutch and Danish, *Strand* means the sea shore. Commentators explain the use of the word 'port' in the old woman's reply by giving the alternative meaning of this word, a city gate. This could be the correct interpretation, but it is not the usual meaning of this word. When the old woman advises Helena to stay at 'the Saint Francis', she asks "is this the way". The old woman's reply is "Ay, marry, is't". This word was pronounced 'Mary', as it is an abbreviation of 'by St. Mary'. In *All's Well* one of the Dumaines asks Parolles for "a copy of the sonnet you writ to Diana" on behalf of Bertram. This is, in fact, what Francis Bacon did, writing placatory letters to the Queen on behalf of Essex, making them look as if they were written by Essex himself. Towards the end of the play, Lafeu sums up the tragedy of Bertram's treatment of Helena in words that apply exactly to Herbert's refusal to marry Mistress Fitton.

. . . *the young lord*  
*Did to his majesty, his mother and his lady*  
*Offence of mighty note, but to himself*  
*The greatest wrong of all. He lost a wife*  
*Whose beauty did astonish the survey*

*Of richest eyes; whose words all ears took captive;  
Whose dear perfection hearts that scorn'd to serve  
Humbly call'd mistress.*

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## **Thoughts on Logos**

Rod Tresseder

*Editor's Note: Over the last few years, Rod Tresseder has shared his philosophical and spiritual reflections with the Bacon Society, as well as a number of his poems.*

*One way of seeing Francis Bacon's scientific method is as an approach from earthly forms to their original nature in the Divine Mind, and ultimately to their unified source in the Logos, "By Whom all things were made" as St. John's Gospel says. The human mind is not merely scientific and analytical: it is also religious and artistically experiential. Francis Bacon was no fan of syncretism, but he was in favour of humanity developing all his faculties – reason, imagination and will – to grasp the Truth of the Logos. That is why he praised Hermes as a Trismegistus – one who had the virtues of King, Priest and Philosopher in one.*

*So, we would like to offer these extracts from a recent communication of Rod's to spark the reader's interest in following a Baconian approach in a far broader sense than is commonly thought, but an entirely valid one. Bacon commented in *The Advancement of Learning* that his method should be applied to the whole 3-fold universe, of spirit, humanity and nature, even though he only demonstrated it explicitly for natural science. Rod Tresseder's remarks show that the search for Truth can start from a person's biography, and is not limited to laboratory tests on inorganic matter.*

...I did some original work in child education using music and meditation to contact the inner being of the child for creative and spiritual purposes, which I conceptualised overall as 'education through SOUND and SYMBOL'; which I summarised in 3 articles.

My next great breakthrough came 10 years ago when I decided to systematically explore the LOGOS teaching of John, which I can honestly say has completely transformed my life and led me (to my surprise and delight) to the centrally important area of SACRED GEOMETRY. I have kept a complete record of this work which to date runs to 42 A5 notebooks and several million words. It comprises notes, essays, teaching stories, prayers, humour, poetry (mostly mystical / esoteric but also including haiku: I am a published haiku writer), explorations in symbolism, particularly in Christian decorative art, photographs which attempt to explore the 'underlying reality' of the natural world, geometrical designs which explore symbolic expression, mystical experiences, particularly in dreams and psychic experiences, and an exploration of synchronic patterns – and that list is by no means exhaustive.

...As someone with a long history of mystical experience I feel most comfortable with saying that I am a GNOSTIC CHRISTIAN.

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## **The Six Days of Creation and Bacon's Great Instauration**

Sacred Creativity and the Six Days Work in Bacon

By James North

## **The Great Instauration and the Book of Genesis**

Francis Bacon modelled his life's work, *The Great Instauration*, on the Bible.

The 6 Parts of the Instauration are structured exactly on the pattern of the 6 Days of Creation described in the Book of Genesis. This 6-fold norm is central to other parts of Bacon's philosophy.

In this short article, I demonstrate just two small gateways to Bacon's use of symbolism within his scientific writings: the Biblical pattern of the *Instauration*, and the metaphysical key to that mysterious work the *Abececlarium*. Readers will be able to build on this clue, and see that Bacon's work as a whole is a key to the mystery of the true relationship between science and religion. It starts by embracing both bodies of Truth as they are initially found, without pseudo-science or pseudo-religion. It establishes these as solid 'pillars'. And it culminates by sailing between them, as if they were the two Pillars of Hercules, to the great Hermetic ocean of truths which link God, Man and Nature.

