

Further Proof from the The Stratford Monument:

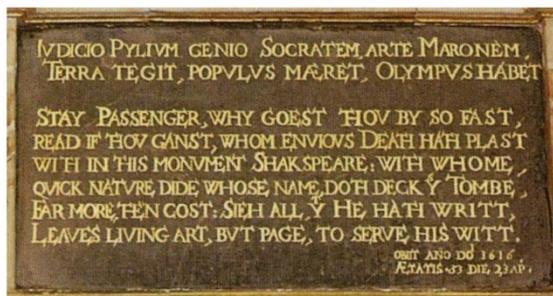
Edward de Vere Was William Shakespeare

David L. Roper © 2011

It has been previously shown in “**Ben Jonson’s Vow that Edward de Vere Is Shakespeare**”, that the monument in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, contains this encrypted avowal. The figure of Shakespeare was originally presented as a bust nursing a sack of merchandise: later identified as wool, but the woolsack has since been replaced by a neat flat cushion, and the hands that formerly clasped the sack no longer do so. Instead, one hand holds a quill, while the other hand holds down a sheet of paper resting on the cushion. One should try writing with a quill on a piece of paper resting on a cushion, for only then will the absurdity of this ‘improvement’ to the bust be understood.

The original version of the effigy would have been readily acknowledged by the deceased’s family. They would have recognised their relative, and the place he held in the township, as a wealthy businessman. As for the inscription beneath the bust, those who were educated enough to read it, must have soon learned there was something about this man that it was best not to speak out about. For instance, in 1662, when the Reverend John Ward was appointed vicar to Holy Trinity Church, he was intent upon making a good impression. Thus, one of the earliest notes he made, read: “**Remember to peruse Shakespeare’s plays. And be versed in them, that I may not be ignorant in that matter.**”¹ Ward remained vicar for nineteen years, and his notebooks increased in number to sixteen. But the plays are never again mentioned. A single paragraph in a later notebook may explain this. “**I have learned that Mr Shakespeare was a natural wit without any art at all.**”² It is a sentiment that does nothing whatever to contradict the effigy with its woolsack.

The tablet beneath the bust, containing the inscription revealing Ben Jonson’s vow that Edward de



Vere was Shakespeare and he should be tested to verify it, has something more to disclose about the cover-up. For this, we turn our attention to the Latin distich preceding the sixaine. As previously indicated, the second line, with its 35 letters reduced to 34 by the use of ‘Æ’ instead of ‘AE’, is the number of the key for confirming the mathematical algorithm that led to the decryption.

It is also the only line which has been inset, thereby setting it apart for special attention.

The translation from Latin to English reads: “**THE JUDGEMENT OF PYLUS, THE GENIUS OF SOCRATES. THE ART OF MARO: THE EARTH ENCLOSES, THE PEOPLE SORROW, OLYMPUS POSSESSES.**” Nestor was the King of Pylos (Rex Pylum): a mythical character described by Homer as having fought at Troy. Socrates was a Greek philosopher made famous by what was later written about him, for he actually wrote nothing himself. Virgil is not named as such; instead the author of the distich has resorted to Virgil’s surname, Maro. It would seem he did not wish to draw attention to a familiar name; for he also avoided naming Nestor,

by resorting instead to his rule over Pylus. Virgil died in the year 19 BCE. He was therefore, according to Christian belief, a heathen. In order to make his poetry acceptable to scholars, a sixteenth-century biography of the poet (*Een Schone Historie Van Vergilius*, 1552) declared that Virgil had obtained his gift for verse by seizing it from a poetic spirit: whose identity, he thereafter kept hidden.

It is a mathematical fact that the sixaine beneath this Latin distich contains an encryption avowing that Edward Earl of Oxford was William Shakespeare. In which case, the three figures from antiquity are confirming that the bust above these words was firstly, a Nestor – a mythical figure; secondly, a Socrates – a man who wrote nothing but achieved fame from the reports of others; and thirdly, a Virgil – a person who took his poetry from a spirit, whose identity he was then forced to keep secret.

Doubt this attribution, as one may, but the question then arises: what have any one of this trio got in common with the known facts about William Shakespeare of familiar appeal? In *Troilus and Cressida* the playwright referred to Nestor, but only to disparage him – “**old Nestor, whose wit was mouldy ere your grandsires had nails on their toes,**” [act 2 sc.i, 106-7]. And again: “**that stale old mouse-eaten dry cheese Nestor ... is not proved worth a blackberry**” [act 5 sc. iv, 10-12]. Shakespeare biographers have never sought to exploit any similarity between their subject and Nestor, but then neither have they favoured Socrates as an example of Shakespeare’s art. Socrates wrote nothing, hence there is nothing written with which to compare. Virgil is a little different, but in comparison to Ovid, he falls far short. L. P. Wilkinson while reporting on – “**the best book we have on Ovid, reminds us that Shakespeare echoes him about four times as often as he echoes Virgil, that he draws on every book of the Metamorphosis, and that there is scarcely a play untouched by his influence.**”³

The question posed above was, what does this trio of ancients possess that would explain their having been named in honour of Shakespeare, particularly on a monument intended for his remembrance? Very little is the only true answer. No matter what words are used to shine a favourable light on these three men, it can never dim the fact that Cicero, Aristotle, and Ovid would have been a better choice. But when it comes to considering the reason for those who were named, Nestor, Socrates and Virgil, and when this is viewed against the background of Jonson’s encrypted avowal that Edward Earl of Oxford was Shakespeare, an obvious interpretation transpires.

