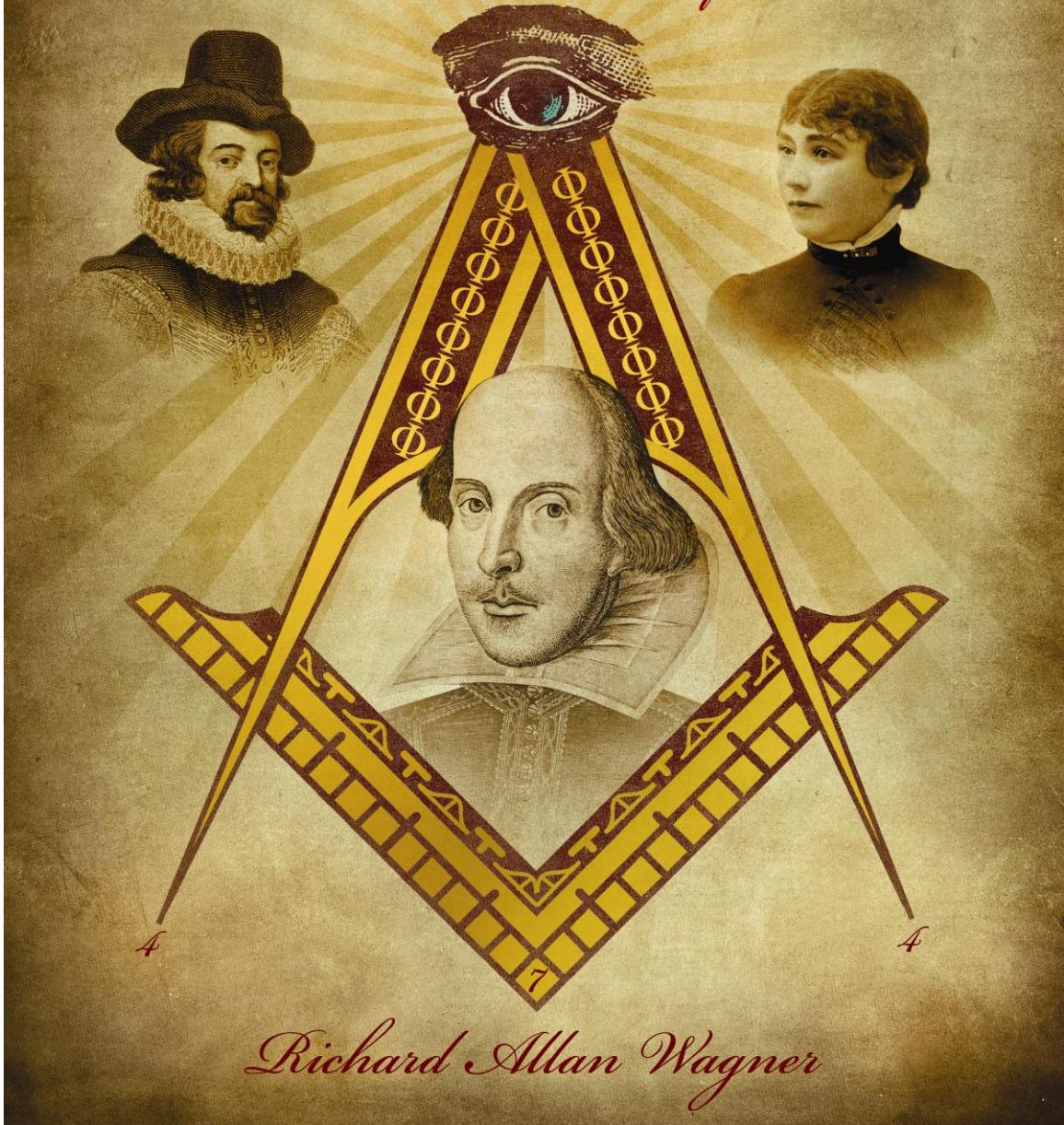


*The
Lost Secret
of William Shakespeare*



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PART TWO

BACON AND THE ROSICRUCIAN- MASONIC

TREASURE TRAIL

The Rise of the Rosicrucians and Freemasons

The Catholic suppression of the Knights Templar in 1307 had driven European philosophy and science completely underground. The progressive minds from the Templar ranks proficient in the arts and sciences found refuge in small, secret enclaves throughout Europe. The clandestine “movement” was generically known to its adherents as “The Invisible College,”* and “The Great Society.”*

It is not certain when such terms as “Rosicrucian” and “Freemason” began to take root. But it is certain that the Movement lacked any semblance of cohesive organization and purpose. Nonetheless, the Movement was the specific cause of the Renaissance which, in its early phase, had been dominated by a burst of artistic genius under the Italian masters such as Da Vinci and Michelangelo. The following century, however, witnessed the intellectual explosion of the English Renaissance which brought revolutionary innovations in literature, science, and social philosophy with Bacon as its chief architect.*

Dr. John Dee, the immanent authority on Hermeticism and Kabbalism in England laid the ground-work for the formation of the “Rosicrucian Order.”* He most certainly initiated young Bacon into the Order, as evidenced by Jacob Cats’ engraving (1655) of Dee passing the “Lantern of Rosicrucian Light” to Bacon—over an open grave.



