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Editorial

Firstly, the editor would like to apologise to readers for the late appearance of the 2010 issue of *Baconiana Online*. Due to the large number of interesting articles with interlinked themes which were submitted, it seemed best to produce two themed issues this year. 2011 is in fact an important year to Baconians for two reasons. The 22nd of January represented the 450th anniversary of his birth: (to be strictly accurate, since Bacon was born before the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar, his birthday should be celebrated on the 1st of February, but Baconians like to follow the traditional style). To coincide with this anniversary, **Polair Publishing** have just issued *The View Beyond*. This is perhaps the most significant contribution to Baconian studies for many years, containing articles that range from the academic to the deeply esoteric treating a wide variety of themes relating to Bacon and his work. Polair owes its origins to the White Eagle work, and was also responsible for publication edition of Peter Dawkins' book *The Shakespeare Enigma*(2004). The book was launched with a conference at White Eagle Lodge on 22nd January. A review of this conference, which was a great success attracting high-profile speakers, will appear in the next edition of *Baconiana*.

Even more important to our wider culture is that 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible, or Authorised Version. It is widely acknowledged that the KJV (King James Version) is one of the highpoints in English literature; even agnostics or atheists like Richard Dawkins have gone on record to mark their admiration of the KJV. The KJV has also been important to Baconians, some of whom have even claimed that he had a hand in editing the translation. It must be said that there is absolutely no evidence that Bacon had anything to do with the KJV. But on the other hand, it is far from impossible. King James' motives were inevitably political – he wanted a Bible that upheld the Divine Right of Kings, enshrining his own authority and role in the established Church. Who better to evaluate the political and legal ramifications of Lancelot Andrewes' translation team than the realm's greatest civil servant, Francis Bacon, who had played a key role in navigating the Act of Union of England and Scotland in 1607.

As the editor has pointed out in previous articles, Britain was destined to offer its language and ethos to the world. Its best minds in the Elizabethan Age were spurred by this idea – John Dee is said to have invented the phrase ‘The British Empire’. However, true dominion is never achieved by force or imperialism – it is achieved through giving a unique gift to humanity. To put it in rather religious terms, Bacon and his contemporaries were aware of Britain’s spiritual mission. Modern readers may find the idea that a nation has a ‘spiritual mission’ to be superstitious or even Fascistic, yet when one considers the remarkable proportion of phrases that have made their way directly into the English language, which has become the most useful language at this point in the world’s history, it’s hard not to see that Shakespeare and the KJV are almost the sources of religious and artistic sentiment in the modern age.

If culture consists of religion, science and art, or what we collectively believe, know and feel, then it is important to consider that an unsuspected proportion of our global culture derives from three literary sources: the KJV, Shakespeare and the philosophical works of Francis Bacon. The more we study these sources of British and world literature, the more it becomes apparent that there is a unified mind and a unified intention between them. Here is where the Baconian theory sheds an important light on the sources of our modern world. Baconians have long believed that Francis Bacon was a leading light in an Elizabethan publication project of vast scope, sometimes called the Rosicrosse literary society.

Some Baconians believe in a group theory of Shakespearean authorship. In fact, the academic world is increasingly coming to recognise that ideas of the lone genius with ownership of text doesn’t really fit Elizabethan practice. But perhaps more important is to recognise that Bacon’s philosophy does indeed contain the clue in plain writing to the purposes presented in the symbolism of action in Shakespeare and in the spiritual hope of a holy, free and enlightened Christian symbolised by the publication KJV and almost realised in Prague at this time in history. From this perspective, it doesn’t really matter whether Shakespeare, Bacon or any other individual wrote particular works, interesting though such questions may be to historians.

This is all very well, the reader may say, but is it likely – it sounds like a ‘conspiracy theory’. Indeed it is: any study of Francis Bacon soon leads into conspiracy and mystery. History gives indications of Francis and Anthony Bacon’s involvement in the Elizabethan Secret Service and we know that Bacon kept a scriptorium of ‘good pens’ in his pay throughout his life. But the idea that literature itself, particularly the arts, could form part of a benign conspiracy, is still strange to many people. Yet it shouldn’t be: writing itself is a spiritually subversive activity, if only because a new book always tends to undermine or undercut the absolute authority of previous works, whether the Bible or secular authorities. The theme of this issue of *Baconiana* is conspiracy – the contributions cover various aspects of conspiratorial thinking relevant to the Baconianism.

As well as this issues' contributions, it should be mentioned that *The View Beyond* contains a number of articles that touch on the benign conspiracy central to Bacon's work. Our Chairman, Peter Welsford, contributed a piece developing his previous investigations of the Shugborough monument which may display unexpected links to the Rennes mystery. This is an abbreviated version of an article that appeared in full in the most recent issue of the RILKO journal, which Baconiana is delighted to recommend to its readers. The editor also contributed an article arguing that the creative tension between science and the ancient wisdom of hermeticism in Bacon's work involves him in the vast project by which masters of sacred science update its expressions in successive eras to drive the world's spiritual evolution.

Barry Clarke's article marks a new phase in the traditional area of ciphers. Literary artifice including acrostics and visual patterns, were common in Elizabethan verse, but often with the intention of being discovered with relative ease. Some Baconians have made implausible arguments for kinds of decryptions which, even if they were found and were not coincidental, would be too explicit, defeating any theory of concealment. Barry argues for one of the only plausible models for an encipherment, a brief code in a dedication which requires external evidence to allow evaluation of how persuasive it is. This evidence must come from scientific literary studies. This is clearly the right approach and the editor has followed it in his work evaluating the significance of certain repeating numerical symbols in Bacon's scientific writing. Once it's concluded they are plausibly beyond coincidence the question of their meaning, if any, must be pursued.

Francis Carr was a great Baconian. We are delighted to publish Nick Young's obituary of Francis, co-written with Francis son the well-known Druid and author Philip Carr-Gomm. A principled agnostic, Francis avoided the religious and occult speculations of many Baconians. Yet he too held to a 'conspiratorial' view of Bacon's work. Francis' last major Baconian work was *Who Wrote Don Quixote?* which argued that one of the main purposes of the conspiracy by which this work originally written into English, was translated into Spanish, was that it was meant to foster peaceful relations between England and Spain in the post-Armada period when the threat of Catholic conquest and retribution still hung over England. To dethrone the actor from Stratford may seem bad enough, but non Baconians can only gasp at the 'chutzpah' of claiming that Spain's great author was a mask for an English philosopher and politician. Yet the arguments in Francis' book remain and it must be said that while unpopular, they remain unanswered.

Whoever Shakespeare was, it should be abundantly evident, after Frances Yates' work, that he is steeped in the Rosicrucian milieu of an Elizabethan Age shaped by the Hermetic Philosophy. Petter Amundsen's article highlights a small fraction of the immense amount of research he has conducted into the specifically Rosicrucian symbolism which can be found in the *First Folio*. This is one of the most important angles to have emerged in recent Baconian investigation, possible in part due to tools

such as the Internet which have allowed a vast quantity of occult symbolism to become much more available. Petter's findings tally surprisingly closely with the editor's investigations of Bacon's philosophical and scientific works, which shows that, at the very least, Bacon and Shakespeare shared a mystical symbolical language and it was that of Rosicrucianism and/or Freemasonry. These symbols enable us to understand the deeper significance of these great authors; works, proving this to be a philosophical-spiritual conspiracy.

Petter's research has also touched significantly on Oak Island. As such it is a pleasure to feature a new article by a great Oak Island scholar, Mark Finnan. This summarizes a talk Mark gave to the Society in 2010. Oak Island is the centre of perhaps the world's longest ongoing treasure hunt. As such it has become a significant focus for conspiracy thinking, including theories involving pirates, the Knights Templar or even people from earth's ancient history. Mark's article avoids mystification and gives a beautiful account of Oak Island mystery as a physical representation of aspects of mystery wisdom, leaving the reader marvelling at the effort and ingenuity put into its engineering, which surely had an important and obscure purpose.

Many people, including Stratfordians, have been puzzled by the famously ugly portrait of Shakespeare contained in the *First Folio*. Among the more interesting examples of conspiratorial or cryptic communication suggested by Baconians was the theory, promoted by Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence, that the portrait was a deliberately grotesque conundrum full of visual clues, an impossible outfit for the true Shakespeare's mask. This argument, doubtless preposterous to conventional thought, is given a timely revival updated in Rollett's article 100 years after its first appearance, but updated in the light of more recent Shakespearean scholarship.

Frode Lersan's piece argues for the connection between Sonnett 115, King James' coronation and Bacon. One of the most important aspects of the Authorship Question is the way it has highlighted the presence of unsuspected historical echoes in the Plays. Some of the most important of touch on Francis Bacon's life and work very closely, such as the connections with the the Virginia Company and the founding of America in *The Tempest* or the direct evidence of comparison of the fall of Bacon and the fall of Wolsey in *Henry VIII*. Whoever wrote these and similar passages knew things only known to a select and secret band of men including Francis Bacon.

One of the few approaches in Baconian cryptography which was never refuted was the 'string cipher', as elucidated by Alfred Mudie and by William Stone Booth. Peter Welsford has made a special study of this method, and his article in *The View Beyond* as well as the connections between the work of the Baconian Walter Arensberg, Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and the Shugborough monument involve. Baconiana used to feature a Cryptographer's Corner; this short article is reprinted from Cryptographer's Corner in the Jan 1939 issue of Baconiana. The next issue of Baconiana Online,

which will appear in autumn 2011, will be devoted to ciphers and literary artifice, so readers who are interested in cipher are invited to submit their work as soon as possible.

One of the best known conspiracy theories of today is that popularised in the *Da Vinci Code*, namely that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and spawned a bloodline that persisted in France, and that the Christian doctrine of Jesus' divinity is a misunderstanding, this being part of the deeper background to the persecution of the Templars and Cathars and the later battle between the Church and those societies which knew the 'secret'. The book which inaugurated this field of enquiry, *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail* by Baigent, Lincoln and Leigh, laid the foundations for inordinate speculation around sacred geometry, landscape alignments, Christian heresies and Vatican cover-ups and so forth, and above all on the region of the Languedoc, the Cathars and the church at Rennes-le-Chateau where mysteries around a priest named Berenger Sauniere persisted.

Patrice Chaplin's book *City of Secrets* casts a remarkable light on these issues – in many respects where the other books create hypotheses, her gripping autobiographical account gives facts and convincing theses. These coincide with the view arrived at by various Baconians that the Kabbalah is central to understanding the work of the initiates in Bacon and Shakespeare's time. Chaplin's book is worth reading purely for the quality of its prose, but it raises as many questions as it answers for the deeper researcher and that is probably its value.

The editor has included some brief reflections on the philosophical and spiritual implications of concealment and conspiracy in an article called *Conspiracies: or, Of Buried Treasure*, which is a Baconian-Rosicrucian meditation on the relationship between spirit and form.

The Editor February 2011

Hidden Messages

Hidden Messages in the Dedications to the Shake-speare work

Barry R. Clarke

Introduction

It is my personal view that Francis Bacon originated all the Shake-speare work as the moral and political philosophy component of his Great Instauration project. Nevertheless, we should not be surprised to find the work of several hands in the plays. Once a work reached a theatre company the author would have lost control over it, some of the work would have been too short for the two hours expected by the theatre-goer, and so a working dramatist would have been employed to fill it out to the required running time.

I also think that Bacon had the wit to leave his signature in the Shake-speare works intended for posterity, namely, *Sonnets* (1609) and the *First Folio* (1623) and that the most appropriate place to put these would have been in the dedications prefacing them. I do not anticipate that he would have left ciphered messages in the main body of the *First Folio*, certainly not geometrical ones, as the demand for the special alignment of certain blocks of text would have produced an intolerable burden on the compositors who were already faced with the huge task of coordinating such a large work and delivering it to deadline. However, the dedications were single pages of text that were uncoordinated with other pages. Neither do I believe that there is any hidden wisdom in these messages, just a simple means of identifying their author.

Of course, no cipher can be used as evidence to prove Bacon's authorship of these plays. Demonstrating that a message was intentionally placed in a piece of text is exceedingly difficult and instead I believe that we should concentrate our efforts on showing Bacons' proximity to the conception of certain Shake-speare plays. Nevertheless, having written logic puzzles for *The Daily Telegraph* since 1989, conundrums are my pleasure, and so I present here for your entertainment three messages that I originated/discovered in the summer of 2004 from the dedications prefacing the *Sonnets* and the *First Folio*. Whether or not they were intentionally left there I leave to your own judgment.

Sonnets Dedication

The *Sonnets* dedication invites interpretation (Figure 1) and even Stratfordians have seen it as a puzzle. Most of the attention has been focused on the identity of Mr. W.H., however, it is my view that this is irrelevant and that the best method of attack is to look for a simple acrostic device. (Strictly speaking, if the last letters of words are used instead of the first, the device is called a 'telestich', although the general term 'acrostic' is still valid.) The first feature of this puzzle that merits attention is that the points between words resemble those of a Roman inscription. The original Latin alphabet had 21 letters as follows:

A B C D E F Z H I K L M N O P Q R S T V X

Around 250BC the Z was replaced with a G to leave:

A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P Q R S T V X

This would have been the 21-letter alphabet used by Julius Caesar (c.100–44BC) for his Caesar Cipher when he sent encoded messages to his battlefield generals. Suetonius, in his *Lives of the Caesars LVI* from the 2nd century AD, describes Julius Caesar's simple cipher:

There are also letters of his to Cicero, as well as to his intimates on private affairs, and in the latter, if he had anything confidential to say, he wrote it in cipher, that is, by so changing the order of the letters of the alphabet, that not a word could be made out. If anyone wishes to decipher these, and get at their meaning, he must substitute the fourth letter of the alphabet, namely D, for A, and so with the others.¹

In other words, the letters in the coded message are shifted +3 in the alphabet to obtain the real message.

Plutarch's *Life of Julius Caesar* supports the account given by Suetonius:

And it is thought that he was the first who contrived means for communicating with friends by cipher, when either press of business, or the large extent of the city, left him no time for a personal conference about matters that required dispatch.

It is possible that Bacon knew of this practice for in his *Character of Julius Caesar* he informs us that: *For his own person he had a due respect: as one that would sit in his tent during great battles and manage everything by messages.²*

After the invasion of Greece in the first century BC the letters Y and Z were added, and in Elizabethan times J, U, and W were introduced. The Tudors used I and J as well as U and V interchangeably, while W was interpreted as being two U or two V.

TO. THE. ONLIE. BEGETTER. OF.
THESE. INSVING. SONNETS.
Mr. W. H. ALL. HAPPINESSE.
AND. THAT. ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.

BY.