In the first of the proofs to head this website’s chain of separate arguments, it was explained how Thomas Thorpe’s asyntactic preface to the Sonnets led to an explanation requiring the transfer of Oxford’s plays and poetry to William Shaxpere (Shakespeare’s name is spelt exactly as it appeared on his marriage certificate) for this is the man whose bust we have been discussing.

By proceeding from the conclusions reached in that proof, the pieces fall into place. William Shaxpere can now be seen as a mythical king in the realm of English literature. Like Nestor, he is spoken about, and his legendary deeds are repeatedly retold. But, as with Socrates, he never wrote a word. His fame rests entirely upon what has been said and written about him. So that when we come to Virgil, the missing piece of the jigsaw is set in place. Shaxpere acquired his ‘gift’ for writing verse from another who possessed that talent, but whose name he could never reveal.

Yet again, we are given reason to suppose that Shaxpere’s fame as Shakespeare was acquired by him secretly, from the true author. He was the proverbial lowclass pawn in a game of power politics, played amongst the nobility to protect elite names and reputations from scandal. Disgrace threatened several noble families if Oxford’s sonnets were published, and he was identified as the lover of the youthful Earl of Southampton. By distancing Oxford from his poetry; that is, by surrendering his authorship to Shaxpere, Oxford, Southampton and Burghley became disconnected from any scandal.

Shaxpere had previously been employed as Oxford's allonym in a hoax concocted between the poet and Southampton in 1592, when *Venus and Adonis* was being prepared for publication. By the time the second poem, *Lucrece*, was published in 1594, the hoax had been discovered – it is hinted at in *Willobie His Avisa* – and Oxford was forced to cease publishing under the name Shakespeare. That is the real reason why Shakespearean scholars remain baffled as to why their man never again published any of his poetry; nor did he publish a single one of his plays, although pirated copies were frequently sold in the bookshops. Shaxpere, the plaintiff in a number of well-documented court cases for non-payment of debts concerning his other business activities, ignored these thefts of 'his' work. It is quite inconceivable that he should have done so. Yet, so great is the idolisation of this man: it even borders on the religious, that reason no longer applies to the many contradictions that question his authorship. It is therefore with this that we come to a further revelation on the Stratford monument. Clare Asquith wrote about the word games that had become habitual in the time of Shakespeare. **“Late sixteenth-century England was a country that provided a ready audience for dissident codes: its people were addicted to hidden meanings. Codes, devices and punning allusions were everywhere—in street songs and ballads, conversation, poems, plays, woodcuts, portraits, [etc.]”** ⁴ In the present day, the same fascination for wordplay is evident. National newspapers regularly supply a daily crossword puzzle and a Sudoku problem; some even extend this to a variety of brain teasers covering an entire page. A well stocked bookshop will often have a whole shelf devoted to puzzle magazines and paperbacks that are designed to test the wits of the reader.

Amongst the cryptic clues that have been employed in these publications, one stands out as an example of its earlier use on the Stratford monument. The terminology **“WITH WHOME QVICK NATVRE DIDE”** resembles a method of concealment in which words are allowed to die in order to leave behind their first syllables. When these are joined together, they form a phrase or statement that was hidden amongst the extra letters. Consider this particular clue, which was part of a crossword puzzle in the *Today* newspaper. **“Diane and Edward faded away.”** By allowing these two names to 'die'; that is 'fade away', we are left with Di and Ed, which become 'died': the answer to the clue. The same strategy can be applied to the words on the monument, but only after they have been translated into Latin. In fact, Latin is hinted at by the inversion of a noun followed by an adjective, as in **“MONVMENT SHAKSPEARE”**, which precedes the proposed translation.

Thus, by translating **“QVICK NATVRE”** into its Latin equivalent, we get, **“SUMMA DE VELOCIVM RERVM NATVRA”**. This is a cue to the title of a much acclaimed book of that time, Titus Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*. (The title means *Nature*, the Latin translates literally as: 'Of Natural Things'), Hence, by taking this title and adding the Latin word for 'quick', and then qualifying it with the Latin for 'the sum of', the title of Lucretius's *Nature* becomes, *Quick Nature*. It is noteworthy that although the Latin word, 'velox', meaning 'quick', is often used for the rapid motion of physical objects, it is also used to describe the inanimate. For example: **“natura humani ingenii agilis ac velox”**, &c. (Lewis and Short).

We are now in a position to do as the inscription indicates; that is, discover what happens when **“QVICK NATVRE DIDE”**. The syllables that remain after the end ones have died (taken from the Latin translation) are, **“SUM DE VE RE NATV”**; which, after joining 've' to 're', reads: **“SUM DE VERE NATV”**. This translates, literally, as **“I AM DE VERE BY BIRTH”**. It is therefore the perfect antecedent to the 34-column grille that states **“SO TEST HIM, I VOW HE IS E DE VERE AS HE SHAKSPEARE: ME B. I.”**

The Stratford monument, although ostensibly dedicated to Shakespeare, is in fact a giant cryptogram written in three different languages, visual, Latin and English. Visually, it was intended to satisfy the

local community attending church services. They would have recognised their former neighbour, and given nodding acquiescence to the effigy and the woosack, which the figure nursed. The Latin distich would have tested even the better educated, with its references to 'Pylium', 'Socratem' and 'Maronem'. But since the sixaine mentioned 'Shakspeare' and his 'Witt', this would have helped mollify the more curious. For, as the Reverend John Ward learned, after arriving in Stratford-upon-Avon and enquiring into Shaxpere's background: "he was a natural wit, but without any art at all."

References

1. Charlton Ogburn, *The Mystery of William Shakespeare*, London, 1988.
2. *ibid*
3. John F. Nims, *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, The Arthur Golding Translation 1567, New York, 1965.
4. Clare Asquith, *Shadow Play*, New York, 2005.

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