Jacob Cats' engraving (1655) of John Dee passing the Lantern to Francis Bacon

For all intents, Bacon was now the leader of the Rosicrucian movement.* However, in 1611, Michael Maier, the German Rosicrucian Master, who in earlier years had become associated with Bacon through John Dee, came to London for two basic reasons. First, the new English language (being created by Bacon's Fra Rosi Crosse society) was rich in Rosicrucian symbolism. The lavish metaphorical lexicon of Shakespeare had fast become a medium for expressing the underlying ideals and philosophy of the Movement, and Maier hungered to digest it. Second, he wanted Bacon to give direction to the Movement and articulate its purpose. To that end (according to Rosicrucian tradition) Maier, who possessed no real authority, proffered the unprecedented position of Rosicrucian Emperor to Bacon who humbly accepted.

In laying the foundation of a Rosicrucian society, Bacon took steps to insure that it would serve the purpose of helping to build and spread his Great Instauration. However,

his greatest concern for the society was that its spiritual philosophy should always remain secular avoiding the temptation of becoming a religion.

Bacon understood that all religion begins with a spiritual philosophy expounded by a charismatic historical leader around whom people rally—eventually denigrating into a cult of personality in which the personality always becomes the focal point while the spiritual philosophy is relegated to obscurity.

As a measure to insure that Rosicrucianism wouldn't become Baconism, Bacon invented a mythical Rosicrucian founder whom he cleverly dubbed Christian Rosenkreutz or Brother CRC—some sources make references to Father CRC (Rosenkreutz is German for Rose Cross). As had been the case with Shakespeare, the names were carefully crafted as encryption devices corresponding to the powerful Kabbalistic number **13**.

Bacon's love of concealing coded messages in plain sight is a consistent feature in all of his pseudonymous works. It was the method by which he communicated higher levels of meaning to the initiated reader. Bacon made use of the numerical encryption techniques he had employed in Walsingham's spy network. These usually involved the "Simple," "Kaye," "Reverse," "Short," and "Pythagorean" Ciphers—each employing a unique system of matching the letters of a name or word to specific numbers which, when added together result in a master code number. Thus, in accordance with the Pythagorean Cipher, the name **Christian Rosenkreutz** adds up to the number **103**. In the Simple Cipher, both **Brother CRC** and **Father CRC** also yield a total of **103** while the name **Shakespeare**, in Simple Cipher, gives the same result. All of these pseudonyms correspond to the number **103** signifying they are, in essence, the same person. As a

general rule, zeros are treated as nulls, and are not counted. Hence, **103** simplifies to **13**. The true significance of this amazing number will be revealed in a later chapter.

Another remarkable aspect of the coded Rosenkreutz legend involves the year 1407 as the founding date of the Rosicrucian Order. Notice that it is exactly **100** years after the downfall of the Knights Templar—**100** equates to Francis (**67**) Bacon (**33**), Simple Cipher. Bacon further used the year **1407** as a code number to be deciphered by simply adding the numbers in reverse, i.e. **70 + 41 = 111 = Bacon** (Kaye Cipher).

In 1614 Bacon wrote the first Rosicrucian Manifesto titled *Fama Fraternitatus* as an anonymous treatise. Many literary scholars (including the Shakespeare-Rosicrucian scholar W.F.C. Wigston) have noted that the *Fama* not only reads like Shakespeare, but its philosophical agenda is precisely that of Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* and *The New Atlantis*.* It basically presents a mysterious biographical story about Christian Rosenkreutz who is also referred to as Brother CRC. The story describes his quest to attain the secrets of Hermetic and Kabbalistic knowledge while traveling and studying in the middle-east. Eventually, he becomes a Master of arcane knowledge.

Bacon followed the *Fama* with two more manifestos: the *Confessio Fraternitatus* in 1615 (again written anonymously) and the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz** in 1616 using the name of Johann Valentin Andrea, a figure shrouded in mystery—reminiscent of Shaksper.* The *Chymical Wedding* was clearly written with John Dee in mind. Bacon took care to place Dee's famous "Monad" hieroglyph beside the text of the wedding invitation on the title page.