OVR. EVER-LIVING. POET.

WISHETH.

THE. WELL-WISHING.

ADVENTVRER. IN.

SETTING.

FORTH.

T. T.

Figure 1. Substitution cipher acrostic puzzle containing Bacon's name and his current business, T.T. dedication, Shake-speare's Sonnets (1609)

Penn Leary, a trial lawyer from Omaha, produced the name BACON in the Sonnets dedication from the following words:

OF. THESE. ENSUING. SONNETS. Mr.

If one selects the last letter of each word FEGSR and takes the word "FORTH" (fourth) in the dedication as a shift indicator then displacing each letter four places backwards reveals BACON.

Unfortunately, Leary could make no further progress with the puzzle and had overlooked the circumstance that the first part of the three-part solution already seemed to be in place.

We suggest here that the first part, which includes the first four words, are to be taken at face value. So the first two parts of the solution read:

TO THE ONLIE BEGETTER BACON ...

where “BEGETTER” means „originator“. For the third part of the solution, consistent with Leary’s method, we suggest taking the final letter of each of the remaining 23 entries but this time without applying a shift. Here, an entry consists of a letter or string of letters bounded at each end by points, noting that the hyphens in “EVER-LIVING” and “WELL-WISHING” resemble points. So, for example, the entries “EVER” and “LIVING” are considered to be separate and contribute R and G. Starting with “.W.”, this yields the letter string:

WHLEDYRRGTHELGRNGHTT

The printer was Thomas Thorpe and the last two T appear to represent his name but they are bounded by points so must contribute to the solution. We now partition this string as follows:

WHLE/DTED/YR/RG/THE/LGR/NGHTT

and take this as an invitation to insert vowels for sense. A fair attempt would be:

WHILE/DATED/YEAR/REG/THE/LEGER/NIGHTT

According to Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913), the now-obsolete “LEGER” (also „leiger“ or „lieger“) was “a minister or ambassador resident at a court or seat of government”. For example, in modern times, the US Leger to the UK would live in London where the government of the UK resides. The term appears in Shake-speare’s Measure for Measure:

Isa. ... Lord Angelo hauing affaires to heauen
Intends you for his swift Ambassador,
Where you shall be an everlasting Leiger;
(1604 Measure for Measure, 3.1)

as well as in Sir Francis Bacon’s letter to his friend Toby Matthew in the summer of 1609:

on the other side it is written to me from the leiger at Paris3

The term “ADVENTURER” in the *Sonnets* dedication refers to one who took on a shareholding risk and it appears in the Second Virginia Charter of 23 May 1609, a document that lists the shareholders and governing members of the new Virginia Colony:

Now, forasmuch as divers and sundry of our loving Subjects, as well Adventurers, as Planters, of the said first Colony, which have already engaged themselves in furthering the Business of the said Colony and Plantation ... whether they go in their Persons to be Planters there in the said Plantation, or whether they do not, but adventure their monies, goods, or Chattles ... and that they and their Successors shall be known, called, and incorporated by the Name of The Treasurer and Company of Adventurers and Planters of the City of London, for the first Colony in Virginia.

The book of Shake-speare’s *Sonnets* was recorded in the Stationers Register on 20 May 1609, thereby investing copyright with the stationer and declaring the intention to publish (and works were usually printed within a year of entry). These two events, the *Sonnets* registration and the publication of the Second Virginia Charter, occurred three days apart so the most significant adventuring at the time of registering the *Sonnets* was investment in the Virginia colony. Sir Francis Bacon, who was already advising King James on plantations in Virginia, was named on the charter as one of about 50 Council members charged with governing the colony (and as Solicitor General, he must have been a prime mover). The most interesting point, however, is that the government resided not in Virginia but in London:

Therefore we Do ORDAIN, establish and confirm, that there shall be perpetually one COUNCIL here resident, according to the Tenour of our former Letters-Patents; Which Council shall have a Seal for the better Government and Administration of the said Plantation, besides the legal Seal of the Company or Corporation, as in our former Letters-Patents is also expressed.

Since Sir Francis Bacon was an ambassador for the Virginia Colony and was resident in London, the seat of the Virginia government, this would have made him a Leger knight. So, taking “REG” to mean “REGISTERS”, the third part of our message becomes:

WHILE DATED YEAR REGISTERS THE LEGER KNIGHT

Our interpretation shall be that the year (1609) together with the date (20 May) of registration of the *Sonnets* virtually coincides with the occasion when the knight, Sir Francis Bacon, became a Leger. So we claim here that the complete message runs as follows:

TO THE ONLIE BEGETTER BACON WHILE DATED YEAR REGISTERS THE LEGER KNIGHT

First Folio I.M. Dedication

One of the dedications at the front of the First Folio “To the memorie of M. W. Shake-speare” (Figure 2) is signed I.M. which some commentators have speculated to be James Mabbe. The verse itself appears cryptic and is reminiscent of an observation by Bacon in his *Advancement of Learning*:

*As we see in Augustus Caesar, (who was rather diverse from his uncle, than inferior in virtue) how when he died, he desired his friends about him to give him a PLAUDITE, as if he were conscient to himself that he had played his part well upon the stage.*⁴

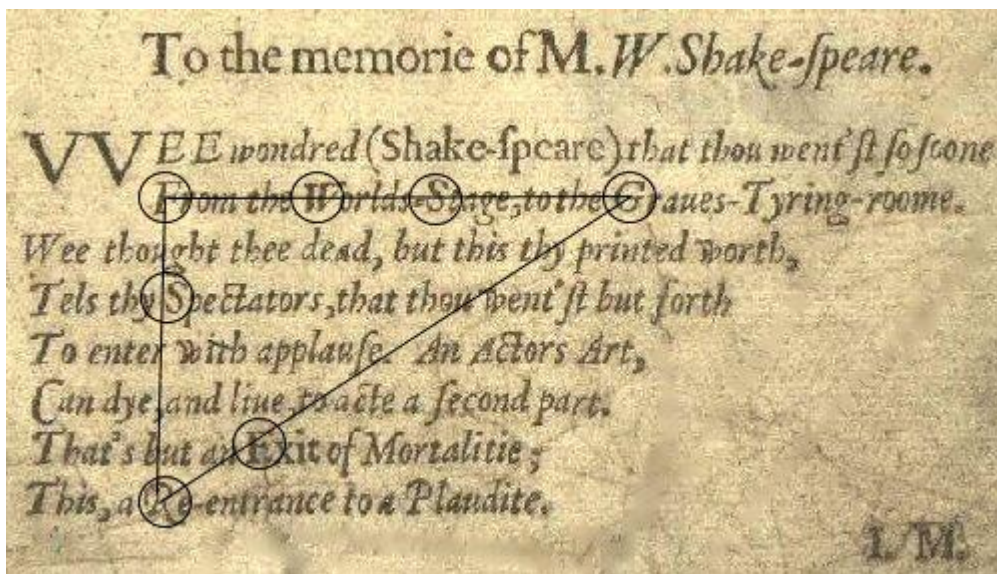


Figure 2. Geometrical substitution cipher puzzle “To the memorie of M. W. Shake-speare”, dedication by I.M., *Shakespeare’s Comedies, Histories & Tragedies* (1623)

The piece has two characteristics in common with the Sonnets dedication: it is signed by initials instead of a full name; and one line of the verse contains the indicator “forth”. Apart from the last, the lines decrease in length and if it is a puzzle then this almost suggests a geometrical solution. In fact, close inspection reveals that the capitals FWSG in the second line of the verse, S in the fourth line, E in the seventh line, and R in the bottom line can be connected by a triangle with the oblique line almost angled in sympathy with the right-hand side of the dedication. This creates the set WSFEGSR (the A in “An” in line 5, which is almost in line, anyway appears as a different font). The first two letters could be William Shake-speare while FEGSR make clear the reason for the „forth“ indicator because following the cipher shift of the Sonnets dedication, they are the letters that produce the name BACON. If one “wen”st but forth” in applying the cipher shift then it is BACON who will “enter with applause” and receive the “Plaudite”.

Jonson's First Dedication

Ben Jonson has two tributes in the First Folio, the second of which has already been discussed. His first tribute (Figure 3) sits on the left page opposite the grotesque image of Shakespeare. (Incidentally, it is customary for biographers of Shakespeare to use the so-called Chandos portrait for his image but there is actually no evidence that this is him).

As noticed by William Henry Smith in his book *Bacon and Shakespeare* (1857), the tribute shares an idea that also appears on a portrait miniature of Francis Bacon painted in Paris by Nicholas Hilliard, England's leading miniaturist, for his eighteenth birthday. The Latin inscription around the face reads *si tabula daretur digna animum mallem*, that is, "if the face as painted is deemed worthy, yet I prefer the mind."

The second observation is that it also shares a feature of the Sonnets and I.M. puzzles in that the signature at the foot of the piece appears in initials, in this case B.I. One might expect that the very first dedication would identify its author explicitly so the choice of initials is curious. These reasons raise the suspicion that we are dealing with a concealment cipher and the unwarranted punctuation after "Nature", "O", "brasse" and "All" hints at the use of punctuation indicators.

One example of this type of concealment dates from Cromwell's time, less than 20 years after the publication of the First Folio. Sir John Trevanion was imprisoned in Colchester Castle ready to meet his execution for extending his sympathy to the Royalists. Despite being under constant guard and his correspondence closely scrutinised, his friends still managed to get a message through to him. The message he received ran as follows:

Worthie Sir John:- Hope, that is ye beste comfort of ye afflicted, cannot much, I fear me, help you now. That I would saye to you, is this only: if ever I may be able to requite that I do owe you, stand upon asking me: „Tis not much I can do: but what I can do, bee you verie sure I wille. I knowe that, if dethe comes, if ordinary men fear it, it frights not you, accounting it for a high honour, to have such a rewarde of your loyalty. Pray yet that you may be spared this soe bitter, cup. I fear not that you will grudge any sufferings; onlie if bie submission you can turn them away, „tis the part of a wise man. Tell me, as if you can, to do for you anythinge that you can wolde have done. The general goes back on Wednesday. Restinge your servant to command. R.T.5

The message seems perfectly innocent until one takes the third character after each punctuation mark to reveal:

Panel at east end of chapel slides

That evening, while alone at prayer in the chapel, Sir John made his escape.

In *Elementary Cryptanalysis: A Study of Ciphers and Their Solutions* we learn that the use of punctuation marks to conceal a message is a known practice:

Significant letters may be concealed in an infinite variety of ways. The key, as here, may be their positions in words, or in the text as a whole. It may be their distance from one another, expressed in letters or in inches, or their distance to the left or right of certain other letters (indicators) or of punctuation marks (indicators); and this distance need not be constant or regular.⁶ Returning to the Shake-speare tribute, perhaps the “Figure” referred to is not the Shake-speare face on the opposite page but the comma that immediately follows the words “Figure” and “put”: This Figure, that thou here seest put, thereby drawing attention to the commas in the text.

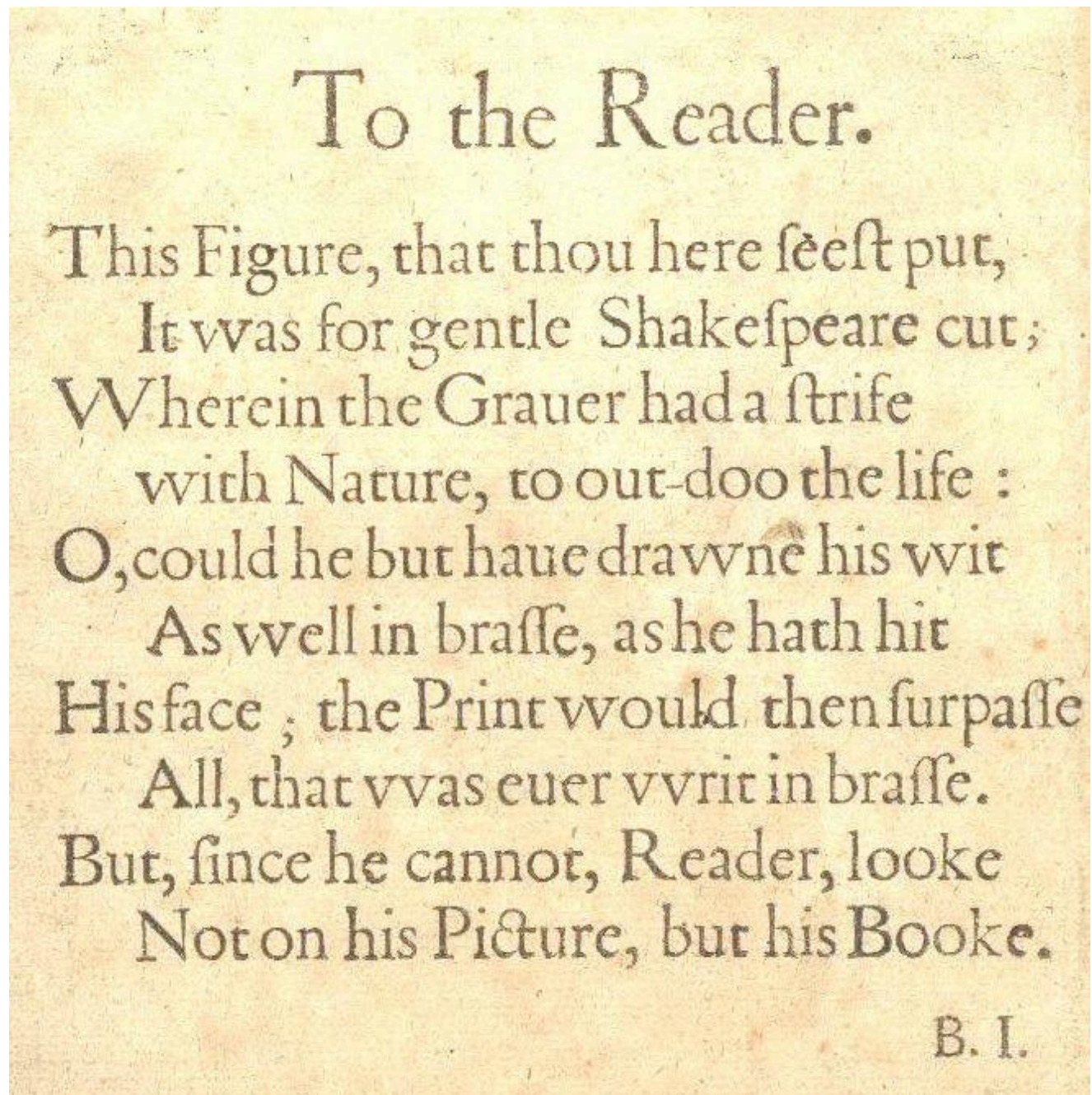


Figure 3. Punctuation puzzle containing Bacon's name, „To the Reader“, dedication by Ben

Jonson, *Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories & Tragedies* (1623)

If we now select the first letter of each word flagged by a comma, the following letters arise:

FpNObABcRP

which we rearrange as

FRbAcONpPB

to give FRbAcON [Francis Bacon] pP [per procurationem, by delegation to] B [Benjamin] This appears more credible considering it is Ben Jonson's tribute and the use of B to represent „Ben“ is justified given that his name appears as B.I. This would then suggest that Ben Jonson was employed by Sir Francis Bacon to oversee the production of the Shake-speare First Folio. Cockburn informs us that:

*3 May 1619, the Court of the Stationers Company had before it for consideration a letter of the Lord Chamberlaine, whereupon it was ordered that in future no plays belonging to the King's Men should be printed without their consent.*⁷

Since the King's men owned the rights to many of the Shake-speare plays, it is clear why Heminge and Condell had to be involved in the project and why Ben Jonson, who had worked with them, might have been chosen by Bacon as negotiator. Were these puzzles intentionally placed in the Shake-speare work? I think it is a question that can only be answered once their real author has been established by more scientific means.