In common with the alchemists, Bacon took the view that humans, who are made in the image and likeness of God, should model their creative work on God's Work, which was perfect. Bacon's many critics of "the alchemists" are the critics of one who shares their ideal and is dismayed at their insufficient approach to the most vital of all questions. 6 phases of work, and a 7<sup>th</sup> of rest and transcendence, is the pattern for anything that needs to evolve in time. According to the hermetic philosophy, this is shown by the fact that there are 7 planets (i.e moving bodies) in the heavens: all things that have a life in time are patterned in 7, as in Shakespeare's famous '7 Ages of Man'.

### **The Spiritual Archetype of Creative Work**

This attitude is reflected in the Masonic title for God: The Great Architect of The Universe. Creation is a holy mystery. Meditation on the idea that God breathed his Spirit into Adam on the 6<sup>th</sup> Day of Creation in conjunction with the idea that God is the Great Architect sheds a remarkable light on the Christian teaching that Jesus was the World Made Flesh, although Adam was already a Son of God.

Plato said that the world-soul has two bands that cross each other in the form of Chi, the greek letter written X. (in the *Timaeus*). In Christian and Platonic mysticism this was developed into the idea that could be expressed by saying "the world-soul was crucified on the world-body" – which opens a deep cosmological insight into the story of Christ's life. From an esoteric point of view there is a cosmic irony in the fact that Jesus was a carpenter and the son of the carpenter. The Carpenter crucified on the planks of the world He built; God buried and resurrected from the world which is His Womb, and Tomb and Temple.

As Plato said the 'soma' is a 'sema', the body a Temple, or Tomb. Spirit is shown, but also killed by form, and destruction of the form means release of the spirit. It seems that, in some mysterious way, our death is the key to immortality, and the Great Work involves preparing our Temple or Tomb.

Bacon's idea of creativity and work was deeply modelled on veneration for God and appreciated of Man's divine essence. It is this work that gives Man the right to aspire to knowledge of life's deeper mysteries – the hidden spirits of nature and the Angelic forces through which God works.

This 6, or 7-fold pattern underlying creation is the reason that Jesus, as the Word made Flesh, is shown as performing 7 miracles and delivering 7 I AM sayings in the Gospel of St. John, that most Platonic and Hermetic of Christian texts

In this short article, it is not possible to explain how Bacon saw religion, philosophy and natural science as a whole, how he knew they had to be provisionally separated but hoped they would not go to war with each other, how the modern world developed contrary to Bacon's expectations. This will form the subject of a future article.

Bacon was deeply religious, committed to natural science and he saw imagination as the connecting link between reason and The Bible, nature and knowledge into the true method of human discovery. He understood that the three realms of the Divine, Man and Nature reflect the threefold Divine Attributes of God found throughout manifestation. He was thus, it might be said, a follow of the 'thrice great Hermes', a Trismegistus.

The beautiful words which Bacon wrote at the beginning of *The Advancement of Learning* in praise of King James are equally true of Bacon's vision of Solomon or Moses, and of his hopes for the future of civilisation.

*“there is met in Your Majesty a rare conjunction as well of divine and sacred literature as of profane and human, so as Your Majesty standeth invested of that triplicity which in great veneration was ascribed to the ancient Hermes : the power and fortune of a king, the knowledge and illumination of a priest, and the learning and universality of a philosopher”*

### ***The College of the 6 Days Works***

Bacon's posthumously published *New Atlantis*, sometimes described as the world's first work of science fiction, describes a crew of seafarers shipwrecked by a Tempest. They find themselves on a mysterious island, where they are met by a guide who speaks to them of the history, customs and the scientific wonders of the island on which they have found themselves, which is called Bensalem. It is obvious that this name is connected with Solomon, the Jewish King famous for his wisdom. This is underlined by the words said the guide