Overall, the three manifestos called for a reformation of society on all levels—social, spiritual, scientific and artistic. Moreover, they stressed the need to adopt a new

methodology for investigating nature through experimentation over reliance on the authority of Aristotle and Galen whose works emphasized the system of syllogistic, deductive reasoning. Bacon effectively demonstrated the superiority of his method of deductive experimentation—thus, forming the foundation of the modern scientific method set forth in his seminal work, the *Novum Organum* (1620).

1616 was a pivotal year for Bacon. It marked the completion of his work on the Rosicrucian manifestos, and it saw the death of his front man Shaksper. With the publication of the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*, Bacon was ready to take his concept of a new, enlightened, secular society much further.

As had been the case with the Rosicrucians, Operative Freemasonry was stagnating without direction or purpose. The old order had adopted the practice of accepting worthy men such as Bacon into their ranks who were not employed in the trade of masonry. As descendants of the Knights Templar, the Rosicrucians and the Operative Freemasons both made use of the same symbols and rituals. On a deeper level, the *Chymical Wedding* reflected Bacon's desire to (alchemically) transmute the two orders into one, unified society sharing the same ideals, goals and philosophy.

The Rosicrucian manifestos reveal Bacon's obsession for discovering all of nature's hidden secrets. The fundamental inspiration for his philosophy is based on *Proverbs 25*, Verse 2 of the *Old Testament*: “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings to search out a matter.”* Bacon's new society would mirror God's work by uncovering everything concealed in nature. However, that concept posed a unique problem with regard to *Proverbs 25*—i.e. the business of searching out a matter was clearly reserved for kings. The die had already been cast with the story of Brother CRC—

therefore, the issue of being equal to kings forced Bacon to create, still, another mythical figure who would fill the gap—thus, the legend of “Hiram Abiff” was born along with the parallel secret society of “Speculative Freemasonry.”* Naturally, Bacon made no significant distinction between Rosicrucians and Freemasons. They were all one family.

Similar to the role of Christian Rosenkreutz (with the Rosicrucian order) Hiram serves the dual function as the mythical founder of Freemasonry and the archetype of the “Master Mason.” The only difference is that Hiram Abiff, who is not a king, is equal to the biblical King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre because they all share in the knowledge of the “Master’s word” (i.e. divine knowledge).

Bacon’s story has King Solomon enlisting the help of Hiram Abiff as the architect of his temple. During the construction, Hiram is confronted by three fellowcraft workers who demand that he give them the Master’s secret word. Hiram refuses, whereupon the three fellowcrafts murder him. They proceed to bury Hiram’s body in a shallow grave which they mark with a sprig from an acacia tree. Later, Hiram’s body is found and dug up from the grave and the murderers are subdued and executed.

To this day, all Masonic 3rd Degree candidates are required to assume the staged role of Hiram—being ritualistically murdered and then raised (from the grave) becoming Master Masons by virtue of being metaphorically RAISED to the “Sublime” level of kings. Hence, all Master Masons assume the identity of Hiram, making them all equal and worthy (as kings) to emulate God’s work.

Needless to say, the Shakespearean works are ripe with Rosicrucian-Masonic symbolism and ritual (to be discussed in greater detail in chapter 23). Furthermore, the Fra Rosi Crosse society who were the first Speculative Freemasons, made extensive use

of various secret encryption techniques. These included Key words which usually had both a symbolic and numeric meaning. The letters in a word or name have a specific number value in accordance with a Cipher Table. The numbers matching the letters are added up to render a code number.

The name “Fra Rosi Crosse” adds up to the number 157 in the Simple Cipher, and the number 287 in the Kaye Cipher. As mentioned earlier, these numbers function as the Fra Rosi Crosse “seals” which are consistently encoded throughout the Shakespearean works, thereby serving as identifying markers of the Fra Rosi Crosse society. One of the reasons Bacon selected these two particular numbers is that, when combined, they add up to the important Kabbalistic number **444** (to be discussed in a later chapter).

	SIMPLE	REVERSE	SHORT	KAYE
A	1	24	1	27
B	2	23	2	28
C	3	22	3	29
D	4	21	4	30
E	5	20	5	31
F	6	19	6	32
G	7	18	7	33
H	8	17	8	34
I	9	16	9	35
J	9	16	9	35
K	10	15	1	10
L	11	14	2	11
M	12	13	3	12
N	13	12	4	13
O	14	11	5	14
P	15	10	6	15
Q	16	9	7	16
R	17	8	8	17
S	18	7	9	18
T	19	6	1	19
U	20	5	2	20
V	20	5	2	20
W	21	4	3	21
X	22	3	4	22
Y	23	2	5	23
Z	24	1	6	24

Elizabethan Cipher Tables

The King James Bible

In his first regnal year, King James presided over a conference between Episcopalians and Puritans. The primary topic for discussion concerned the numerous, and sometimes conflicting versions of the Bible—most of which were not written in English.