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Obituary

FRANCIS EARDLEY CARR-GOMM 1924 – 2009

by Nick Young and Philip Carr-Gomm

Francis Carr was a remarkable man with a wonderful open-mind to the end of his life. He loved to question the accepted throughout his life. Recently he had decided on an improvement to Descartes' aphorism 'Cogito Ergo Sum'. He felt 'Disputio ergo sum' summed up human nature more effectively, and he meant this, not in a derogatory way. Instead he saw our ability to disagree with each other as an attribute of intelligence, and enjoyed nothing more than a good debate. To hold to one's views, to maintain one's own unique stance, even if it meant standing in opposition to prevailing opinion, was one of his strongest attributes.

He was born in Warwickshire in 1924. At the age of 18, as soon as he left school, he joined the army where he joined the 60th Rifles and became a lieutenant. At the age of twenty, he was sent to the front line in Italy in the autumn of 1944, after a training that was so basic it didn't include even the most rudimentary first aid, and he soon found himself having to give orders to men who knew more about fighting than he did. Although he was only in action for 8 months, his experiences there marked him for life.

The war over he tried to pick up the thread of his education. He enrolled at London University's School of Slavonic Studies to study Russian. This was a time when many left-wing intellectuals were

finding themselves attracted to communism, which Francis found infuriating. He knew about the atrocities of Stalin, and later wrote a book about the dictator's horrendous precursor, Ivan the Terrible. Unable to cope with the prevailing sympathies of his fellow students and professors, and having failed to get a job with the Intelligence services, he took on a job as private secretary to Lord Willoughby de Eresby, the MP for Rutland. In 1948 he met and married Jane, the love of his life.

Francis tried his hand in the world of publishing, and worked on the staff of a new magazine, *The Ambassador*, and then got a job copy-writing for the official publisher in England to the Holy See. From the world of Catholic publishing he moved on to working as a history teacher for Carlisle & Gregson, cramming students for university.

It was then that Francis decided to start his own magazine, which had a unique slant. It was a history magazine, but unlike its rival *History Today*, it included articles on the future too, and so was called *Past & Future*. It ran for seven years, during which time Francis got to know a wide range of scholars, eccentrics and artists. Although *Past & Future* was a professionally produced magazine, Francis ran it from the dining room table at home, cutting and pasting text together with prodigious quantities of cow-gum: a technique that he continued to use throughout his life, and which members of the Bacon Society experienced in his invaluable *Shakespeare Authorship* publications. In the late 1960's, he and Jane started 'Residence Recitals'. Their idea was to present recitals of music, poetry and the writings of famous people in the actual houses they had lived in. The idea was elegant and simple: research blue plaque houses, find those that had rooms large enough to welcome the public, and then if permission could be obtained to hold an event, create a programme that would showcase the work of its famous resident.

Over the years Francis created dozens of well-crafted recitals based on published writings and private letters that he would then give to often well-known actors to read. He became an impresario, directing famous names like John Gielgud, Michael MacLiammor, and Barbara Jefford. The Recitals successfully ran for 12 years.

All this while, when he was editing *Past & Future* or working with the recitals, Francis was also busy with his passion for solving the mystery of the authorship of the Shakespeare plays. He published articles in his magazine about it, founded The Shakespeare Authorship Information Centre, and for over thirty years, right up until he died, edited a digest of press comment about the question, that he entitled *The Stratford Tragi-Comedy*.

In 1969 he brought a private prosecution against the Shakespeare Trustees on the grounds that there was not evidence of Shakespeare's Birthplace being genuine. The Trustees never denied the charge but defended themselves with a 'plea of avoidance', and the case was dismissed. He favoured the theory

that Francis Bacon wrote the plays, and was a member of the Francis Bacon Society, travelling to their meetings right up until earlier this year. He also believed that Bacon wrote *Don Quixote*, normally attributed to Cervantes, and in 2004 his book *Who Wrote Don Quixote?* was published, that laid out his theory in detail.

One of Francis' greatest attributes was his active mind that constantly questioned received wisdom and enjoyed challenging the status quo. When he was 48 his first book was published: *European Erotic Art*. This was followed nine years later by his biography *Ivan the Terrible* and then his most successful book: *Mozart & Constanze*.

In the last six months of his life he wrote a play about Pushkin, who died in a duel defending his honour in St.Petersburg.

Ronald Hutton, who is the Professor of History at Bristol University, and a Commissioner of English Heritage commented that Francis was a 'remarkable personality' and 'a significant player on the English cultural scene of his time, and although his literary causes were unorthodox, I think that posterity will be interested in them.'

Nick Young and Philip Carr-Gomm

Shakespeare and the Rosy Cross

by Petter Amundsen

First Folio breakthrough – Crucial signatures arose

383 years ago a bold plan was carried into fruition. In November 1623 *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*, generally known as the *First Folio*, was finally ready to be sold. The first registered purchase was made by Sir Edward Deering on December 5th that year.ⁱ Printing drama was risky business,ⁱⁱ and based upon the standard 50 % mark-up and an estimated print run of 750 copies, it could be argued that at least 375 copies at the cost of one poundⁱⁱⁱ had to be sold just to break even. A pound had significant buying power during King James' reign. One may recall that Shakespeare's home in Stratford, the second largest in town, was secured for the price of £60 a few

decades earlier.^{iv} The Folio publishers, Jaggard & Blount, would need to create a turnover large enough to secure six such five-gabled houses before any profit could be reaped. Considering such a bold financial undertaking a question comes to mind: Might there have been a grander motive behind this issuance than merely the hope for pecuniary gain? Could someone else be sponsoring the publishers? Someone with an agenda?

My investigations have led me to conclude: yes, this could indeed be the case. I have come to believe that the First Folio with all its plays was a keystone in a lofty plan for the advancement of learning among the British. In our recently published book, *Organisten*^v, co-written with Erlend Loe, we also give the organization behind it a name. *Evidence indicates that the great Shakespeare Folio is a Rosicrucian publication.*

A halo of poetic splendour surrounds the Order of the Rosicrucians; the magic lights of fancy play round their graceful day-dreams, while the mystery in which they shroud themselves lends additional attraction to their history.” These are the words of Heckethorn, historian of secret societies.^{vi} The idea that a philanthropic organization may have financed the Shakespeare publication makes good sense, considering the impact Shakespeare had, and would continue to have on the development of English language and cultural identity. The linguistic effect from his literary effort would mirror what the *Pleiades* achieved in France. The Rosy Cross fraternity aspired “to learn all that which God hath suffered Man to know, and thereby to be enabled in all times of need to give their counsel unto those that seek it.”^{vii} To this end the Shakespearean plays might have been a wonderful vehicle for the purpose of educating the unlettered majority.

The Rosy Cross fraternity is a mystery. In 1614 a manifesto called *Fama Fraternitatis* was published in Cassel, Germany. There is reason to believe that it existed in manuscript form four years earlier. The publication created a craze among young aspiring men who wished to become a member of the Rosy Cross society. Hundreds of pamphlets were printed and distributed in which an open expression of this desire for inclusion in the group was the main subject. Even Elias Ashmole, antiquarian and co-founder of the Royal Society, had in his papers left to posterity not only his own translations of the *Fama* and the second manifesto *Confessio*, which was published in 1615, but also a letter in which he begs for membership in the Rosy Cross society.^{viii}

However, no one has admitted to membership of the Order. But their ideas certainly impacted their era. The Rosicrucian phase in the history of European culture is called an intermediate between the Renaissance and the so-called scientific revolution in the seventeenth century.^{ix} But uncertainties abound. Even the meaning of the name of the order is disputed. Some writers say that it does not stem

from a *rose* but is derived from the Latin word *fordew*, which is *ros*.^x Then again, a hundred years earlier Martin Luther had as his emblem, a cross within a rose.

The Bohemian church was the first reformed church in Europe. If we follow this lead and study the Protestant resistance to Habsburg powers in Germany around the time of the publication of the Rosy cross manifestoes, we find in the Palatine Electorate, a blood-line connection between the court of England and this part of Germany. Young protestant Prince Frederick V (the Elector Palatine) was married to Princess Elizabeth of England, daughter of King James. During their nuptial celebrations in 1612 *The Tempest* was performed. Frederick's ambition was to secure the Bohemian crown and thereby secure Protestantism in the area. In 1619 he succeeded and ascended the throne with his young queen at his side. A group of English Players visited the couple in Prague.^{xi}

But tragedy was looming. In November 1620 Frederick was defeated by the Catholic army. The Habsburg power was secured for another generation. Historian Frances Yates (1899-1981) writes: "What was the stimulus which had set in motion the movement leading to the so-called 'Rosicrucian manifestos' with their strange announcements of the dawn of a new age of knowledge and insight? It is within the sphere of influence of the movements around Frederick of the Palatinate and his bid for the Bohemian crown that one should look for an answer to this question."^{xii}

Readers of Yates would not be as susceptible to shock by our initial Shakespearean statement as others might be. But consensus is that nothing except the aforementioned Rosicrucian manifestoes has ever emanated from this shady group. If our new book will create acceptance for this our view then our discovery would be a considerable contribution to understanding Shakespeare. And, importantly, it stirs the hope that Shakespearean manuscripts might be discovered. What follows is an appetizer for a tome that guides the reader, step by step, through a fascinating maze to an intriguingly auspicious spot somewhere on our planet.

Frances Yates stated that "Shakespeare's thought in these Last Plays belongs to the evolution of the Renaissance Hermetic-Cabalist tradition into Rosicrucianism."^{xiii} But, as already mentioned, no person has ever boasted membership to this mystical order^{xiv}, albeit the order has had its share of prominent apologists, like Michael Maier, Thomas Vaughn and John Heydon.^{xv} The great mystic, Robert Fludd, also stands out as a possible member, but nothing is certain. In 1615 a second manifesto was issued, called *Confessio Fraternalitatis*, elaborating on the *Fama*.

Now, what has this to do with the Shakespeare Folio? A lot, as we are about to see. The prefatory to the First Folio sports a laudatory poem with a long title, written by Ben Jonson: *To the memory of my beloved, The Author Mr. William Shakespeare: and what he hath left us*. If we investigate its panegyric lines, we shall discover that Ben Jonson quite likely was connected with the Rosy Cross brotherhood.

When the two R.C.-manifestoes finally were translated into English and published in 1652, they were called the ***Fame and Confession** of the Fraternity of R:C:, commonly, of the Rosie Cross*.^{xvi} The key to deciphering Ben Jonson's poem is very simple, and is found in the conspicuous letters *R* and *C*. Rosicrucians made no secret of their cabalistic knowledge.^{xvii} An important part of cabala is *gematria*. In gematria letters have a numerical value. The Jacobean alphabet had 24 letters, in which I and J was deemed the same letter, sharing place number 9; likewise U and V shared place number 20.^{xviii} Following this method we know that the letters R and C are represented by the numbers 17 and 3 respectively.

The deciphering is based on counting words. It is a blatant fact that in Ben Jonson's poem word 17 is ***Fame***. And when you count 3 more words you land at ***confesse***. This is child's play and clever hiding at the same time:

To draw no enuy (Shakespeare) on thy name,

*Am I thus ample to thy Booke, and **Fame**:*

*While I **confesse** thy writings to be such...*

In this writer's opinion the three lines above must have been designed by Ben Jonson to function as a Rosy Cross signature. The point being, of course, that the two R.C. manifestoes are called *Fame* and *Confession*. And before the sceptical reader dismisses this as a chance occurrence, let me add that the odds of this being happenstance is approx. 1:56,000,000.^{xix} Now, even if these are impressive odds – is what it signifies at all possible? Could Ben Jonson really have had connections to the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross?

Not only does Frances Yates build a plausible scenario where such memberships are possible. She describes a close connection between Germany and the British court,^{xx} and also makes a point of Jonson satires upon Rosicrucian themes^{xxi}. But it is a demonstrable fact that Ben Jonson was familiar with the term *Rosie Cross* itself. In 1623 his library tragically burnt down, and he handled it by writing an angry poem addressed to *Vulcan*, God of Fire. Line 72 of *An Execration upon Vulcan* reads:

With the Chimæra of the Rosie-Crosse.

What is more liable to induce uneasiness is that *Cymbeline*, the last play in the First Folio contains a related and most elegant Rosy Cross-signature that has the added bonus of propelling us forward on our search for long lost manuscripts. What is disturbing lies in that this signature is worked into the dramatic lines themselves. Whoever wrote this section of *Cymbeline* (i.e. the grand poet himself) is also very likely to have been affiliated with the Rosy Cross fraternity. This statement rests upon the display the constructor of the Cymbeline-signature makes of his knowledge of the deeper symbolism conveyed in the R.C.-manifestoes.

The first of these, the *Fama Fraternitatis*, relates the story about the creator of the order, Father C.R.C. We learn how he travelled through the Middle East, through Africa and subsequently into Spain and Europe. The first part of the journey he sought knowledge wherever it was to be found, and then, travelling up through Europe, he was teaching it to deaf ears. Then he dies and was secretly buried at the age of 106 years. In the second manifesto, the *Confessio*, his birth year is given as 1378. 1378 is 13 times 106.

The *Fama* points to the *Confessio* in which we are supposed to learn the “37 reasons wherefore we now do make known the fraternity”.^{xxii} These 37 reasons are, however, never to be learned. Author Paul Foster Case has shown that both the age of 106 years and the 37 reasons are, in fact, geometrical numbers^{xxiii}: 106 divided by two is 53, and together with number 37 these represent the acute angles in the famous Pythagorean 3-4-5-triangle. This is geometry at its finest, and is described in Euclid’s proposition number 47, book I. The first edition of *Fama* was included in a book having 147 pages. 147 symbolizes Euclid 1:47 and is also half the numerical value of *Rhodon* – Rose in Greek.^{xxiv} The importance of this geometrical exercise is explained below.