*“I find in ancient records this Order or Society is sometimes called Salomon's House, and sometimes the College of the Six Days Works; whereby I am satisfied that our excellent king had learned from the Hebrews that God had created the world and all that therein is within six days”*

Of course, the 7<sup>th</sup> day (Sabbath) was that on which God rested and blessed the world, and thus became the day of religion, the day of rest on which work ceases and blessing is given and received. The traditional Sabbath, of course, was Saturday, or Saturn's day, which is part of the reason which Bacon said to James

*“But this is that which will dignify and exalt knowledge: if contemplation and action be more nearly and straitly conjoined and united together than they have been: a conjunction like unto that of the highest planets, Saturn, the planet of rest and contemplation, and Jupiter, the planet of civil society and action”.*

As well as being famous for his wisdom, Solomon was both devout and godly. The College of the Six Days Works refers to science, and Bacon thought that just as God had worked to make the world, we must work to understand and govern it. Bacon underlines his view of the 6 Days as the realm of science by the name Salomon's House. Solomon built his House at the same time as his Temple, religion and science coexisting: the Bible indicates that there was something almost blasphemous in the comparison between the Temple and the House (ref). Nonetheless Bacon was at pains, throughout his writings, to emphasise that morality and worship and compassion to humanity were the ultimate aims of science.

The above should make it obvious that the 6 Days Works apply to Solomon's House and the (implicit) 7<sup>th</sup> Day to Solomon's Temple. They constitute the ultimate image of Bacon's ideal relationship between religion and science.

### ***The 6 Parts of the Great Instauration***

Bacon designed a plan for the development of science, which he knew would span generations of effort. He divided it into 6 parts. In case there was any doubt that the number 6 was a coincidence, Bacon makes the link explicit by finishing his text with the following prayer:

*“Therefore do thou, O Father, who gavest the visible light as the first fruits of creation, and didst breathe into the face of man the intellectual light as the crown and consummation thereof, guard and protect this work, which coming from thy goodness returneth to thy glory. Thou when thou turnedst to look upon the works which thy hands had made, sawest that all was very good, and didst rest from thy labors. But man, when he turned to look upon the work which his hands had made, saw that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and could find no rest therein. Wherefore if we labor in thy works with the sweat of our brows, thou wilt make us partakers of thy vision and thy sabbath. Humbly we pray that this mind may be steadfast in us, and that through these our hands, and the hands of others to whom thou shall give the same spirit, thou wilt vouchsafe to endow the human family with new mercies”*

[It should be noted that the phrase "intellectual light" does not just mean ordinary reason: in this context it refers to a spiritual gift of Intellect which is Angelic, as proved by the fact that it was breathed into Man.]

It goes very much against the grain of modern thought to consider that Bacon might have designed these 6 Parts explicitly on the 6 Days of Creation. Yet it is so. Let us compare these accounts:

### **The Plan of the Work**

It consists of Six Parts

First: The Divisions of the Sciences.

Second: The New Organon, or Directions for the Interpretation of Nature.

Third: The Phenomena of the Universe, or a Natural and Experimental History for the Foundation of Philosophy.

Fourth: The Ladder of the Understanding.

Fifth: The Forerunners, or Anticipations of Second Philosophy

Sixth: Second Philosophy, or Active Science.[Source: Preface to The Great Instauration]

### **The 6 Days of Creation**

Let us summarise the creation account found in Genesis, looking at it structurally without any fundamentalist reading. (We will see that there is no traditional basis for deriving pseudo-science from this inspired teaching).

Day 1: Heaven and Earth: earth was without form and void; light; day and night

Day 2: creation of firmament – heaven. And division of waters into above and below

Day 3: separation into dry earth and seas, and creation of trees and other organic life

Day 4: creation of sun, moon and stars

Day 5: sea creatures and birds

Day 6: other animals and Man in God’s image and likeness

Genesis Account	The Parts of Bacon’s Instauration
Creation of Heaven and Earth; Light; First Division into Day and Night	The Divisions of the Sciences.
Creation of firmament of heaven, dividing waters above and below; [only day not described as ‘good’ by deity	The New Organon, or Directions for the Interpretation of Nature.
Separation into dry earth and seas; creation of trees and other organic life	The Phenomena of the Universe, or a Natural and Experimental History for the Foundation of Philosophy.
Creation of sun, moon and stars	The Ladder of the Understanding.
Creation of sea creatures and birds	The Forerunners, or Anticipations of Second Philosophy
Creation of higher animals, and Man in God’s image and likeness	Second Philosophy, or Active Science.