King James I

The Puritan leader John Rainoldes stressed the need for a uniform English translation of the Bible.* The King approved the idea, and commissioned a force of 54 translators to execute the project. The translators were then arranged into six groups operating under specific guidelines. It was the consummate set-up. Bacon had every intention of producing his own translation of the Bible since his teen years, and the King provided the perfect opportunity and means for its implementation—along with the ideal cover for which Bacon was only too happy to insure that James would receive full credit for the undertaking. Hence, the “Bacon Bible” would forever be known as the *King James Version* by virtue of Bacon’s need for a patron to finance such an immense project, and a front man behind which he could operate with complete invisibility.

By 1609, the translating was completed and the roughly drafted manuscripts were handed over to James who, in turn, covertly committed them to Bacon’s care. Thus, Bacon, along with his Fra Rosi Cross society, applied the Shakespeare touch to the work resulting in the most impeccably polished best seller the world has ever seen. With the publication of the *King James Version* of the Bible in 1611 and the 1623 Shakespeare Folio, the English Language underwent a total transformation in just 12 years.

The late actor Charleton Heston stated “no other literary work reads more like Shakespeare than the King James Translation of the Bible.”* Author Edwin D. Lawrence said “When Bacon was born, English as a literary language did not exist, but once he died he has succeeded in making the English language the noblest vehicle of thought ever possessed by mankind. This he accomplished merely by his Bible and his Shakespeare.”*

Just as he had done with the Shakespeare work, Bacon incorporated both coded messages and Rosicrucian-Masonic symbolism into the “KJV” (King James Version) which identified him as the author, or in this case, the chief translator and editor.

One of the most obvious of Bacon’s coded devices used in the 1611 publication of the KJV is his trademark “headpiece” engraved on the cover. The same engraving block had also been used to print the headpiece of the 1593 publication of *Venus and Adonis* (the first work to bear the Shakespeare name). Later, it would appear in Bacon’s *Advancement and Proficiency of Learning*. All of Bacon’s works used variations of this design (to be further discussed in chapter 24).

Without a doubt the most significant encryption technique employed throughout Bacon’s works involves a variety of numerical ciphers. These typically involved the Simple, Kaye, Reverse, and Pythagorean Cipher Tables—each matching specific numbers to the letters of the alphabet.

Bacon chose Psalms (his favorite book in the Bible) as the junction for his encrypted messages. He also used Key words as signposts to provide coded instructions (much like a treasure map) to the initiated reader. So, just as he uses synonyms for his name such as hog, sow, swine, etc. to serve as Key words in the Shakespearean works, he also makes use of the same system in the KJV, starting with the appearance of the word swine in Leviticus, Chapter 11 verse 7. This, of course, directs us to Psalm 117. Bacon chose the number 117 because it corresponds to the name John Dee in Reverse Cipher. Turning to Psalm 117, we find that it consists of precisely 33 words (Simple Cipher for the name Bacon). No other biblical translation does this.

The second appearance of the word swine occurs in Deuteronomy, Chapter 14 verse 8. Turning to Psalm 148 we find that it is comprised of 202 words. In encryption codes, zeros are ignored as nulls, leaving the number 22. This is code for Bacon's birth date, January 22 (i.e. the 22nd day of the year). Again, no other biblical translation does this. Additionally, Bacon deliberately chose the number **148** because it matches the name **William Tudor** (Simple Cipher). This would have been Bacon's royal name had he acceded to the throne.

Throughout the KJV, Bacon always uses the word swine as the substitute for his name, with only one exception—the word boar is the third Key word in the series representing Bacon's name. This is significant because the boar is a predominant feature of Bacon's coat of arms. He is definitely taking us to a higher level of understanding. There is an important lesson to be learned before we can move on. And, sure enough, we appear to be at a dead end since the word boar has shown up in verse 13 of Psalm 80. However, Bacon has chosen this Psalm to point out the significant "Fibonacci" connection between the numbers 13 and 8 (to be discussed in a later chapter). However, the Key to encoding the instructions leading us forward is in the wording of the verse itself: "The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it."* The Key words here are "waste" and "devour." In Bacon's day, those words were synonymous with "take away" or "subtract." Thus, we are simply being instructed to subtract 13 from 80, resulting in the number 67. In the Simple Cipher that number matches the name Francis. We now turn to Psalm 67, and, voila, it consists of exactly 111 words (the name Bacon in Kaye Cipher). Again, no other translation of the Bible will yield the same results.

By now, the keen reader has acquired a fundamental understanding of Bacon's methodology. However, he has provided still another revelation for our discovery. Starting from the beginning, with first word of the book of Genesis, we notice that (unlike any other biblical translation) the 46th word of the KJV is "Light." This is the single most important word in both the Rosicrucian and Masonic vocabularies. It's a signpost directing us to **Psalm 46**.