One of the many pleasures of using the Internet is that you may easily, and in seconds, perform tasks that previously would take months to accomplish. A wonderful example of this is searching for a specific word within Shakespeare's close-to-a-million. Let us say you would want to know how many times the word "Rosy" appears in the canon, and exactly where it is to be found. Just go to www.rhymezone.com and you shall find the answer right away. It is impressive. And the answer will impress you as well.

The word "Rosy" is found twice within the 908 pages that make up a First Folio^{xxv}, and both times it is found in *Cymbeline*. This play is a romance and therefore it does not belong among the tragedies, but it is puzzlingly appended to these, being the very last play in the book. The first "Rosy" can be plucked on page 379, which is called 389 by a (deliberate^{xxvi}) typo. The similarity with the Ben Jonson – R.C.-signature related above is that the next "Rosy" is located 17 (= R) pages later, on page 396. Then count three more pages (3 = C) and you end up on the very last page of the First Folio, a page having a reversed page number, 993, in all extant copies. By this feature a reversal may be indicated. The buried Rosicrucian father is called C.R., C.R.C. and R.C. throughout the *Fama*. This last page 399/993 has an interesting C.R.C. acronym to be cherry-picked for the geometrically inclined seeker. Line 25^{xxvii} has as words 3, 4, 5: Cedar, **R**oyall Cymbeline.

The stated connection with 3-4-5-triangle may be considered wishful thinking were it not for the inescapable geometric figure that accompanies the first "Rosy" on page 379/389. The figure below illustrates that the R of Rosy is part of a hypotenuse created by capital letters C-R-O. The slope is 37 degrees, consistent with the 3-4-5-triangle. The opposing right angle is located at a capital S and the bottom of the completed 3-4-5-triangle is supported by the second S. Thus on page 379/389 of the *Tragedies* we have discovered

Rosie & C-R-O-S-S .

And "Rosie Cross" is linked to geometry important to Rosicrucians. Add to this that the line of Rosie begins with the four letters *Apud*. There is only one other occurrence in the First Folio of these four letters in this sequence.^{xxviii} The latter would be trivial were it not for the circumstance that *Apud* is a Latin word signifying *published by*..

Detail from First Folio, Tragedies, page 379/389. © Petter Amundsen

There are three “Rosies” in Shakespeare. Two of these have been accounted for, but what about the last? The final *Rosie* is found as word 66 in Sonnet 116. Its parallel to the Rosies in the First Folio is this: The Sonnets of Shakespeare (1609) is an un-paginated book but all the poems are numbered in sequence. With one exception. *Sonnet 116 is the only sonnet with a numbering typo*. It reads 119, an error of *three*. (This fact may be admired in the Treasures exhibition of British Library, the rare book being opened on this page.) Sir Sidney Lee calls this “additional proof of the want of discrimination on the part of those who have credited the volume with exceptional typographical accuracy” ^{xxix} Following the pattern observed in the Folio we jump 17 sonnets ahead. Sonnet 133 has the word *crossedas* word 69. This is an increment of *three* from Rosie which was word number 66, 17 sonnets back. Please recall that the typo consists of a 6 made into a 9. 3 = C. 17 = R. Rosicrucians called themselves cabalists. This warrants a gematrical calculation of their chosen name, *Rosie Cross*. $17+14+18+9+5 + 3+17+14+18+18= 133$. Just like the number of the “crossed” Sonnet.

To call these observations mere coincidences, or “games”, should be held up against Frances Yates’ views on Shakespeare and his arguably Rosicrucian elements. In this light I cannot see how such findings can easily be dismissed.

i Peter W. M. Blayney: *The First Folio of Shakespeare*, Washington, 1991 p. 25

ii Anthony James West: *The Shakespeare First Folio, The history of the book Vol. I*, Oxford, 2001 p. 67

iii Calf bound. West p. 68

iv If we guesstimate such a building to be worth one million pounds today, then a First Folio (in calf, mind you) relatively speaking would carry a price tag reading 17 thousand. The book was cheap then – nowadays it sells for millions!

v Erlend Loe & Petter Amundsen: *Organisten*, Oslo, 2006

vi A. E. Waite: *Real History of the Rosicrucians*, London 1887 p. 1

- vii *The Fame and Confession*, London 1652 Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, Margate, 1923 p. 9
- viii Frances Yates: *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, London, 1972 p. 249
- ix Yates: *T.R.E.* p. xii
- x Waite p. 5
- xi Yates *T.R.E.* p. 32
- xii Yates *T.R.E.* p. 41
- xiii Yates: *Majesty and Magic in Shakespeare's last Plays*, Boulder, 1978 p. 8
- xiv The original 17th century order, not modern inventions like S.R.I.A.
- xv A. E. Waite: *Real History of the Rosicrucians*, London 1887
- xvi *The Fame and Confession* (facsimile)
- xvii Openly expressed in *Fama*.
- xviii Selenus: *Cryptomenytices et Cryptographia*, Lüneburg, 1624 p. 141
- xix Based on word frequency in the First Folio. "Fame" is found 80 times, and "Confess(ion)" is found 180 times. A rough calculation indicates that there are 900,000 words in the FF. (Readers of *Organisten* will add meaning to the opening syntax: "To draw no envy".)
- xx Yates: *T.R.E.*
- xxi Yates: *Majesty and Magic* p. 110 ff
- xxii *Fame and Confession* p. 17
- xxiii Paul Foster Case: *The True and Invisible Rosicrucian Order*, York Beach, 1985 p. 45
- xxiv $\rho\omicron\Delta\omicron\text{N} = 100+70+4+70+50=294$. Theophilus Schweighardt uses *Rhodo-Stauroticum* for Rosy Cross in 1618 (Used as frontispiece in Yates: *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*)

xxv If we forget about "leprosy"

xxvi Explained in *Organisten*

xxvii 25 is the square of 5 – and again, the hypotenuse of the 3-4-5-triangle

xxviii Henry V Act II sc. I – By my troth, he'll yield the crow a **pudding** one of these days

xxix Sonnets of Shakespeare, Oxford 1905, p. 46-47

The Oak Island Mystery

A perspective by Mark Finnan

The discovery over two hundred years ago of a deep, man made shaft on this small island off the coast of Nova Scotia, Canada gave rise to an intriguing historical mystery, that remains unsolved to this day. It also led to what is the longest treasure hunt in North America, if not in the world. The full story, with its many twists and turns, is detailed in my book *Oak Island Secrets* (Formac Publishing, Halifax N.S.).

In this article, which is based on a talk I gave to the Francis Bacon Society in London in June 2010, I want to address an aspect of the mystery that I observed during my research. It suggests members of a secretive, esoteric society of the sixteenth or seventeenth century may have been responsible for what has been found to date on Oak Island. It is an aspect that, if true, adds a profound philosophical and spiritual dimension to the mystery and has a bearing on the nature of the elusive treasure. However, for readers who know little or nothing about the Oak Island mystery and the ongoing treasure hunt, here is a summary of the story.

In the early summer of 1795 three young men from the mainland rowed out to the nearby island, one of many in picturesque Mahone Bay just south of Halifax. They began exploring what one of them had earlier discovered, a circular indentation in the ground in a clearing in the oak tree covered east end of the island. Their digging opened up a seven foot wide perpendicular shaft which had been filled in and

covered over just below the surface with a layer of flat stones. Thinking that they had found the hiding place of some pirate's treasure, a not unreasonable notion at the time, they eagerly continued to dig. After removing ten feet of earthen fill they found a floor of solid oak logs embedded into the side of the shaft. On removing these they encountered ten more feet of fill, beneath which was another solid barrier of oak logs. At this stage they abandoned their digging for want of extra help. They in-filled the shaft and left the island, but not before exploring it and finding a metal ring bolt embedded in a rock in a nearby cove and a rough path leading to the western end of the island, which faced the mainland. Assuming they did try to interest others in their discovery, for whatever reason they were unable to do so. However, one of the young men involved in the discovery, John Smith, soon purchased the lot containing the shaft and several other adjoining lots as well.

Historical records relate that it was 1804 before the first organised and concerted effort was made to explore the shaft further. Involving a small group of business associates and brother Masons, it uncovered additional platforms down to the ninety foot level. One was overlaid with a layer of strangely marked stones. Another was covered with blue, putty-like clay. Still another had charcoal spread on top. Quantities of coconut fibre were also found. Then, on the platform at the ninety foot level, workman came across an unusual stone slab containing two lines of cryptic writing. Made up of a series of triangles, circles, rectangles and dots with other lines intersecting and joining at right angles, the writing was remarkably similar to that traditionally used by Freemasons.

While this discovery must have reassured these early treasure hunters that a valuable treasure lay further below, their hope of locating it was dashed by water filling the shaft to thirty feet from the surface. Successive attempt to date by many others, some utilizing the best drilling and engineering expertise of the day, have also failed to reach the treasure, due primarily to a highly effective gravity-fed, water trap system that continually channels sea water from the Atlantic ocean, five hundred yards away, into the shaft.

Additional discoveries made by drilling deeper down into the water-logged shaft, such as wood from a chest or box, three links of a gold chain and a piece of parchment extracted from what was believed to be a concrete-like vault, fuelled speculation that the treasure was much more than pirate's booty and attracted a succession of treasure hunters. One group came across evidence of a man made tunnel even further down, below the bedrock. Artefacts and radio carbon dating indicate that there was human activity on the island sometime between the mid sixteenth and mid seventeenth centuries.

As my research progressed a specific possibility presented itself. The discovery of a ten foot, equilateral triangle made of beach stones, a hand worked stone in the shape of a heart, the capital letter G chiselled into a large boulder and a megalithic cross found elsewhere on the island suggested to me that members of the Masonic fraternity or some other esoteric order had been involved. On noting also that many of the men who committed a good deal of their time, energy and money trying to recover whatever treasure existed on the island had been prominent, high ranking Freemasons from both Canada and the United States, I decided to pursue this possibility.

One theory, among many, that already existed as to who had been responsible for creating the Oak island mystery, involved Sir Francis Bacon and the possibility that the treasure might contain the missing original manuscripts of the Shakespeare plays. I was already aware that Bacon and some of his close associates were not only progressive thinkers engaged in esoteric and literary pursuits at home, he and others were also interested and involved in the colonization of North America. It certainly seemed plausible to me that if Bacon was the secretive author of the plays and if he feared his body of work might be destroyed for political or religious reasons, he could have arranged to have the manuscripts transported to and deposited in a safe haven across the Atlantic for the benefit of future generations.

In fact Bacon's allegorical story *New Atlantis*, with its distinctively Masonic / Rosicrucian vision, suggests he foresaw the possibility of a spiritually and scientifically advanced civilization, a utopia, developing in New World. It was no doubt possible, given the esoteric networks, the proven mining and mechanical abilities of the times, that a plan could have been executed whereby certain knowledge and materials considered essential to such an eventuality were secretly transferred to the New World and securely hidden on a small, geologically suitable, island close to the mainland. Hidden in a way that would both protect the material treasure from reaching wrong hands and perpetuate the purpose it was intended to serve.

This brings me to the aspect of the Oak Island enigma that reinforces the theory that there is a non material dimension to the mystery and that the unusual man made workings and other discoveries on Oak Island may have a sacred ritualistic significance.

The shaft or pit, as it is more commonly called, with its series of barriers, strangely marked stones, layers of charcoal and blue, putty like clay, the unusual stone slab on which a cryptic message has been carved, the evidence of chests and a vault containing a treasure of some kind, resembles in many ways the core content of the Masonic ritual related to the conferring of the Royal Arch Degree.

The Masonic body known as York Rite confers a series of degrees beyond or above the three found in regular Blue Lodge Masonry. Claimed to be of earlier origin, these degrees were incorporated to help Master Masons advance in their knowledge of the Craft. Like all the other rituals in Freemasonry, it has an initiatory aspect derived from the mystery school tradition and is intended to enlighten the individual morally and spiritually in his progress along the path to perfection.

Based on an allegory associated with the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem following the return of the Jewish people from captivity in Babylon, the Royal Arch Degree ritually re-enacts the story of three workmen finding a concealed opening beneath the rubble of the former temple. The opening leads to the discovery of a vault containing a sacred treasure, the Ark of the Covenant and the lost Master Mason's Word. Not surprisingly the opening lines of John's gospel "In the beginning was the Word...And the Word was with God...And the Word was God" are intoned at the start of the degree conferring ceremony. It is also declared that the three associated attributes of the Word or Logos are **Omniscience, Omnipotence and Omnipresence.**

The allegory relates how the light of the sun shining down through the opening reveals a triple triangle, emblematic of the long lost Master Mason's Word, engraved on one side of the Ark. When the sacred vessel is brought to the surface and opened it is found to contain the book of holy law, a pot containing the manna or bread God gave the Jews during their wandering in the wilderness and finally the ever budding rod which Moses gave to his brother Aaron.

This particular Masonic initiation ritual which, as intrepid researcher Scott Clarke of Toronto discovered, one early ordinance suggested should be performed in a most sacred place, preferably underground, was taken up by Freemasons in North America many years prior to the discoveries on Oak Island.

All of this begs the questions. Might Oak Island, with its shaft and contents physically replicating the lost Temple treasure allegory, have been intended to be used as a centre for sacred ritual and learning relevant to mankind's advancement and the creation of a new order in the New World? Might the treasure be such that it speaks to our potential for growth and development as human beings?

If such is the case and even though the island may not as yet have revealed all its secrets, we can be encouraged by the fact that we have grown in our understanding of the inner and universal meaning of this archaic ritual. Namely our need and ability to find the sacred treasure of our godly nature and renewed life deep within the long neglected temple of our own being. We have long since solved the mystery behind some of the sacred geometry and symbolism found on Oak Island. In addition contemporary transformational work, whether based on the Hermetic, Kabbalistic, Christian Gnostic or Islamic mystical traditions, is helping us progress along the path of perfectibility.

It is a progress that derives from the consciousness of wholeness and harmony and oneness with the creative forces of the universe and each other. The kind of progress by which Francis Bacon's New Atlantis and St. John's New Heaven and New Earth can eventually be realized.