Some of the correspondences are entirely obvious, such as the relationship between forerunners or anticipations of Part 5 with the true philosophy of Part 6, and the lower animals as forerunners of the others, especially Man who was to become a ‘living soul’ through God’s spirit breathing into him. (Bacon commented that animal instinct often discovered things before reason – it is thus a forerunner). Also the sun, moon and stars were traditionally seen as linked by an intellectual ladder, sometimes called Jacob’s Ladder as in the Kabbalah. What is remarkable is that familiarity with Bacon’s writings shows that throughout his life, he persistently symbolised seemingly ordinary things with reference to their divine archetypes, e.g. in water and light. As well as study, these correspondences need

meditation. I include a brief, selective comparison of the two accounts, which should serve as a few pointer to those who want to research this in greater depth...

Part 1 was largely fulfilled by *The Advancement of Learning*, (1605) later expanded and Latinised as *De Augmentis Scientiarum*. (1621) In this work, Bacon frequently speaks of the Intellectual Globe, and uses the imagery of its discovered and undiscovered sides. This is analogous to the Day and Night that arose from God's creation of Light from the prior darkness. Bacon casts light on the previous chaos of existing knowledge, and indicates the regions where darkness still reigns.

Part 2 was Bacon's *Novum Organum*, his new logic of discovery. The principles of logic arrive before the work of compiling the natural history, and have a strongly negative, discerning quality. Much of the tone of *Novum Organum* is critical of the human mind, pointing out the difference between the idols of the human mind and the Ideas of the Divine Mind. (Bacon always believed in these Divine Ideas; he simply didn't believe that the abstract philosophies of Platonism or Aristotelianism could reach them). This seems to be related to the separation of the waters into those above and below the firmament. The relationship between Day 2 and Part 2 is underlined by Bacon's frequent symbolism of the content of knowledge by water, and the faculty of knowledge by light. These were the only two substances in existence on Day 2.

Part 3 involved the whole programme of experimental science. Bacon had a broader view of the task of experimental science than anyone before him. Experience was the basis of his pyramid of knowledge, and he wanted this experience to be as rich as possible. He certainly had something of the passion attributed to Solomon in his breadth of interest in nature, and frequently complains that he has an insufficient experimental basis for a truly sound science.

Day 3 is the day when the variety of nature first came forth in teeming life. The correspondence with Bacon's Part 3 is particularly clear. It is the day when dry land and seas arise, and life and reproduction begins. Just as it is the first day of form rather than formless pre-existence, it is the first part of Bacon's instauration where the method is beginning to take shape.

Part 4 is called the Ladder of the Understanding. This has often confused Bacon's commentators, but the Biblical parallel makes the intention clear. Bacon gives a particular hint when he states that Part 4 is really just an elaboration of Part 2. It has been noted that Day 2 was unique in that God didn't say it was good on beholding it: this may be interpreted as being because it wasn't complete. The division into above and below and the creation of the firmament were not in themselves beautiful facts. Day 4 continued the work of distinguishing and beautifying 'above' and 'below' by creating sun, moon and stars, that is, by shaping the light as before the earth and seas had been shaped.

The celestial bodies' movements reveal heaven's order to humans. They also seem to show a ladder to heaven: many pictures show Jacob's Ladder linking earth to the moon and higher bodies. Rather than distinction, the 4<sup>th</sup> Day also gives connection. Bacon said that models were essential teaching aids, and that the whole 4<sup>th</sup> Part was such a model. His *Abecedarium* belongs to this Part and holds many clues for the path from Physics to Metaphysics. As we will see later, the number 4 also relates to the distinction between the durable and transitory traditionally symbolised by sun and moon.

Part 5 contained Bacon's anticipations. He had high hopes for his inductive method, but didn't regard his provisional findings as worthy of being called true science. He also allowed himself to use methods of speculation and other normal methods of thought which couldn't provide truth by the severe criteria of his logic, but were worthwhile in themselves. His semi-Paracelsian cosmology should probably be classed in that category.

