



A New Online Bookset:

OXFORD'S VOICES

What Shakespeare Wrote Before He Was Shakespeare

by Robert Prechter, Jr.

I have finally finished a twenty-four-year research project. The result is an online bookset titled *Oxford's Voices*. Its subtitle is *The Complete Canon of History's Premier Literary Genius—With a Broader Investigation into the Authorship of Elizabethan Literature*.

I started this venture when I was 48 years old. I am now 72. At the outset, I thought it would take me about a year or two to figure out what books Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), wrote. I vastly underestimated the intricacy of the matter. Doing justice to the subject required reading and assimilating massive amounts of material.

Oxford's acknowledged poems are mostly from his teen years, whereas his plays and poems issued under the name Shakespeare are strikingly mature. As others had surmised, it seemed likely that there must be other works by him, to fill the gap.

To find out if such was the case, I set out to investigate every play, poem, prose story and literary translation from the Elizabethan era—from 1557 through 1604, and in some cases beyond. In all, I accessed 2,945

Elizabethan and Jacobean publications and 2,500 scholarly books, papers and articles. I read every word of many of them (some multiple times), whereas others required only skimming. Orthodox sources—at times unwittingly—provided a massive amount of useful information. Books, papers and articles by Oxfordians are quoted throughout.

As it turns out, Oxford wrote many uncredited books, plays, treatises, poems and songs. Most of the people to whom these publications were attributed never came anywhere near them.

I call the names under which he wrote Oxford's Voices. Because evidence suggests that the name “Shakespeare” debuted as a pseudonym and only subsequently became attached to a real person, I expected to find that most of Oxford's Voices would turn out to be pseudonyms. But I soon realized that Oxford borrowed nearly all his names from real, local people. Such cover names are called *allonyms*. The employment of allonyms is one reason why Oxford was so successful in keeping his authorship hidden.

The bookset:

- Uncovers contradictions, inconsistencies, incongruities, absurdities and voids in conventional biographies of Elizabethan writers and within the era's accepted literary canons.
- Uncovers biographical, genealogical and textual connections between various works or authors' names and Oxford.
- Identifies text possessing literary qualities conforming to the known writings of the Earl of Oxford, his established Voice (William Shakespeare), and ultimately to works by the newly discovered Voices as well.
- Contrasts biographical facts and literary proclivities of independent writers with those of the Voices and their works.
- Concludes with lists of Oxford's Voices and their works, lists of the era's independent writers and their literary works, and a list of 113 works that, in my judgment, others have erroneously assigned to Oxford.

The book does not rely upon what many Oxfordians consider to be controversial constructs, such as bastard-son theories, hidden ciphers, faked deaths, sexual-orientation inferences and the interpretation of fiction as contemporary allegory. There is no psychologizing in this book. Nowhere will you find passages conjecturing about how Oxford must have acted because of how he must have felt. My aim was to be objective throughout.

I am aware that about twenty years ago a pair of authors generated a list of Oxford's proposed writings based on textual “fingerprints.” Reviewers expressed

skepticism, for good reason. A “fingerprint” is not good enough. To identify a hidden author, one must identify full prints from both hands and must omit fingerprints that fail to match. As they say, one lie makes a liar. Similarly, one incompatible fact negates the case for a particular Voice and establishes the existence of an independent writer, sometimes only for a piece or part of a piece, but often for an entire canon.

Induction is a complex business. It does not take one from a premise to facts but from facts to a proposition, which when established can become a premise by which one can deduce additional facts. Details lead to context, and context leads to the discovery of more details. Induction allows deduction, and they must support each other mutually. That is the approach I have taken in this book.

An Online Brightbook™

Oxford's Voices is rendered in a new online format we call Brightbook™. The text is not cluttered with source citations, footnotes or endnotes, so reading flows freely. Every source is instantly available with a single click on the accompanying asterisk (*). Every term is searchable, providing a complete, error-free index. After any search, a few clicks on the Back button will bring you back to where you left off reading. Searching on a carat (^) takes you from one chapter or section to the next.