There are several reasons Bacon chose this Psalm as the converging point for his coded message. First, the structure of the Psalm, prior to its retranslation, provided an ideal slate upon which Bacon could pen an ingenious "super-message." Second, its numerical value of **46** stands between the numbers **45** and **47**. These three numbers, aligned in series, serve as a backdrop for a spectacular display of code using the Pythagorean, Kaye and Simple Ciphers.

Thus, we start with the preceding Psalm **45**. That number corresponds to the name **Shakespeare** in the 1 through 9 Pythagorean Cipher. Moreover, Psalm 45 has 17 verses. The number **17** in the Pythagorean Table matches the name **Bacon**. This is another signpost. Once again, the wording of the verse provides critical information as it indicates the importance of a name is about to be revealed: "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee forever and ever."*

The revelatory stage has been eloquently set as we now step into Psalm 46. In the Kaye Cipher, the name **Christian Rosenkreutz** corresponds to the number 406, i.e. 46. It is no accident that the word **Light**, the 46th word in the KJV, matches that name which in turn leads us to Psalm 46 which functions as another signpost. So, we count down to the 46th

word of Psalm 46—we land on the word **shake**. Reversing the process, we count up from the end of the Psalm (starting with the word Selah) to the 47th word which is **spear**.

Until now, Baconian scholars have missed the significance of the number 47, insisting that the word **Selah** be ignored so that the word **spear** would be the 46th word from the Psalm's ending. They also ignore the fact that the word Selah appears two more times in the coded message. If the word is to be ignored once then it should be rejected altogether—but that would then destroy the encryption.

Bacon knew what he was doing. He deliberately ends the Psalm with “Selah” for two reasons. First, the word Selah corresponds to the number **33** in Simple Cipher. Here, Bacon is using one of his favorite encryption devices by ending the Psalm with his own signature, **33**. And second, he wants the word **spear** to be the 47th word from the end for the purpose of presenting us with a brilliant metaphor. Thus, in Simple Cipher, the number **47** matches the name **Hiram**. This is no coincidence as the number **47** is twice mentioned in the Masonic 3rd Degree lecture with regard to the “47th problem” (also known as the “Pythagorean Theorem”) in Euclid's *Elements*—it is the number of the Master Mason.

Now comes the main course—the *pieces de resistance*. We count the number of words between the words **shake** and **spear**, resulting in the number **111**, which corresponds to the name Bacon in the Kaye Cipher. In a master stroke, Bacon has united the names Shakespeare (45), Christian Rosenkreutz (46), and Hiram (47) with his own name, thereby revealing the three names, along with their three matching numbers to be pseudonymous aspects of himself.

Furthermore, Bacon has crafted a way to prove it out mathematically. We remember that his two Rosicrucian seals when combined equal **444**. And, when we place the trio of numbers side-by-side, i.e. **45 46 47**, a remarkable pattern emerges. Just as he employs the method of displaying his code numbers in the Psalm both frontward and backward, Bacon does the same with the “trio”, i.e. 444 and 567. We now combine them, resulting in 1011, or **111**. Moreover, we get the same result by partitioning the trio in halves, then combining them, i.e. $454 + 647 = 1011$. None of this is coincidence!

Finally, the metaphorical meaning becomes clear. At the outset of his initiation into each Masonic Degree, the initiate (Candidate) proclaims his wish to receive “Light.” Thus, being lead to Psalm 46, the initiate seeking Light (knowledge), represented by the number 46, begins his journey of insight and discovery as he enters the “Bacon Light” represented by the number **111** through which he is transformed from initiate to Master in the number 47. Therefore, Christian Rosenkreutz (46) and Hiram (47) serve as Masonic pillars flanking Bacon (**111**) in the unifying form of **Shake—111—Spear**.

The rich linguistic style of the KJV is uniquely different from all other versions of the Bible. The numerous parallels with the Shakespearean works are unmistakable—this includes the encrypted content that is simply not present in any other biblical translation.*

Inventing America

The concept of a utopian state originated with Plato's *Republic*. Prior to the seventeenth century, such societies existed only on paper and in the imaginary realm. Bacon's vision of an ideal Rosicrucian civilization is described in his book *The New Atlantis*. The locale for this society, however, would not be Europe, as Michael Maier had hoped—rather it would have a fresh start in the New World that lay across the ocean to the west.*

English colonization of the new continent had been a fanciful preoccupation throughout Elizabeth's reign, but all attempts to colonize were ill conceived and short lived. One of the principal items on King James' agenda was the more expansive and enduring enterprise of New World colonization. This laid the foundation for the implementation of Bacon's Rosicrucian society.*