If the analogy holds up, this suggests that Bacon had a notably evolutionist view of the Book of Genesis, for it would imply that birds, fish and other sea creatures were valid but not quite adequate anticipations of the animals God would create on the 6<sup>th</sup> Day. The 6<sup>th</sup> Part is active science and Bacon makes the connection with Genesis glaringly obvious in a long discussion of mankind and true knowledge and power. The traditional view of Man is that He is the crown of creation, the only being with Spirit, the King on earth and God's representative. We share body and instincts with nature, but Mind with God and the Angels.

What is notable is that the contrast between the ordinary mind and Baconian logic is like the contrast between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> Day; in other words, we do not display a mind and knowledge worthy of man at all in our daily life. This underlines the reach of Bacon's method; it aims to give Man a knowledge equivalent to Angelic Intellect. This level of knowledge is inseparable from

knowledge of Divine Ideas and power over nature such as that possessed by Adam who named all that was created. To name is to have power over a being's essence, to be a co-creator with God.

## **Bacon's metaphysics and hermeticism**

### ***The Inquisitions***

1679 saw the publication of an intriguing edition of some of Bacon's previously unpublished works, called *Baconiana*. It contained what was apparently a fragment of a longer work called *Abecedarium Novum Naturae*, describing a series of Inquisitions – scientific inquiries. The excerpt runs from the 67<sup>th</sup> to the 78<sup>th</sup> inquisitions. The *Abecedarium* is central to an article that will be published in a future issue. For the present context, the relevant point is that it relies on a labelling system using the Greek alphabet of 24 letters. Thus the first Inquisition would be Alpha, the second Beta, the 24<sup>th</sup> Omega, the 25<sup>th</sup> Double Alpha, the 49<sup>th</sup> Triple Alpha and 73<sup>rd</sup> Quadruple Alpha, the beginning of the the fourth run of the alphabet.

The 6 metaphysical questions are

73<sup>rd</sup> Inquisition: On Being and Not Being

74<sup>th</sup> Inquisition: On the Possible and the Impossible

75<sup>th</sup> Inquisition: On Much and Little

76<sup>th</sup> Inquisition: On the Durable and the Transitory

77<sup>th</sup> Inquisition: On the natural and the monstrous

78<sup>th</sup> Inquisition: On the natural and the artificial

Having studied the correlations between the 6 parts of the Instauration and the 6 Days of Genesis, the connections between both of these and the 6 metaphysical inquisitions listed here are even more obvious.

Day 1 was the day when Being itself arose, before which nothing was. I have noted before that it helps to translate Bacon's philosophical language into vivid and imagistic terms. An "Inquisition into being and not-being" cannot be translated better than by Hamlet's lines "To be or not to be, that is the question". I have no doubt whatsoever that when Shakespeare had Hamlet say these lines, the seriousness of Hamlet's existential plight coexisted in the Author's minds with the awful darkness that was upon the face of the deep and with the magnitude of the very fact of creation. Hamlet's question echoes the seriousness of God's decision to create the universe, with all the attendant risks and vicissitudes, (including the possibility of Christ's crucifixion).

Day 2 divides the possible from the impossible. This is the aim of Bacon's logic. It also has the original resonance that what is possible for God is not possible for Man, a difference between that which is above and that which is below the firmament of heaven.

Day 3 is the day of the variety of creation and the day when it became possible to distinguish between the many varieties of plants, those substances which were abundant and those which were not. Bacon also divides bodies into the Greater Congregations, meaning those simple bodies like earth, water, air and fire, which can exist in great abundance and collected together, and the Lesser Congregations, or species generally studied. **Bacon was deeply fascinated by the fact that some things are abundant and some scarce.** We start to see that the author of the Shakespeare plays was also interested in these binaries and contracts, which are often ironic - *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Day 4 perfectly illustrates the connection between the creation of the sun, moon and stars, and the ladder of understanding. The celestial bodies have long been the emblem of all that is durable, while all earthly things are perishable and changeable. But they form a 'ladder': the moon which is nearest to earth, waxes and wanes, is connected with the tides, and represents the transitory part of the heavens. Solomon said that there is nothing new under the sun, but that it is all vanity, a theme Bacon never ceased to develop throughout his literary career. All beneath the sun is perishable, all above it immortal, especially in the realm of the stars. Venus, the planet of love, is below the sun, the realm in which Love's Labor's Lost, and all shall 'dissolve' as the final speech of the Tempest describes, being 'such stuff as dreams are made of'. (Dreams are ruled by the moon).