Contents

The book comprises twenty-four volumes, ordered within ten sections:

Preparation

Prologue and Opening Argument Earl of Oxford

Early Voices (1560-1579)

Prose Writers (1574-1604)

Early Euphuists
Wits: John Lyly
Wits: Robert Greene
Wits: Thomas Lodge
Wits: George Peele
Wits: Thomas Nashe
Pamphleteers

Playwrights (1580-1604)

Miscellaneous Playwrights
**Two Independent Playwrights to Whom
Scholars Have Credited Plays by Oxford**
**Three Independent Playwrights to Whose
Canons Oxford Contributed**
Senecan Closet Dramatists

Poets (1580-1604)

Miscellaneous Poets and Storytellers

Narrative Poets

Sonneteers

Songwriters

Compilers

Shakespeare

Those Who Knew

Independent Writers (1547-1635)

Summation and Epilogue

Hot Answers to Cool Questions

The subtitle of the book mentions “a broader investigation into the authorship of Elizabethan literature.” This project revealed answers to numerous questions that have dogged researchers of Elizabethan writing. Once the proper context is established, all kinds of seeming conundrums become parts of a sensible picture. Here are some questions to which I believe this book provides satisfactory answers:

1. How many allonyms and pseudonyms provide cover for works written by the Earl of Oxford?
2. To members of what family did Oxford's Voices dedicate the most books?
3. How many poems and lyrics in *The Passionate Pilgrime* (1599) did Oxford write?
4. How many times did Oxford write literary dedications to himself?
5. When and where did Oxford first employ the initials “W.S.” in print, implying that he had adopted the pseudonym, William Shakespeare?
6. When did Oxford tap Will Shaksper of Stratford to provide a body for the name William Shakespeare?
7. Did any of Oxford's Voices ever praise Shakespeare?
8. How many people hinted that they knew Oxford had one or more Voices?
9. What project may have triggered Elizabeth's decision in 1586 to pay Oxford 1000 pounds a year?
10. Was Oxford of low character? A plotter of murders? A philanderer? A pederast? A monstrous adversary? A secret Catholic? A mocker of the Bible?
11. What fellow poet did Oxford admire most?
12. What is the single most extensive “Oxmyth”?
13. Did Shakespeare ever take up Henry Chettle's plea to pen an epitaph for Queen Elizabeth?
14. What four other Elizabethan writers penned material under at least two pseudonyms?
15. What respected name attached to poetry is a cover for two consecutive writers, and who were they?