With the King's approval, Bacon drafted a charter for a colonial venture called the Virginia Company of which he was a founding member. The charter, in fact, was a constitution providing the structure and guidelines for governing the new society. This would later inspire the authors of the Constitution of the United States of America.*

The year 1606 saw the establishment of several Rosicrucian colonies, the most prominent taking root in what is now Pennsylvania.* Later, Benjamin Franklin (who was greatly influenced by Bacon's work) would emerge as the highest ranking Rosicrucian-Masonic figure from that colony. Likewise, other Rosicrucian-Masonic founding fathers

of the new American nation such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Paine were avid readers of Bacon. Jefferson is said to have carried a picture of Bacon with him wherever he went.* In his book *The Secret Destiny of America*, Manly P. Hall writes: “Franklin spoke for the Order of the Quest, and most of the men who worked with him in the early days of the American Revolution were also members. The plan was working out, the New Atlantis was coming into being, in accordance with the program laid down by Francis Bacon a hundred and fifty years earlier.”*

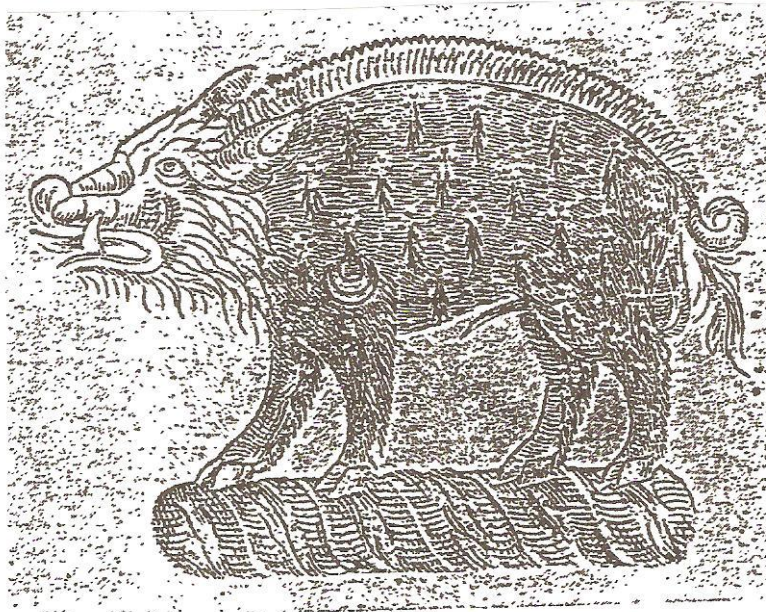
In May of 1609, a Virginia Company voyage involving nine ships carrying 500 colonists was severely struck by a hurricane. One of the ships, the *Sea Venture* was presumed to have perished with all aboard. Unknown to the rest of the fleet, the vessel had run aground on the island of what is now Bermuda. Up to that time, mariners had looked upon the unexplored island in superstitious awe, believing that it was a habitat of witches and demons. Bermuda was thought to be a remnant of Atlantis ruled over by the gods Neptune and Jupiter.

Much to their surprise, the castaways of the *Sea Venture* found the island of Bermuda to be a lush, demi-paradise with abundant food and fresh water. They stayed for nine months before refloating the ship, and making their way to Virginia. Meanwhile, news of the miraculous misadventure reached England. The actual details of the event, however, were kept in a strictly confidential report known only to the Virginia Company’s board of directors of whom Bacon was a foremost member.

The *Sea Venture* incident became the inspiration for *The Tempest*,* the only Shakespearean play that is neither tragedy, nor comedy, nor history. In essence, the play is a philosophical dream sequence dramatizing both Bacon’s views of Rosicrucian-

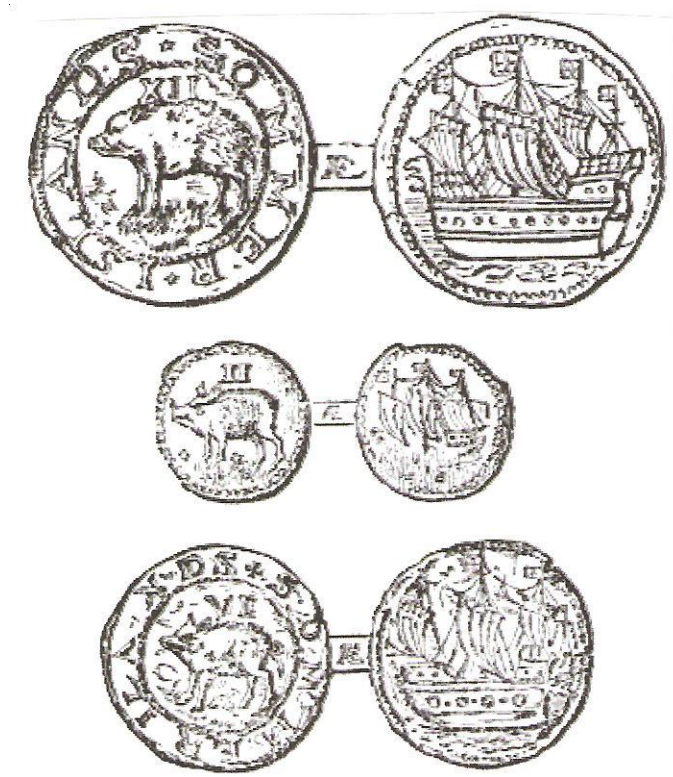
Masonic principles and his scheme for *the Advancement and Proficiency of Learning*. The play's chief protagonist Prospero is patterned after John Dee, while the monstrous, deformed Caliban (an anagram of canibal) is another of Bacon's numerous personifications of Robert Cecil.