We start to understand that, just as Gold was associated with the sun, as being the most durable metal, Bacon's metaphysics aimed to reveal the truly powerful changeless laws that would give a kingly dominion to mankind, coming from the changeless spiritual

realm. Bacon's method aimed to fulfil the hopes of alchemy and metaphysics.

Day 5 was that of anticipations – but in some respects these could be seen as abortions. Bacon speaks of natural and monstrous, and this is the Day of sea-monsters. The archetypal monster of the Old Testament is Leviathan, the name of a famous book by Bacon's once personal secretary Thomas Hobbes. It is the day of animals that cause man fear because they are not mammals, or domestic.

Day 6 is of course the day of Man's creation. Man is 'homo faber', distinct from the rest of the animal kingdom as is obvious through his ability to alter nature through artifice, from the flint, to the Temple to the Space Rocket.

**Symbolism or Superstition** It is not safe to assume that Bacon was a devotee of numerology or superstitious search for patterns, in general. He thought that when humans do science, they have to work upwards from facts to laws, without anticipation. But the Bible, as the Word of God, does include clues, symbols that can inspire research. The Mosaic account of creation is one, but Bacon had noticed the use of certain number and letter symbols throughout the Old Testament and in the New Testament concentrated in the Gospel of St. John.

### ***Conclusion, and a Note on Days and Gods***

Much of the misguided hunt of Baconians for crude ciphers has touched on the fringe of the mystery that Bacon was deeply aware of the ancient science of gematria and, it seems, of its probable original links with ancient science and sacred geometry. This wisdom was particularly that of Egyptians and Chaldeans, so although we have inherited a pagan connection of the gods to the days of the week, it is not sound to use this as proof in the present context. Bacon's bedrock is the Mosaic account, which is more primal, more archetypal than the planetary gods. But it is possible that Bacon would have been interested in a second, provisional rhythm produced by the days of the week as gods...

Our word Day comes from the same root as deity, that is God. The Indo-European root *de* or *div* is connected to the word for light from which Zeus, Deus, Dyaus, Deva. In other words a day is really a god or a light or in a way a division. This is the deeper reason that our days of the week are named after Gods, whether the Roman gods or their Saxon equivalents. Much confusion about whether the Genesis account is meant to be taken literally could be avoided if it were remembered that what is being talked about is 6 acts of God. It should also be noted that the word often translated as God is Elohim, a plural word (Gods).

The Sabbath is of course Saturday in the old system, whether Jewish or classical so correlating the gods to Moses' creation account would give

Day 1. Sunday: Creation of Light (essence of the sun)

Day 2. Monday: separation of waters (the moon is associated with water and tides, thus separation as in waxing and waning)

Day 3. Tuesday: beginnings of life (mars is associated with generation and activity, which came forth on this day)

Day 4. Wednesday: sun, moon, stars, reckoning (a powerful correlation: mercury- hermes is the god of astrology, of correspondences analogies and 'ladders')

Day 5. Thursday: sea creatures and birds (less obvious, but Jupiter transformed himself into animal forms in classical mythology)

Day 6. Friday: other animals and man (Man symbolised by love and separation into 'male and female')

It may turn out that the day of the week – pagan god correspondence was also used by Bacon. But I have found no direct evidence of it in Bacon's writings, and various other confirmations of the Biblical approach followed here. Accordingly, this approach must be regarded as more speculative than the above. Contrary to the normal hermetic-occult principle of deriving 7-foldness from astrological theory, the key to number is in Moses' creation account. Bacon's philosophical is truly 'Mosaical' and his Hermeticism must have seemed to him the true, original, Ancient Wisdom encoded still in the Bible, in Temples and in Nature for those with the keys to the Mysteries.

J. North 2009