The Mystery of Shakespeare's Doublet

Is Shakespeare's portrait in the First Folio fraudulent?

by John M. Rollett

The engraving of Shakespeare which appears in the collected edition of his plays (known as the First Folio) is perhaps the most famous literary portrait ever produced. It is not a very attractive picture (Figure I), and various defects have been pointed out from time to time – the head is too large, the stiff white collar seems odd, left and right of the doublet don't quite match up. But it is generally regarded as serving a valuable purpose in giving posterity some idea of what our great poet and playwright looked like. In this article I shall suggest that it was actually intended to serve an entirely different purpose.

It is a curious fact that there are only two tiny phrases in the First Folio (1623) that associate William Shakespeare the author with Stratford-upon-Avon. These are "Sweet Swan of Avon" in Ben Jonson's long poem, and in a poem by Leonard Digges on a different page, "thy Stratford monument". Lacking additional information, one might wonder which Avon, which Stratford? (There are seven River Avons in England, and twelve or more Stratfords.) The lack of corroborative material may perhaps have

contributed in the past to doubts over who was the real author. Be that as it may, taken at face value, the First Folio (FF) is a straightforward collection of plays by a Mr. William Shakespeare, just as the vast majority of readers have always taken it to be. If there were no other reason for querying his authorship (and quite a number have been put forward), the FF would not suggest any, apart from one thing – the engraving of Shakespeare by Martin Droeshout.

The Uncomely Frontispiece

Here I am going to quote liberally from observations made by Leah Marcus, in her book *Puzzling Shakespeare. Local Reading and its Discontents*, published in 1988. In the preface she explains that she is interested in “topical readings”, which worked well in the case of other authors of the period, but “seemed not to work for Shakespeare”; the attempt was like “entering a murky labyrinth without signposts or exits.” Marcus regards as “topical” whatever was commonplace at the time, such as references to contemporary ideas, events, people and places. A further puzzle is the very idea of a “local” Shakespeare: he is almost impossible to pin down, either in time, place, ideology or associations.

Marcus makes some trenchant comments on the title page of the First Folio, under the heading “The Art of the Uncomely Frontispiece”. Compared with other folio volumes of the period she finds it peculiar, to say the least. For a start, the Droeshout~portrait (Figure 1) has been much vilified as the likeness of a real person – “a depressing ‘pudding face’, a skull of ‘horrible hydrocephalous development’.” Readers, she says, have delighted in pulling it apart – “Shakespeare, it is claimed, has lopsided hair and a doublet with two left armholes, a displaced nose, eyes that don’t match, a head much too large for the body.” Compared with other portraits on title pages of the period it is “extremely large”. It is stark and unadorned – it has no frame or ornamental borders (even though such embellishments are found elsewhere inside the volume), and it is devoid of the allegorical figures and emblems which might be expected to surround such a portrait, and are included on frontispieces in a number of comparable volumes printed by William and Isaac Jaggard.

She compares it with the title pages of Daniel’s *Civil Wars* (1609), Samuel Purchas’s *Pilgrims* (1625), the *Works* (1630) of John Taylor (the Water Poet), Raleigh’s *History of the World* (1614), Jonson’s *Works* (1616), all of which have elaborate iconography and emblems surrounding the portrait, features that are designed to inform the reader of the character of the author and his book. By contrast, the FF title page “appears stripped down to essentials.” It differs from all the others by offering no “topical” details – only “the raw directness of the image, as though to say that in this case, no artifice is necessary: this is the Man Himself.” Jonson’s poem facing the portrait further adds to the puzzle (Figure 2). Shakespeare, the verse tells us, “is not to be found after all in the compelling image

opposite.” It is a “Figure” cut “for” Shakespeare, and should be ignored (according to Jonson) in favour of the volume’s contents.

Marcus’s attempts to “localise” Shakespeare in the FF fail. Just as the image floats (as it were) in a vacuum, so the rest of the volume is without time, place, dates, venues, performances, or “devices” (clues) bearing on “the author’s identity”. There can be no doubt that Leah Marcus is confident that the man from Stratford was the real author. Yet several of her remarks might be interpreted in such a way as to encourage those who are not so sure. And it is in this spirit that I shall adopt one or more of them for purposes of which she would clearly not approve.

The peculiarities of the doublet (which will be examined in detail later) led to the suggestion around a hundred years ago that it consists of the left half of the front joined to the left half of the back of the garment, something so very odd that it seemed to cast doubt on William Shakespeare as the real author. The suggestion was announced in print in 1910 by the barrister and MP Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence, and subsequently confirmed by a tailor writing in a professional tailoring magazine in 1911. So the engraving (according to the tailor of 1911) apparently depicts a doublet with two left sleeves, worn (presumably) by a man with two left arms.

Developing this idea further, in an attempt to discover the meaning of such a strange image, leads one to suppose that if the “Figure” (Jonson’s word) is shown to us clothed in the left half of the front and the left half of the back of the garment, then the back of the Figure must be clothed in the remaining bits of the garment, the right front and the right back. If one could view the image from behind, one would then see a doublet with two right sleeves, worn by a man with two right arms. A man with two left arms (and hands) is gauche, cack-handed, inept, incompetent, dubious, untrustworthy, devious, sly, underhand, verging on the sinister, clearly not a writer, while the man with two right arms and hands is undoubtedly fully capable of writing (one might almost say that he is the right man). The man we can see, William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, is apparently being presented to us as if he were incapable of being the author, while the man we cannot see is (perhaps) the True Bard. Such are the kind of thoughts that the tailor’s verdict of 1911 might give rise to.

The deficiencies of the engraving are usually ascribed to the youth of the engraver, Martin Droeshout, who was around 20 or 21 at the time. But it has recently been shown (by Mary Edmond) that the engraver was most probably the young man’s uncle, of the same name, around 55, and an experienced and well-established artist, so that this argument loses much of its force. In any case, a young man engaging on an important commission early in his career is going to make absolutely sure that what he produces is exactly what his patrons require; his deficiencies, if any, are theirs. It follows that, in all likelihood, whoever the artist, the so-called “deficiencies” of the engraving were deliberate (for whatever reason), and approved and accepted by the publishers.

This raises the question of whether anyone else has ever been portrayed in a similarly 'counterchanged' or 'harlequin' type of costume. What would an onlooker infer from such an image?

Alternatively, if there is no history of a similar iconography, what would someone buying a copy of the First Folio in 1623 make of the engraving, assuming they spotted its peculiarities, far more readily apparent to them than to us? (It may be relevant to mention that Harlequin is traditionally portrayed wearing a mask, and the face in the engraving has often been likened to a mask, perhaps on the back of the head.) However that may be, it comes as no surprise to find that the oddities of the portrait seem to have given rise to scepticism when it was later used as the basis of another frontispiece. John Benson's 1640 edition of Shakespeare's "Poems" employs a simplified and reversed version of the engraving (Figure 3), beneath which are eight lines of verse, the first two of which read:

This Shadowe is renowned Shakespear's? Soule of th'age
The applause? delight? the wonder of the Stage.

Doubts about the engraving appear to have already surfaced. The construction of the doublet will now be examined in detail, to see if the evidence allows some kind of conclusion to be formed.

Droeshout's Doublet

The doublet in the Droeshout engraving of Shakespeare displays several oddities or peculiarities. To begin with, the right shoulder-wing of the doublet (onlooker's left, Figure 1) is smaller than the left shoulder-wing, when they should be (roughly) the same size, or at least balance, having regard to perspective. More significantly, the seams and embroidery in the neck area of the doublet are unsymmetrical, as shown by the different lengths of the embroidery edges labelled 'x' and 'y' in Figure 4; as far as I know, this is the first time this oddity has been pointed out. Notice that the white collar is cleverly arranged to obscure part of the edge labelled 'y', in such a way that the exposed part is the same length as the edge labelled 'x', so that at a first glance left and right halves of the neck area appear to match each other.

More significantly still, the embroidery on the right sleeve (onlooker's left) does not match that on the left sleeve, as demonstrated in Figures 5a and 5b. On the left sleeve, Figure 5b, the upper edge of the embroidery meets the base of the shoulder-wing (where it is joined to the doublet) a distance of just over two bands of embroidery (labelled 'B') down from the top of the shoulder-wing, while on the right sleeve, Figure 5a, the upper edge of the embroidery meets the base of the shoulder-wing a distance of rather over three bands, plus a wide gap (labelled 'g', roughly the same width as a band), down from the top of the wing. Instead of being approximately symmetrical, the right sleeve

embroidery is around a distance of two band widths lower than that on the left sleeve, or around twice as far away from the top of the shoulder-wing; this too has not been noted before, so far as I know.

Most significant of all is the fact that the embroidery on the right shoulder-wing does not match that on the left shoulder-wing. From the top of the left wing, Figure 5b, moving down, there are two bands of embroidery close together, a wide gap, and then another pair of bands, and so on. On the right wing, Figure 5a, starting at the corresponding place, there is one band of embroidery, then a wide gap, then a pair of bands, then a wide gap and a pair of bands, etc. Symbolically, the pattern of embroidery on the left wing, starting from the top, can be represented by 'B E3 g B B g B B' and that on the right wing by 'B g B B g B B g'. These two patterns would match on a normal garment, but here they do not: it is not a normal garment. This vital new piece of evidence, described here for the first time, is crucial to the analysis of the image.

These four points are consistent with the idea already outlined, that the garment is an absurdity, consisting of the left front joined to the left back of a real doublet. The right half of the front of the doublet, Figure 5a, is clearly not the right-hand-side complement of the left half of the front of the doublet, shown in Figure 5b, and the seam and embroidery on the right sleeve (Figure 5a) indicate that this is in fact the back of the left sleeve, where they are correctly placed. The asymmetry of the neck area and of the embroidery on the shoulder-wings is also consistent with this view. No real, wearable, tailor-made doublet ever had such a 'counterchanged', harlequin-style appearance, and so we are left wondering how this might have come about.

It could be argued, and it has been argued, that the engraver was incompetent (the 20 or 21-year old Martin Droeshout), and that the publishers, principally Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount, were, for whatever reason, prepared to accept an imperfect image of the author and his doublet, despite the fact that such a costly undertaking (one of the most expensive to date by an English publisher) would surely demand a flawless frontispiece. While incompetence in perspective drawing might possibly account for the first three points above, it cannot account for the last, the embroidery mismatch on the shoulder-wings. No tailor, dressmaker, painter or sculptor – or engraver – could ever commit such a gross error, unless it were expressly required by client or patron. Whether the engraver was an experienced artist over 50 years old, or the younger man (one anxious to gain a reputation and a living, and striving to avoid errors at all costs), the so-called "deficiencies" were clearly intentional, and accepted by Jaggard and his colleagues. If they didn't like what the engraver first produced, they had only to withhold payment until he produced something more acceptable. That the engraver signed with his full name (which he is not known to have done elsewhere) suggests that he was fully satisfied with his achievement.

This mismatch between the patterns of embroidery on the shoulder-wings can only have been achieved deliberately; to put it another way, even a child of ten would know that the bands of embroidery on the two shoulder-wings should be mirror images of each other. An artist or engraver, having completed one shoulder-wing, would automatically make sure the second wing matched the first, unless instructed otherwise. Together with the other peculiarities, this specific feature shows beyond any doubt that the engraved doublet was carefully designed to consist of the left half of the front and the left half of the back of a real garment. This is no longer a subjective opinion, based only on looking at the image, but an objective fact capable of scientific demonstration, resting on measurement and counting, which anyone can repeat for him or her self. Moreover, it accords with the opinion expressed by a professional tailor writing in “The Gentleman’s Tailor” of April, 1911. Part of this reads: “The . . . garment is so strangely illustrated that the right-hand side of the forepart is obviously the left-hand side of the backpart, and so gives a harlequin appearance to the figure, which it is not unnatural to assume was intentional and done with express object and purpose (emphasis added).” It seems that the artist had the doublet on a stand in front of him, and having depicted the front left half, turned the stand round and drew the back left half joined to the front left half. Why the engraver (whoever he was) should have distorted reality in so eccentric a way remains open to speculation, especially as other engravings ascribed to him are executed with more than ordinary skill.

Commentary

A possible explanation, first expressed around a hundred years ago, has already been put forward for what this left-front left-back anomaly might have been intended to convey. It may be that there are historical parallels or other similar pictures which might suggest other explanations. However, for the moment it would seem that the simplest interpretation is that the engraving was designed to show that the man ostensibly put forward as the author was no such thing, and was in fact a decoy, selected (for whatever reason) to obscure whoever the real author was. And although there may be alternative explanations, to back up this idea I offer the following.

Among the many oddities to which Leah Marcus drew attention is this. The portrait of Shakespeare is “extremely large”; in fact it is around four times larger in area (seven and a half inches by six and a quarter) than the title-page portrait of any other author of the period. Why?

I would suggest that if the image had been of normal size (eg. that of a playing card or postcard), the details, especially the details of the embroidery, would have been so difficult to make out that the message they were designed to convey (whatever it was) might never have been found. To ensure that the intended meaning would (in time) be discovered, the engraving had to be as large as possible, so that there could be no doubt whatever that its left-front left-back character would eventually be

noticed. As a consequence, there was no room left for the conventional allegorical figures, emblems and iconography usually surrounding such an image.

Further evidence is provided by the starched white collar or 'wired band' under the head (Figure 1). Its support (known as an 'underpropper' or 'supportasse') shows clearly through the linen on the left side of the collar, but is not visible on the right side; both Tarnya Cooper and Sandy Nairne draw attention to this curious omission in the National Portrait Gallery's recent publication *Searching for Shakespeare*. In addition the triangular sewn darts of the collar are almost comically unsymmetrical: left and right bear no kind of mirror relationship with each other, even allowing for perspective; Figure 7 draws attention to the chief mismatches. It is no more a real collar than the doublet is a real doublet (or, one might be inclined to add, than the man from Stratford is the real author).

Conclusion

There is a baffling discrepancy on the title page of the First Folio between what one would expect and what one finds. In place of a faithful portrait of the "Soul of the Age", the "Star of Poets", we are offered a travesty, a figure-of-fun, an absurdity. If a likeness of the poet was unavailable, the publishers could have commissioned an imaginary portrait, or omitted one altogether; instead they chose a course apparently deliberately designed to invite speculation.

The immediate reaction to this mystery is that it casts serious doubts on William Shakespeare of Stratford as the true author. An impossible doublet is worn by an impossible man, one incapable of being the writer. Doubts about the authorship have been around since the 1590s, and began to flourish in the mid-19th century; they have never been dispelled. All the same, the possibility that some other explanation for the anomaly can be found cannot be ruled out.

If nothing else, this analysis of Shakespeare's doublet has drawn attention to an astonishing aberration at the heart of the First Folio, which may leave a permanent question mark on the conventional attribution of the plays and poems. Whatever its interpretation, it is now beyond dispute that the left-front left-back anomaly is a fact. Droeshout's engraving of Shakespeare has become, down the years, the most famous literary icon in the world, and yet, to all intents and purposes, it is duplicitous: a spoof, a hoax, a fraud.