Soon after the *Sea Venture* episode, the first colonial currency went into circulation. It consisted of four different coins: the Shilling, Sixpence, Threepence, and Twopence. The coins, appropriately referred to as "Hog Money," had the image of a boar stamped on the front, and the image of the *Sea Venture* on the back. There is a remarkable resemblance between the boar on Hog Money and the boar in Bacon's coat of arms.*



Boar from Bacon's coat of arms with the Crescent moon brand above the front left leg.

Engraving from Bacon's *Novum Organum*



Colonial Hog Money

Although the colonists were English subjects, they saw their enterprise as a fresh start in a land they regarded as their own. Names like Nova Scotia, New England, New York, and New Hampshire were nothing more than extensions of the Old World. They wanted their new country to have an identity that would be easily distinguished from the motherland. Hence, the name America began to take a firm hold with its new occupants proudly calling themselves Americans. But where did the word America come from?

The conventional explanation for the origin of the word “America” rests with an obscure German monk by the name of Waldseemuller who, in 1507, published a book titled *Cosmographiae Introductio* that included a map of the New World. Waldseemuller was familiar with numerous accounts of sailors using a word sounding like “america” when speaking of the continent to the west. After reading of the exploits credited to the Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci, Waldseemuller simply married the two unrelated pieces of information resulting in his erroneous assumption that Vespucci was the discoverer of the new land mass which the German monk arbitrarily dubbed “America.”

In their book *The Hiram Key*, the Masonic authors Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas cast further light on the origin of the word America: “Waldseemuller got the name right but the explanation wrong. His personal inclination for meaningful names misled him, and the power of the printing press ensured that his error was transmitted widely in a very short space of time. Very shortly after he had written these words, he realised his great mistake and publicly retracted his assertion that Amerigo Vespucci was the discoverer of the New World—but by then it was too late, people had an explanation that seemed to make some sort of sense. It was a classic case of history (to paraphrase Henry Ford) becoming bunk.”*

In truth, knowledge of a westerly continent over the Atlantic Ocean was not new. Contemporary archeological and forensic evidence support the fact that the ancient cultures of the east had been in contact with the North and South American Continents for thousands of years. Additionally, the name “America,” in reference to a land mass west of the Atlantic, had been in use long before Vespucci’s time.

An early Jewish sect known collectively as the Nasoreans, Essenes, and the Qumradians made reference to a perfect place on earth marked by a star they called “Merica.” Actually, the star is the planet Venus, which, next to the moon, is the brightest body in the night sky. According to the Nasoreans, Merica is a land of paradise that lay directly to the west under the “blazing star.”

It is believed that the Templar knights, in their excavation of the Temple Mount, discovered an abundance of Nasorean scrolls along with the meaning of the word “Merica.”* Francis Bacon, more than anyone, understood the word’s significance, and it is no coincidence that the name “America” began to see common use during the years of the Virginia Company’s colonization.

Considering Bacon’s theme of using important unifying Kabbalistic numbers, it should come as no surprise that the word Merica adds up (in Bacon’s Reverse Cipher) to the number **103**. Thus, there were **13** English colonies not by accident but by design—it was an important and consistent feature in Bacon’s overall scheme.

Fall from Grace

Until his death in 1612, the powerful and corrupt Robert Cecil had been Bacon's chief antagonist. For many years Cecil took perverse delight in using his influence to block any advancement of Bacon's political status. Once Cecil was gone, Bacon's career enjoyed a meteoric rise in just a few short years. But now he was beset by another potent enemy Sir Edward Coke who proved to be Bacon's foremost adversary throughout his political life.