16. Did Robert Greene ever publish his promised *Blacke Booke*? If so, where is it?
17. Who composed George Peele's "only extant letter"? And who delivered it to Lord Burghley's doorstep?
18. To whom are Samuel Daniel's *Delia* sonnets addressed? Why did Daniel apologize for and "correct" them? Where did he get the name Delia?
19. Where did Robert Chester get the name Emaricdulfe?
20. Who wrote Richard Edwards's *Palamon & Arcyte*?
21. How many plays did Thomas Kyd write?
22. Is anything under Christopher Marlowe's name not at all by him?
23. Is anything in Ben Jonson's accepted canon not by him?
24. Did Ben Jonson make the 1602 revisions to *The Spanish Tragedie*?
25. Did Oxford write the glosses for Edmund Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579) under the initials "E.K."?
26. What parts of Thomas Watson's *Hekatompathia* (1582) did the Earl of Oxford write?
27. Who wrote *Greenes Groats-worth of Witte* (1592): Robert Greene, Henry Chettle, Thomas Nashe, Chettle and Greene, Chettle and Nashe, Greene and Nashe, all three of them, the Earl of Oxford, or someone else entirely?
28. How did William Rowley and William Shakespeare's names come to be placed on the title page of *The Birth of Merlin*, published in 1662?
29. How much of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* did Shakespeare and John Fletcher each write?
30. On how many plays did Shakespeare collaborate with each of the following people: Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton, George Chapman, Thomas Kyd, George Wilkins, John Fletcher, William Rowley, Christopher Marlowe, George Peele, William Stanley and Thomas Nashe?
31. Did Oxford write the Langham Letter?
32. Who wrote *Leicester's Commonwealth*?
33. Who wrote the Parnassus Plays?
34. Who wrote the body of *Willobie His Avis*? Who wrote the preface and brought the book to press? Who got upset about it and responded in print?
35. Was Richard Barnfield gay?
36. Was Walter Raleigh atheistic? Was Christopher Marlowe atheistic?
37. What was Oxford's opinion of witchcraft? What did he think of astrology and astrologers? Did he believe it was possible to conjure up spirits?
38. Did Oxford dress in an effeminate manner?
39. Did Barnabe Rich know the Earl of Oxford? If so, what did he, as revealed in his own words, think of him?
40. What literary name should be credited with initiating euphuism?
41. What else does W.C.'s marginal note in *Polimanteia* indicate that he knew?
42. To which person among four who qualify as "Lady Anne Dacre" did Henrie Wotton dedicate *A Courtlie controversie of Cupids Cautels* in 1578?
43. Did Oxford ever write pornography? If so, where?
44. Did Oxford ever write of homosexual attraction? If so, where? And what was his motive?
45. How many people did Gabriel Harvey battle in the pamphlet war of 1589-1597?
46. Why is Gabriel Harvey's writing so cryptic? What was he on about?
47. Among John Lyly, Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe, Gabriel Harvey and the Earl of Oxford, who is the most sympathetic victim of abuse?
48. What was Thomas Nashe's occupation?
49. How many of the nine documentary records of Thomas Nashe's activities are genuine?
50. Did Thomas Nashe spend time in the Fleet? Did he spend time in Yarmouth? Did he spend time at George Carey's house?
51. About whom was Nashe griping in his preface to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* (1589)? What work prompted him to complain of one who would "bodge up a blanke verse with ifs and ands"?
52. In 1589, Nashe wrote, "a tale of Jhon a Brainfords will, and the unluckie furmentie, wilbe as soon interteined into their libraries, as the best poeme that ever Tasso eternisht." Who is "Jhon a Brainford"? Why Tasso?
53. When authorities commanded Thomas Nashe and Gabriel Harvey to stop writing, who was silenced?
54. How many of these names are improperly spelled: Walter Raleigh, Thomas Blenerhasset, George Whetstone, George Turberville, Emilia Bassano?
55. Which among the following women writers did not write the most celebrated item attributed to her:
 - Isabella Whitney—*A Sweet Nosgay* (1573)
 - Margaret Tyler—*The Mirrour of princely Deeds and Knighthood* (1578)
 - Mary Sidney—*Tragedie of Antonie* (1592)
 - Emilia Bassano—*Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (1611)
 - Elizabeth Tanfield Cary—*The Tragedie of Mariam* (1613)?

If you already have opinions on these matters, I am confident that a surprising number of the book's answers will differ from yours. When you log into the book, you will find this list again, augmented with brief answers, each of which is supported in detail within the volume. Just search on "Hot Answers."

Accessing the Book

This project is a labor of love, designed to inform and delight enthusiasts. The publisher harbors no illusion that a volume on such a specialized subject will generate meaningful income. There will be no tours to promote it. Word-of-mouth recommendations will probably be the only path to new readers. If you can help, I would be grateful.

The publisher hopes to cover the cost of maintaining the website, so there is a moderate cost to access the book. Any Oxfordian who is strapped for money can access the bookset at no charge. Just let the publisher know that you plan a review for posting or publishing somewhere useful. All permissions will be at the publisher's discretion. You may review any chapter (or the whole book). To access the volume, go to www.oxfordvoices.com. Address content matters to

info@oxfordvoices.com. Address any personal messages to bob@oxfordvoices.com.

Deep thanks to all my Oxfordian friends. I do hope this effort delights you.

Here are the titles I think are the most fun and for which reviews seem most warranted:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. William Adlington | 12. Thomas Lodge |
| 2. E.C. (Elizabeth Cary) | 13. Christopher Marlowe |
| 3. Samuel Daniel | 14. Thomas Nashe |
| 4. John Doleta | 15. Robert Parry |
| 5. Richard Edwards | 16. Thomas Proctor |
| 6. George Gascoigne | 17. Mary Sidney |
| 7. Arthur Golding | 18. Phillip Stubbes |
| 8. Robert Greene | 19. John Trussel |
| 9. Henry Howard +
Margaret Tyler | 20. William Warner |
| 10. Thomas Kyd | 21. Thomas Watson |
| 11. James Lea | 22. Henry Willobie |