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Sonnet 115

Sonnet 115 and the Coronation of King James I

by Frode Lersan

Sonnet 114 and 115 in Shakespeare's Sonnets contain the words "kings", "kingly", "monarchs", "crowning" and "crown'd". In this article I will argue that line 6 from sonnet 115 refers to the coronation oath taken by King James I at his crowning in 1603. Here is the sonnet as it appears in the 1609 quarto:

Those lines that I before haue writ doe lie,
Euen those that said I could not loue you deerer,
Yet then my iudgement knew no reason why,
My most full flame should afterwards burne cleerer.
But reckening time, whose milliond accidents
Creepe in twixt vowes, and change decrees of Kings,
Tan sacred beautie, blunt the sharp'st intents,
Diuert strong mindes to th' course of altring things:
Alas why fearing of times tiranie,
Might I not then say now I loue you best,
When I was certaine ore in-certainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest:
Loue is a Babe, then might I not say so
To giue full growth to that which still doth grow.

The most common interpretation of “Creepe in twixt vowes” in line 6 is that times accidents creep in between a vow and the fulfilment of the vow. But the fulfilment of a vow is not a vow, so this interpretation is not presenting something as creeping in between vows.

I think the vows mentioned in line 6 refer to the coronation oath taken by King James I. I will argue that “vowes” in plural is referring to the original Latin oath found in the *Liber Regalis*, and to the translation into English of this oath made especially for King James in 1603. I will also explain how time's accidents are creeping in between these two versions of the oath. Here is a quote from the book *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800*.

“In his coronation on 25 July 1603, King James continued to stress his house's continuity with the Tudors by using the traditional ceremonial, the *Liber Regalis*, as had every English monarch since 1307, while making a few changes in the service. [...] Most important, the monarch [...] had the service translated from Latin into English. But this political act, designed to win support, had unexpected long-term political consequences.” (Pocock, Gordon, Schochet & Schwoerer, 1996, p. 81)

The important point here is that the translation into English of the coronation oath found in the *Liber Regalis* had to clear up an ambiguity in the Latin original. This is explained in the subsequent paragraph from the same book:

“It was customary for English monarchs to take a coronation oath swearing to keep the peace of the church, to see that that justice was done and to maintain the law. The Latin oath had been ambiguous as to the origin of these laws: the phrase “*quas vulgus elegrit*” might mean either the laws that the

people “shall chose” or those they “have chosen”, suggesting perhaps the role of parliament in creating the law. The new English translation adopted by James I referred to “the laws people have”, omitting any reference to their role in making the law.” (Pocock, Gordon, Schochet & Schworer, 1996, p. 81-82)

This might seem like a minor detail, but the question of how the tense of the verb in “*quas vulgus elegerit*” should be understood became a major issue in political debates during the 17th century. This is from Weston & Greenberg: “Subjects and Sovereigns: The Grand Controversy Over Legal Sovereignty in Stuart England”:

“This conclusion is strengthened by the persistence of the Latin tag “*quas vulgus elegerit*” in this period. Its appearance in Stuart political literature made it manifest at a given time that a debate was under way about the king’s veto in law-making. The claim for a supremacy in the two houses in this case relied on translating “*elegerit*” in the future tense, whereas the retention of the veto was associated with the preterperfect tense. (Weston & Greenberg, 2003, p. 215)

“The point is that the king solemnly promised to ‘*corroborare justas leges & consuetudines quas vulgus elegerit*’, and the problem was to ascertain the nature of this promise. Parliamentarians and later anti-court writers, translated *vulgus* as ‘the people’ or ‘the two houses’, and *elegerit* as ‘shall choose’ or ‘should choose’ to conclude that the king had promised assent to ‘such laws as the people shall choose’ or ‘should choose’. The claim of a supremacy in law-making for the two houses was thus associated with the future tense of the verb and conveyed that the coronation oath obliged the king to accept all such bills as the two houses sent him in the name and for the good of the whole kingdom. If he vetoed them, he was guilty of perjury for violating his coronation oath.” (Weston & Greenberg, 2003, p. 65) The explicit debate about the translation of “*quas vulgus elegerit*” from the coronation oath peaked in the second half of the 17th century, but we find several instances of similar debates concerning the details of the coronation oath, related to the prerogatives of the king, at the occasions of earlier coronations. The endnotes contain quotations describing two such examples.

Thus, on my reading of line 5 and 6 from sonnet 115, the “vows” are the Latin original and the English translation of the oath King James took in 1603. Time is creeping in between the two versions of the oath (vow) in at least two senses:

- 1) The original oath in the *Liber Regalis* was formulated almost 300 years before the translation into English
- 2) More importantly: The possible difference between the oath in its original Latin formulation and the English translation, is a difference that hinges on the translation of the tense of a verb found in the original Latin version

If we now go back to line 5 and 6 from sonnet 115 we find that a pun on the inflection of verbs related to tense is probably intended:

But reckening time, whose milliond accidents
Creepe in twixt vowes, and change decrees of Kings,

If we read “accidents” as a pun on “accidence”, we can read the lines as saying that time’s accidence creep in between vows. We can here take time’s accidence as referring to the inflection of verbs determining their tense.

The first line in the entry for accidence from The Online Etymological Dictionary, shows that “accidence” had acquired a meaning related to inflection before Shakespeare wrote his sonnets:

ACCIDENCE: “part of grammar dealing with inflection,” c.1500

Reading “vowes” in line 6 as referring to the Latin and English version of the coronation oath, also connects “creepe in twixt vowes” to the last part of the line, “and change decrees of Kings”, since, as we have seen, the translation of the coronation oath has consequences for the decrees a King can make.

We find several clues in sonnet 115 accentuating the tense of verbs, corresponding to the contrast between the future (“shall chose”) and the past (“have chosen”), that became the matter of dispute concerning the translation of the Latin oath. In the four first lines we find a systematic alternation between lines referring to past and future events respectively:

PAST: Those lines that I before haue writ doe lie,

FUTURE: Euen those that said I could not loue you deerer,

PAST: Yet then my iudgement knew no reason why,

FUTURE: My most full flame should afterwards burne cleerer.

Lines 10-12 contain an almost monstrous conflation of tenses and references to time

Might I not then [PAST] say now [PRESENT] I loue you best,

When [PAST] I was certaine ore in-certainty,

Crowning the present [PRESENT], doubting of the rest [FUTURE]

Counting in Shakespeare’s Sonnets

In line 5 from sonnet 115 we find the expression “reckening time”:

But reckening time, whose milliond accidents
Creepe in twixt vowes, and change decrees of Kings,

In his commentary on the sonnets, Stephen Booth says that a possible reading of the expression “reckening time” is “time that counts, that adds up the number of things” (Booth, 1977, p. 380). I think

this is a reading intended by Shakespeare, and that the point is that the reference to the coronation in 1603 is confirmed by counting.

I will first try to convince you that Shakespeare is counting words in his sonnets. Let us start by looking at sonnet 11 and sonnet 12:

11

As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest,
And that fresh bloud which yongly thou bestow'st,
Thou maist call thine, when thou from youth conuertest,
Herein liues wisdom, beauty, and increase,
Without this follie, age, and could decay,
If all were minded so, the times should cease,
And threescore yeare would make the world away:

[...]

12

When I doe count the clock that tels the time,

The first line of sonnet 12 is easily related to the number of the sonnet. The other number most closely associated with a clock is “sixty” (the number of minutes and seconds in one full rotation). We find the old English expression for sixty, the word “threescore”, in the sonnet preceding sonnet 12. Counting words from the beginning of sonnet 11 we find that “threescore” = 60 is word number 60 (1).

If we turn to sonnet number 60 we find a reference to minutes in the second line:

Like as the waues make towards the pibled shore,
So do our minuites hasten to their end,

Another number associated with time is 52, the number of weeks in a year. Word number 52 from the beginning of sonnet 52 is the word “stones”. Adding the six words preceding “stones” we can read [...] in the long yeare set,

Like stones [...]

I guess that that the word “stones” is chosen here for its relation to the etymological origin of the word “calculus”, which is a Latin word meaning ‘stone used for counting’.

Counting from the end of sonnet 52 we find that also word number 52 from the end of the sonnet is referring to a kind of stone. The word is “Iewells” (2).

Here is one more example of Shakespeare’s use of counting. The moon’s phases recur with an interval of 29,5 days. Counting from the beginning of sonnet 30 we find that word number 30 is “new”. We don’t find the word “moon” or “month” here, but “new moon” is the moon phase where the moon is

invisible or visible only as a narrow crescent, so “new” could indicate the absence of what we expect to find here by counting.

Word number 30 counted from the end of sonnet 30 is the first word in
of fore-bemomed mone

I think this can be read as alluding to “moon” or “month”, although “mone” and “bemomed” lacks the extra o or “th” (3).

Counting from the end of sonnet 29 we find that word number 29 is the first word in of daye arising
A month is made up of days. Inside “of daye arising” we find another measure of time made up of
days:

of dAYE ARISING = of d A YEAR IS IN g.

The examples presented here give us reasons to believe that Shakespeare was counting the words in at least some of his sonnets. We notice that all the examples are related to measuring time, and I think the main point is to confirm the genuineness of other instances where Shakespeare is using counting to determine references to time. In my examples here, words with a hyphen between them are counted as two words. A large number of examples presented on my website www.somemanuscripts.no confirm that this is a rule Shakespeare followed consistently.

Counting in sonnet 115

The point of these examples was to prepare for the way I think Shakespeare is confirming the relation between line 6 from sonnet 115 and the coronation oath taken by King James I in 1603.

The number above the sonnet gives a hint at what should be counted. The number is 115, and word number 115 counted from the end of the sonnet is the word “lines” (5). If we add the next five words of the sonnet, we can read

lines that I before have writt

If we take “reckening time” and “lines that I before have writt” as hints to count the lines preceding sonnet 115 in Shakespeare’s Sonnets we find the following. Preceding sonnet 115 we have 113 sonnets containing 14 lines each and one sonnet with 15 lines (sonnet 99). Taken together the 114 sonnets preceding sonnet 115 therefore contains

$113 \times 14 \text{ lines} + 1 \times 15 \text{ lines} = 1597 \text{ lines}$

From this it follows that line number 6 in sonnet 115 is line number $1597 + 6 = 1603$ counted from the beginning of the collection of sonnets. Thus, the line I claim refers to the coronation in 1603 is line number 1603.

Shakespeare is confirming that he is counting lines in several ways. If line 6 in sonnet 115 has become

line number 1603 counted from the beginning of the first sonnet on purpose, Shakespeare must have had a part in the arrangement and publication of the sonnets. The sonnets were published in 1609. The year 1609 is therefore what would count as the present when the sonnets were published. Line number 12 in sonnet 115 is line number 1609 counted from the beginning of the sonnet. The line goes like this:
Line 1609: Crowning the present, doubting of the rest:

We see that the content of line number 1609 accords well with 1609 being the present when the sonnets were published.

I think sonnet 115 is intended to bring us to one more confirmation that Shakespeare is counting lines. We find this by taking a closer look at line 12 (line 1609) and the preceding line:

When I was certaine ore in-certainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest:

The last part of line 11 and the first part of line 12 give us
[...] certaine ore in-certainty, Crowning the present [...]

I think these words are supposed to guide us to a particular line found in another sonnet in the collection. The designated line is line 7 from sonnet 107:

Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de,

Comparing the words “certaine ore in-certainty, Crowning the present” with the words in the line “Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de”, we find that each word in the first set of words correspond semantically to a specific part of line 7 from sonnet 107. “Certaine” corresponds to “assur'de”, “In-certainty” corresponds to “Incertenties”, “Crowning” corresponds to “crowne” and “the present” corresponds to “now”.

If this is intended, why is line 7 from sonnet 107 pointed to in this way? I think we find the answer to that question by counting of lines once more. Counting from the beginning of Shakespeare's sonnets we find that line number 7 in sonnet 107 is line number

$$105 \times 14 + 1 \times 15 + 7 = 1492$$

The number 1492 interpreted as referring to a year most naturally points to a specific historic event: 1492 was the year Columbus discovered America. As we have seen, line number 1492 is this line:

Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de,

I think that at least one intended meaning here is that the discovery of America is what turns incertainties into certainties.

In the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century the newly discovered America was seen by many as a new hope for mankind, otherwise destined to doom. The discovery was seen as fulfilling prophecies, and as part of God's plan. Compare the 8 lines from sonnet 107 below, with these words from Douglas Robinson's American Apocalypses:

“the very idea of America in history is apocalyptic, arising as it did out of the historicizing of apocalyptic hopes in the Protestant Reformation [...] America was conceived as mankind's last great hope, the Western site of the millennium [...] its future destiny was firmly and prophetically linked with God's plan for the world” (Robinson, 1985, p. xi)

Sonnet 107

Not mine owne feares, nor the prophetick soule,
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true loue controule,
Supposde as forfeit to a confin'd doome.

[...]

Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de,
And peace proclaimes Oliues of endlesse age,
Now with the drops of this most balmie time,
My loue lookes fresh, and death to me subscribes,

Sonnet 107 also contains a rather direct reference to the inhabitants of the newly discovered continent. Line 12 speaks of “speechless tribes”:

While he insults ore dull and speachlesse tribes.

I also think line 5 and 6 from sonnet 107 contain allusions to the discovery of America.:

The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'de,
And the sad Augurs mock their owne presage,

Compare the content of these lines with this well known story about Columbus

“COLUMBUS’S LUNAR ECLIPSE

Eclipses have influenced more than the outcome of battles. During his voyage to the New World, Christopher Columbus used them for purposes both scientific and non-scientific, and was among the first to use an eclipse to measure the latitude of the observing site.

While exploring the coast of Central America during his fifth voyage, Columbus’s exhausted expedition arrived in the West Indies. The tiny flotilla, worm-eaten and leaking badly, made landfall in Jamaica. Not long afterwards, half his men mutinied, stealing the food reserves, killing natives and engaging in guerrilla warfare against the crew members who remained loyal. Fearful of the mutineers, and unable to parley with Columbus’s crew, the local inhabitants ceased providing food. Three days before an eclipse of the Moon, Columbus predicted to their chiefs that the god of the Christians, furious with the locals, would invoke a celestial sign of his displeasure. In a cloudless sky on the night of 29 February 1504, a flame-red Moon struck terror into the natives, who then supplied and protected the navigator and his party until a relief vessel arrived.”, (Guillermier & Koutchmy, 1999, p. 86)

I think one intended reading of the two lines from sonnet 107 is as allusions to this story about Columbus.

Above, I have argued that both lines number 1492, 1603 and 1609 have a content fitting to the years referred to by the numbers. If there is a reference to the coronation oath of King James I in sonnet 115, what could be the purpose? Among the British Kings, King James I is probably the King that most vehemently asserted his sovereignty, with his persistent insistence on the divine right of kings. I think the reference to the coronation oath is a hidden critique of this. When it (in my reading) is said that

time's accident creep in between vows, and the vows are the Latin and English versions of the coronation oath, the implication is that there is a difference between the oaths concerning the inflection of verbs determining their tense, and that King James' "the laws people have" is not a faithful translation of "quas vulgus elegrit".

An obvious problem with this interpretation of these lines from sonnet 115 is that it might seem improbable that Shakespeare should have been aware of these details concerning the coronation oath. But then on the other hand, Shakespeare scholars have argued that Shakespeare had an extremely intimate knowledge of law, even so intimate that some have claimed that Shakespeare must have had some kind of legal training.

A last thought

We were brought to line number 1492 in sonnet 107 by its semantic connection to line number 1609 found in sonnet 115. I will end this article with some speculations on a probable connection between the years 1492 and 1609 that might be intended by what has been shown above. Over the course of four days in 1609 the following events took place:

May 20. 1609: Shakespeare's Sonnets were entered in the Stationers' Register

May 23. 1609: The second charter of the Virginia Company was promulgated

We have reasons to believe that Shakespeare had contact with the inner circle of the Virginia Company. Among the members of the council of the Virginia Company we find Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, the dedicatee of both *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, and William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, which the first folio was dedicated to. Shakespeare's assumed use of a letter from William Strachey as a source for *The Tempest* also connects him to the inner circle of the Virginia Company; since the letter contained information the company did not want to become public. This leaves us with an open question:

Is the connection between 1492 and 1609 that I have argued for above somehow related to the Virginia Company?

I think the answer to that question is related to another member of the council of the Virginia Company; the philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon.

Literature

Stephen Booth, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Yale University, 1977

Pierre Guillermier & Serge Koutchmy, *Total eclipses: science, observations, myths, and legends*, Springer, 1999

Alice Hunt, *The drama of coronation: medieval ceremony in early modern England*, Cambridge University Press, 2008

J. G. A. Pocock, Gordon J. Schochet & Lois G. Schwoerer, *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800*, Cambridge University Press, 1996

H. G. Richardson, "The English Coronation Oath", *Speculum*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan., 1949), Medieval

Academy of America, pp. 44-75

Douglas Robinson, *American apocalypses: the image of the end of the world in American literature*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985

Corinne Comstock Weston & Janelle Renfrow Greenberg: "Subjects and Sovereigns: The Grand Controversy Over Legal Sovereignty in Stuart England", Cambridge University Press, 2003

The first quotation below is from H. G. Richardson's "The English Coronation Oath", and concerns the oath made by Edward II in 1307. It is assumed the oath in the *Liber Regalis* was first taken on this occasion. The second quotation is from Alice Hunt, *The drama of coronation: medieval ceremony in early modern England*, and discusses the oaths taken by Henry VIII in 1509, and his son Edward VI in 1547.

"Confronted with this situation, the baronage required from Edward's son a new promise binding him to observe the charters. This led to a recasting of the whole oath late in 1307, probably at the Michaelmas parliament when the arrangements for the coronation were considered. [...] The fourth promise is directed to securing the king's observance of the charters (as Edward II's advisers themselves recognized) and any similar 'rightful laws and customs that the commonalty of the law shall have chosen.' While this clause is both retrospective and prospective, it is imprecise in that it does not define any particular legislative process by which the will of the commonalty is to be ascertained, but it does protect them from the arbitrary rescission of rightful laws to which they have assented and inferentially from arbitrary law-making against their will." (Richardson, 1949, p. 74-75)

"In fact, in comparison to Henry's proposed changes to his oath, the amendments in 1547 are more subtle and ambiguous. This is the key phrase: 'Do ye grawnte to make no newe laws but such as shalbe to thonour and glory of God, and to the good of the Common Wealth, and that the same shalbe made by the consent of your people as hath been accustomed?' This is a delicate alteration: the oath that Henry VIII swore in 1509 required him to promise to strengthen and defend the laws that his people 'shall have chosen'. As Chapter 2 showed, Henry wished to alter this to the opposite extreme: he would swear to uphold laws and approved customs that his 'noblys and people have made and chosen with hys consent'. Edward VI's revised oath grants the king power to make laws, but this is limited by 'such as shalbe to thonour and glory of God, and to the good of the Common Wealth' and, crucially, is dependent on 'the consent of your people'. The alteration is also cloaked by the appeal to precedent: 'as hath been accustomed'. This is neither the extreme of 1509 where Henry promised to consent to the people's laws, nor the opposite extreme of Henry's later revisions. Instead Edward's oath presents the king as consulting with his people: his supremacy does not extend quite so far as to override all laws. That the coronation articulates and sanctions this oath is crucial, and it was evidently in the Council's interest that Edward's supremacy was limited in this way. At the same time, it needs to be taken into account that the oath could not be revised to the extent that it would bind the monarch to the 'religion of the gospel'. The careful but significant revisions to the oath in 1547 indicative how

important it was for the oath to correctly reflect Edward's power, and the continued importance of coronation as the space where this power is sworn to and made legitimate." (Hunt, 2008, p. 89)

Mudie's Method

THE CRYPTOGRAPHER'S CORNER – reprinted from *Baconiana* vol. 24 January 1939

In these days the subject of cryptography has so completely died out as a topic of general interest that many people do not realise how widespread this study was in Tudor times. The very fact that numerous important treatises on the subject were published during that era is sufficient evidence that there must have been readers for such literature. Not only was a knowledge of cipher codes essential in political and diplomatic circles, as it still is today, but among men of all ranks it was frequently necessary as a means to safety in those dangerous days of religious and political persecution. Literary men, also, took up this study and seemed to enjoy it as a pastime; so that many specimens of acrostics, anagrams, numerical ciphers, and similar devices may be seen in the books of that period. If, as we believe, Francis Bacon had many important secrets to conceal regarding his own career and the history of his times, it is natural that he should have selected this method as one means to that end. That he had thoroughly studied the subject, invented systems of his own and was in all respects a master cryptographer admits of no doubt. Accordingly the search for such hidden information is not only legitimate but necessary to an understanding of his character, his genius and the immense scope of his lifework. Holding these ideas in view we believe it will accord with the wishes of our readers that we should present from time to time in the pages of BACONIANA selected examples of cipher devices to be found in the literature of the Tudor period, especially of course in that which is connected with Francis Bacon.

In the present issue we purpose to describe some of the work accomplished in this field by the late Alfred Mudie; who, in 1929 published a book under the title of "The Self-named William Shakespeare." The proposition he put forward was that Francis Bacon inserted a secret signature either at the beginning or at the end of every literary work of which he was the author; and the nature of the signature was as follows. He arranged for the *text* of, say the first verse of a poem so that if we take the first f in the text, then the next r, then the next a, and so on until the name Francis Bacon has been spelled out, the "n" of Bacon will be the last n in the text.

Unless these two conditions are fulfilled, the device is not genuine. Very often the name Bacon alone is found in this manner, sometimes repeated twice or even three times; but always commencing on the last “b” of the text and finishing on the last “n.” Sometimes, too the name commences at the end of the poem or paragraph and finishes at the beginning; that is, it works in the reverse direction. Mr. Mudie argued that when a number of such signatures have been found, any theory of chance must be ruled out, and the only reasonable conclusion is that the author inserted these devices for the express purpose of indicating his claim to the work in question. We give below a few characteristic examples of these signatures, which speak for themselves. In order to facilitate the task of following them out we have printed, the letters of the significant names in heavy type.

LUCRECE, 1594

First stanza.

From the besieged **A**rdea all **i**n post,
Borne by the trustlesse wings of false desire,
Lust-breathed Tarquin leaves the Roman host,
And to **C**olatium beares the lightlesse fire,
Which in pale **e**mbers hid, lurkes to **a**spire,
And girdle with embracing flames, the wast
Of **C**olatine’s fair love, Lucrece the chast.

Result (a) Francis Bacon.

From the **b**esieged **A**rdea all in post,
Borne by the trustlesse wings of false desire,
Lust-breathed Tarquin leaves the Roman host,
And to **C**olatium beares the lightlesse fire,
Which **i**n pale **e**mbers hid, lurkes to **a**spire,
And girdle with embracing flames, the wast
Of **C**olatine’ s fair love, Lucrece the chast.

Result (b) Bacon, Bacon.

JUPITER’S LABEL IN CYMBELINE.

When as a Lyons whelpe, shall to himselfe unknown.
without seeking finde, and bee embraced’ by a peece of
tender Ayre: And when from a stately Cedar shall be lopt
branches. which being dead many yeares, shall after
revive, bee joynted to the old Stocke, and freshly grow.
then shall Posthumus end his miseries, **B**ritaine be

fortunate, and flourish in Peace and Plentie.

Result (a) Francis St. Albans.

When as a Lyons whelpe, shall to himselfe unknown.
without seeking finde, and bee embrac'd by a peece of
tender Ayre: And when from a stately Cedar shall be lopt
branches, which being dead many yeares, shall after
revive, bee joynted to the old Stocke, and freshly grow,
then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britaine be
fortunate, and flourish in Peace and Plentie.

Result (b) Saint Albans, Saint Albans.

SHAKSPERE'S EPITAPH IN STRATFORD CHURCH.

Stay passenger, why goest thou by so fast?

Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plast
Within this monument; Shakspeare with whome
Quick nature dide; whose name doth deck ys tombe
Far more than cost; sith all yt he hath writt
Leaves living art but page to serve his witt.

Result (a) Francis Bacon.

Stay passenger, why goes thou by so fast?

Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plast
Within this monument; Shakspeare with whome
Quick nature dide; whose name doth deck ys tombe
Far more than cost; sith all yt he hath writt
Leaves living art but page to serve his witt.

Result (b) Bacon Bacon.

Reflections on Patrice Chaplin's City of Secrets

By the editorIs home a place of comfort, where life goes on much as it always has? Or are we born into an alien reality, exiled from our true spiritual home? Whether this city is El Dorado, Shambala or the Heavenly Jerusalem, there have always been those for whom life is a pilgrimage to their true homeland. Whilst the generations roll by and the majority of people live out their lives quite

happily following the tracks laid down by their leaders and peers, others question, driven by that insatiable longing which Sufis call *Ishq*, the 'nostalgia' for God. While the many choose their belief system – whether atheism, religion or spiritualism – based on personal psychology and environmental cues – others set out like Abraham 'not knowing where they are going' but following the call.

Patrice Chaplin's outstanding book *City of Secrets* is the story of one such seeker. It is appropriate that the publishers are Quest, because the book itself is the record of a lifelong quest. Books often represent the quest being as a philosophical or a mystical journey. It can be both of these things, but whereas the student's path can be dry and solitary, and the mystic often turns away from the world, there is also the artist's way – the search for that in life which is colourful, vivid and exuberantly alive. One of the missing qualities in the Baconian theory regarding the Authorship Question is that by treating Shakespeare as a work of illustrated philosophy, it misses the tensions, the anguish, the evident bohemian impulse in Shakespeare's works and surely his personality.

All paths have their challenges. Art can bewitch and delude; yet it can also free us. Like an ancient Sybil or prophet, it often reveals more than it intends. Yet it contains the raw human response to life between the logic of God and the seeming random cruelty of fate, the troubled link between spirit and nature not fully at home in either. Everything turns on whether we take this ordeal in a state of spiritual passivity or engage with it.

City of Secrets tells the story, in artful autobiography, of the young Chaplin's escape from the drabness of post-war England to the colourful culture of France and Spain. Travelling with a friend she experiences a Paris inhabited by intellectuals like Jean-Paul Sartre before reaching the ancient city of Girona in Northeast Spain. Chaplin quickly falls in love with this '*City of Secrets*' and the handsome poet José, who is an important local figure. She evokes the beguiling atmosphere of this proud and separate Catalonian city which jealously guards its traditions, associations and private beliefs.

While joining in Girona's colourful bohemian world of writers and actors – including famous figures like Jean Cocteau, Salvador Dali and Umberto Eco, it gradually dawns on Chaplin that José, his associates and many of those drawn to Girona are aware of a mystery that connects the town, its Jewish past, its oldest families, and the Pyrenees, particularly the sacred mount Canigou. Chaplin evokes the excitement and mystery of these people who appeared to know something important and secret. What she did not know at that time was that the artistic circles in which she moved were connected with the French occult revival at the end of the 19th century, which was shaped by the strong revival of traditional Catholicism alongside a flourishing of Rosicrucian sects following the upheavals of the Revolution and the Republic in France.

The most famous author from this milieu was Eliphas Levi, whose book *The Dogma and Ritual of High Magic* probably did more than any other work to revive interest in magic the modern age. Many of the great magical authors of the next generation were French, including Papus, Péladan and de Guaita. Their brand of Kabbalistic and metaphysical Rosicrucianism was deeply influential upon the arts: great composers like Debussy and Satie were part of their circles and the famous singer Emma Calvé goes on to play an intriguing role in *City of Secrets*. This combination of art and spirituality with a strong kabbalistic underpinning forms part of the deeper cause of the power of successive cultural renaissances of Europe, including Italy in the 15th century, England in the Elizabethan Age and Germany at the turn of the 19th century. This torch had passed to France by the turn of the 20th century, which in some ways recapitulated the spirit of Elizabethan occultism implicit in both Bacon and Shakespeare. Yet even today the history of European esotericism is not widely known in the English-speaking world.

Information concerning the private interests of people like Cocteau and Dali was restricted to members of Rosicrucian groups or academic researchers into the obscure connections between politics, esotericism and the arts in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is becoming clear that these societies' interests in subjects like the Grail and Kabbalah was not just literary; it was associated with particular people and places.

Chaplin's personal odyssey took her deep into the heart of these networks of artistic mystics, without her knowledge, at the same time as information was slowly emerging (or was it disinformation being leaked?) concerning secret societies like the so-called Priory of Sion. Following the immense popularity of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* and the global phenomenon of the *Da Vinci Code*, millions previously uninterested in occultism are aware of ideas including secret societies, conspiracies, the Grail, the existence of an esoteric Christian tradition regarded as a threat by the Church, the role of the Templars and Freemasons and so on, and so on. This movement has had the effect of glamourising certain places – notably Rennes-le-Château and Roslyn Chapel – and creating mystery, or perhaps more accurately, mystification.

This is where *City of Secrets* comes into its own, and is transformed from a deeply romantic story of a woman's personal and often painful journey into a major contribution to the Rennes-le-Château debate. As the book charts Chaplin's bittersweet romance with José and the city of Girona, and her life oscillating between the poles of England and Spain, the clues emerge.

Girona is an ancient settlement, and was home to a Jewish community as far back in time as the 4th Century BCE, Chaplin sketches its Kabbalistic roots as a centre for Jewish mysticism, most notably under Nachmanides. Beyond this is the older power of the land – José is described as particularly concerned with an ancient stone called the Sun Stone. Chaplin successfully evokes the mood of

medieval awe at the sacred mountains into which she weaves a sense of the separateness of this place, witness to to the Cathar presence the other side of the Pyrenees in France.

Gradually she – and the reader – are given to understand that Girona is still a place of ancient ceremonies and knowledge and that certain families are custodians of ancient knowledge and power. The narrative begins to suggest that Girona is not just part of the story of Rennes, but in many way holds the key to its mystery, and that its citizens were well aware of Abbé Saunière's comings and goings between Rennes and Girona, and the reasons for them. I will not deprive the reader of the opportunity to experience Chaplin's progressive revelations which touch briefly and suggestively on sacred geometry, earth alignments and Kabbalistic numerology or to ponder the hints regarding Chaplin's progressive initiation into the secrets which her friends finally began disclosing after decades of concealment.

The book is beautifully and subtly written, keeping Chaplin's real thoughts and personality rather in the background, but it emerges between the lines that she is a sensitive or psychic. This adds an interesting quality to her evocation of the endless passion and confusion of her quest for the truth of Girona, presented as a city reluctant to make outsiders truly 'at home'.

And here readers are bound to reflect – who really are the people who decided that it was time that Chaplin was entrusted with this information and what was their motive? When one considers the immense cultural effect of Baigent, Lincoln and Leigh's decision to publicise certain political-occult ideas associated with Far Right French occultists, it's notably how seldom these sources offer their readers reflection on their own motives or those of the shadowy informants who selectively leak information over long periods of time.

Clearly, those who sow tantalising hints, as did Francis Bacon's literary executors Rawley and Tenison, mean to excite and tantalise with hints of important secrets. Whilst Bacon's successors left clues intended to test the wits and develop the critical research skills of would-be neophytes, modern mass literature on occult conspiracy seems designed to draw readers into the glamour and often confused mystification of legends of secret societies. This can be a benign or a very sinister practice depending on the ethics of the group involved. Certainly, the truths in Bacon and the Rosicrucian sects would never have haunted and beguiled the worldly public without the genius of Shakespeare. There is an aspect of truth that can only be approached through error, mystification and glamour. It is inevitable that the chaos of truth and nonsense that surrounds the Shakespeare Authorship Question exists. But unless we then apply spiritual discernment, the path can lead to madness and obsession.

Michael Buhagiar (see his article in [Baconiana Online 1](#)) is closer to the truth in suggesting that Shakespeare's energy came from the catharsis of his breakdown by the gnostic wisdom of Francis

Bacon. Beyond the fascination of the revelations in *City of Secrets* is the picture it paints of an individual's search for meaning. But how does the free artist's quest reconciled with the gloom of ancient secrets, ordeals and rituals, as well as secret groups that claim elite knowledge and spiritual powers?

The Rennes Mystery is a global obsession – a dangerous one quite obviously stoked by the political and other vested interests of clandestine groups, which nonetheless has become a central party of humanity's awakening in the age of the Internet. Some will respond to *City of Secrets* by believing or disbelieving its revelations; some may go to Girona and ask to be introduced to the Guardians of the Grail; no doubt the tourist industry of Girona will benefit, but the book itself is a fascinating work of art, with many clues that link up with and corroborate subjects studied by Baconian students from other angles.

Following *City of Secrets*, the reader will want to know what Chaplin learned in her deepening quest into the esoteric truths known to Saunière, the Rosicrucians and the Kabbalists associated with Girona. Next issue of *Baconiana* will contain a review of *The Portal*, where she continues her journey.

The Editor Feb 2011

Conspiracies

Conspiracies, or *Of Buried Treasure*

By the editor

“Nay, the same Solomon the king, although he excelled in the glory of treasure and magnificent buildings, of shipping and navigation, of service and attendance, of fame and renown, and the like, yet he maketh no claim to any of those glories, but only to the glory of inquisition of truth; for so he saith expressly, “The glory of God is to conceal a thing, but the glory of the king is to find it out;” as if, according to the innocent play of children, the Divine Majesty took delight to hide His works, to the end to have them found out; and as if kings could not obtain a greater honour than to be God’s playfellows in that game; considering the great commandment of wits and means, whereby nothing needeth to be hidden from them.”[Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*]

One persistent motif in the history of Baconianism is that of “buried treasure”. And the paradox of any treasure hunt is that, in some ways we don’t ever want to be completely successful, for then the thrill

of the search is over. This is why Oak Island remains an irresistible attraction to treasure hunters. Yet there have been other Baconian treasure hunts: Orville Owen's search for evidence near Chepstow, Arensberg's theories concerning Lichfield, Marie Bauer Hall's search in Bruton, Edward D Johnson's belief that secrets were hidden at the Church in Stratford upon Avon, later hunts focusing on Canonbury Tower...

One of the fundamental practices of that set of beliefs and actions named 'magic' is to bury something – often a treasure or a talisman. This process often serves to create a mystique, some times beneficial – one example is the blue bowl which Wellesley Tudor Pole was guided to have unearthed in the West Country, after which it emerged that another man unknown to Tudor Pole had been guided to bury it in the ground a little time before, for reasons unknown. The object had been brought to England from Italy around the end of the 19th century, but its provenance before then was obscure. The whole incident was bizarre, but the 'aura' around the blue bowl, which was considered to be linked with the Holy Grail, served to bring thousands of people to Glastonbury and participate in the true treasure which is inward.

Often what the seeker things they are looking for is very material and tangible: valuable objects, or manuscripts perhaps providing evidence in the Bacon Shakespeare dispute. But ultimately the real treasure is knowledge, is wisdom uncovered. Ultimately, to discover is to uncover, and that implies that something was covered. And the most important discoveries are usually those of things deliberately covered, such as 'treasures'. Sometimes in the history of Baconianism one senses that the subconscious prompts people to hunt for the inner riches, but their minds interpret this call very literally. But every creator is a 'coverer', the simultaneous concealer and revealer of the thing, depending on others' level of understanding. To the religious mind, it is clear that it would be futile for us to extract knowledge from the world if knowledge were not a reality in the world. However much agnostics disclaim so called 'arguments for design', which is understandable given that their modern proponents give them crude and unphilosophical forms, it is clear that if understanding reflects something real in nature, that real thing must be of like nature with the understanding, though not necessarily identical. That thing is Intelligence which is real.

All meaning is concealed and revealed by the symbolism of facts; to understand is to go beyond gesture and sound to soul and sense.

The relationship between the glory of God and that of a King, as illustrated by Bacon's slight misquotation from Proverbs 25:2, is one of the keys to understanding Bacon's thought. This can be pursued throughout his writings: in its literary sense regarding secrecy, particularly the *Essays*, in his practical significance regarding the need for cryptic communication and the essence of science as a kind of decryption of nature's cipher through cryptographic analysis, in the great philosophical works.

But because the religious and esoteric background to these concepts is not as familiar in our age as it was to those who know the Bible and Greek philosophy, it might be helpful to clarify some of the key concepts implicit in Bacon's formulation as a series of aphorisms that the reader can pursue. These are explained in greater detail in some of the author's previous articles in Baconiana and elsewhere.

God created the material universe, gave it life, and in humanity he gave it Spirit; finally in Jesus Christ he entered it as full divinity.

For Spirit to enter matter is a limitation, a painful constriction, a crucifixion willingly and lovingly embraced. Matter expresses and makes real spirit, but it also confines and even destroys it.

The Greek word tomb is also that of monument or Temple – in Greek, sema which sounds like the word for body, soma. This gave rise to the Greek pun that the body is a temple or tomb, a meaningful wordplay present in John's Gospel.

Saint Paul spoke of the contrast between the letter that killeth and the Spirit which giveth life. In other words, the form of letters is related to the spirit of language as the mortal body is related to the indwelling spirit. Letters are Temples.

Thus, there are multiple correspondences between words and letters, spirit and matter, life and death.

These all come together in the doctrine of Christ Jesus as the Word made Flesh.

Just as Incarnation meant the Word has to die; the Resurrection of Jesus is a great symbol of the freeing of the Word from the dead body.

A body or treasure can be kept in a crypt; likewise decryption is analogous to freeing a spirit from a body.

The process of writing is a kind of Incarnation which is also, ultimately a burying or condemning to death. A symbol such as a letter thus simultaneously conceals the truth from those who cannot release it and reveals it to those who can bring it to rebirth, much as a word on the page is mute but through it the speech of one long dead can live again.

There is a cosmic mystery in the fact that God, who created the structure of the universe with cosmic cruciform planks as described in Plato's Timaeus, should incarnate as the son of a carpenter and be crucified on planks of wood.

The 19th letter of the Greek alphabet is Tau, which is the name for the ancient form of the cross, for which the Greek term is stauros, which also contains the word tau. This meaningful wordplay was known in ancient times, and discussed by the Greek author Lucian.

Bacon uses the number 19 frequently as a symbol in contexts referring to power over matter or the dead form with which science is concerned.

The 19th chapter of John's Gospel concerns the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ the Word. John 19:19 describes the words written above his head as the description of who He was (the famous INRI).

Early Greek Christians were fond of gematria – the calculating of arithmetic values from word. By the Greek system

The Great Beast = 666

The Cross = 777

Jesus = 888

This tells a clear story of the Cross as the meeting place of Jesus and the forces of the Beast. 8 was also the symbol of the Resurrection, the 8th or new day beyond the traditional 7, which is why the Christian Sabbath falls on Sunday.

The numbers 666,777 and 888 are multiples of 37. 19 and 37 are two numbers key to ancient Greek sacred geometry reflected in the gematria of the Holy Scriptures, as described in part by Bligh Bond and Lea in their book Gematria.

Bacon's inductive method was based on the view of the fundamental forces of nature as being like an alphabet; true knowledge and power involve knowing this alphabet and being able to write with it.

Resurrection of the body is also compared to rebuilding the Temple, as well as finding the lost Word.

Science, in short, is inseparable from a kind of magical or cryptographic linguistics and thus from the Logos who dies and is reborn.

—

Platonic and Theosophical metaphysics speaks of Involution and Evolution. Involution is the process through which the spirit is wrapped in ever denser bodies shrouding its light; in evolution, spirit emerges from and begins to master the matter which encased it. In involution, we can say in Bacon's

sense that the Glory of God is concealed, shining like gold in the centre of a thing but externally invisible; but in evolution that spark is freed from the shell and the inner takes precedence.

What light does this shed on conspiracies? The word literally means ‘breathing together’, or in other words, sharing the same spirit. When the Holy Spirit descended on the Disciples at Pentecost, they became in truth Apostles, sent with a common mission. They share in the Master’s fate and transmit the torch of the Spirit.

Thus Bacon in common with other great teachers concealed mysteries as well as giving the tools to uncover them. The tools are also partly covered; we are expected to learn the reasons for secrecy, the means of concealment and the inevitable sacrifice involved in creation.

In the worldly sense, conspiracies occur when a group of people feel that things as they are must change or evolve, but are aware that the powers that be do not wish this. Enlightenment philosophers, political pamphleteers, surrealist poets and many others used literature to influence or subvert public perceptions. Our age is one of mental fight and propaganda. Many who have used literature in this way had particular spiritual and political objectives which were contrary to establishment views. The powers that be will convince the people – perhaps quite rightly – that the ‘others’ are a danger or a threat. Notoriously, the fear of conspiracy has often led to racial and religious paranoia, such as disgraceful and rightly discredited theories promulgated for vicious political reasons which claimed that there is a secret Jewish conspiracy which plots to control the world’s money supply and wrest control of the world from governments. It is typical for those who succumb to paranoid conspiracy thinking to become impossible of believing that any fact is unrelated to their theories – everything proves it, is twisted into it. The main motive for such thinking seems to be the excitement of fear and the glamourising of perceived enemies rather than any real basis in fact.

Any individual can act in malice or error; instinctively, conspiracy theory attributes a greater power and knowledge to a group than it is likely any group ever possessed. Usually this is done in fear, though sometimes there are beliefs in benign conspiracies. Yet implausible though it is in a human sense that any group has the kind of omniscience or omnipotence, conspiracy theories reflect the sense that the Spirit goes beyond any individual, but it may act through a group. As Christ is reported to have said “Whenever two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in the midst of them”.

The interest in conspiracy theories this century – greatly spurred by theories around the death of John F Kennedy and ominipresent around 9/11 and 7/7 terrorist attacks due to the power of the Internet, are a testament to our civilisation’s basic sense that it doesn’t know what is really going on and that someone must be to blame (probably the Government). However it has to be said that these modern theories share the problem of turning on supposed ‘facts’ – much as conventional Christianity turns on

believing the particular historical fact of Jesus' resurrection has been proven by physical eye witnesses. This is unstable as truth can only be truth for a person as they can experience it in the here and now.

The tendency to engage in conspiracies as well as to believe in paranoid conspiracy theories is a tell-tale sign of the degradation of the sense of Spirit into Internet-fed theory based on information. Rather than the mind being magnified or assimilated to something like it but on a much grander scale, our age approaches the subterranean machinations of the Underworld. Yet this is part of Bacon's challenge – we must bring to light all that is in the dark places as we free the Truth and bring it to Light.

The path of poetry, power, magic, or creation on its own, is a path of enchantment in matter. In wanting to be like God without sacrifice we may be chained to our own productions. The earthly conspiracies of magic evoke opposition and end in destruction; but true art carries its own resurrection within it. As we contemplate humanity's confusion, nations and peoples filled with distrust and looking for answers in violently uncovering what they believe to have been secreted, perhaps we should reflect on the basic human condition or partial understanding. The artist, representative of the specifically human nature, compounded of flesh and spirit, cannot be the perfect decryptor detached from the world; this is voiced to perfection in Prospero's Epilogue in *The Tempest*.

*Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's mine own,
Which is most faint: now, 'tis true,
I must be here confined by you,
Or sent to Naples. Let me not,
Since I have my dukedom got
And pardon'd the deceiver, dwell
In this bare island by your spell;
But release me from my bands
With the help of your good hands:
Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please. Now I want
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant,
And my ending is despair,
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so that it assaults
Mercy itself and frees all faults.*

*As you from crimes would pardon'd be,
Let your indulgence set me free .*

The irony is that as we step up to set Prospero free, we must to some degree take his place.

James North Feb 2011