Coke's animosity toward Bacon began many years earlier when, as Queen Elizabeth's heavy handed Attorney General, he and Bacon frequently clashed over legal and political matters. During the trial of Essex, in which Coke was the presiding Judge, Bacon constantly had to restrain the over zealous prosecutor's abusive behavior while interrogating prisoners.*

Following the execution of Essex, Coke's hatred of Bacon intensified, particularly when the two men competed for the hand of Elizabeth Cecil (Lord Burghley's granddaughter) whom, after her brief union with the wealthy Sir William Hatton, became his widow in 1587. Soon, thereafter, she opted to wed the more eminent Attorney General Edward Coke over the penniless poet Francis Bacon—a decision she bitterly lived to regret—resulting in a marriage that was so notoriously stormy that Lady Hatton refused to adopt the name of her estranged husband.* Furthermore, Bacon and Lady Hatton remained close lifelong friends, and her affections for him were no secret to an insanely jealous Edward Coke.

The Attorney General knew of Bacon's royal heritage. For Coke, Essex's downfall had been like the scent of blood to a shark. It appeared that Elizabeth had thrown her sons to the wolves—a signal to Coke that Bacon was fair game. The matter of Bacon's legitimacy became Coke's pet obsession, resulting in his incessant taunts at the would-be heir to the Tudor throne.

On one public occasion, following a disagreement on some obscure issue, Coke launched a vituperative attack at Bacon shrieking "Mr. Bacon, if you have any tooth against me, pluck it out; for it will do you more hurt than all the teeth in your head will do you good." Bacon replied "Mr. Attorney, I respect you: fear not: and the less you speak of your own greatness, the more I will think of it." Coke responded "I think scorn to stand upon terms of greatness towards you, you who are less than little; less than the least." Coke, of course, was alluding to the prevailing view of illegitimacy in the pecking order of Elizabethan society. The scathing exchange of insults escalated into Coke making reference to Bacon as "Elizabeth's bastard." Bacon sternly answered "Do not depress me so far; for I have been your better, and may be again, when it please the Queen."* It was a warning to Coke that he had crossed the line in which his insult betrayed a state secret, and that he could be in further jeopardy should the Queen still name Francis as her successor. Bacon then dispatched a letter recounting the incident to Cecil.* Nevertheless, the venomous Attorney General vowed to attain nothing less than Bacon's total destruction.

In 1618, Sir Francis Bacon reached the zenith of his legal and political career when King James conferred the office of Lord High Chancellor of England upon him, along with the title Baron Verulam. Later, Viscount St. Alban was added to the list of Bacon's

titles. It is worthy of note that upon receiving the titles of Lord Verulam and Lord St. Alban, Francis quit referring to himself as Bacon (a further hint at his true heritage). For most men, basking in the glory of sitting in England's highest political seat was viewed as a blessing, but for Bacon it was a curse in disguise.

Much like Thomas More who served as one of Henry VIII's Chancellors, Bacon was "an island of virtue in a sea of corruption" upon which an out-of-control Stuart monarchy was foundering. The unbridled extravagances of King James and his "Favorite" bedmate, George Villiers, Earl of Buckingham, were bleeding the coffers dry and driving the country into financial ruin.

The crown's principle sources of revenue resided in an unprecedented sale of patents and monopolies.* Moreover, the legal system relied almost entirely on the conveyance of fees, fines, and gifts from litigants to the judges who rendered verdicts on their prosecution. For many years Bacon had been the strongest opponent of such practices, but his words fell on deaf ears.

The most egregious source of abuse was the "Inn and Hostelries monopoly." Author Ross Jackson explains: "The Inn and Hostelries monopoly had been originally established with good intentions several years before in order to regulate drunkenness in the nation's taverns and inns. The King had sold for a hefty fee the lucrative rights to administer the giving of Liquor licenses to two commissioners, Sir Francis Michell and Sir Giles Mompesson, a relative of the Favourite. Proceeds from licenses went primarily to King James with about 10% going to the commissioners and another 10% going to Edward Villiers, one of the Favourite's brothers. But as time went on, corruption crept in, with the King's full knowledge and approval. The monopoly developed into a

racketeering scheme, and everyone around the table knew it. The two commissioners simply refused licenses to respectable innkeepers unless they could afford to pay enormous bribes, while granting licenses to those who ran their inns as brothels if they handed over a major part of the illicit gains to the monopoly holders. The commissioners had the authority and used it, to send to prison any innkeepers who resisted their offers of protection. The protection and prostitution racket was one of the King's major sources of income.”*

Bacon well knew the predicament the abuses of the patents and monopolies placed on the common people who were becoming increasingly outraged by the immense strain of the whole corrupt system. He consistently tried to reason with the King and his Favorite (nicknamed “Steenie”) into a compromise, but they wouldn't budge.* Finally, during a meeting of the Privy Council (November 1621), Bacon advised that the forthcoming session of Parliament would be seeking to do everything within its power to pressure the King into abolishing all patents and monopolies. He then boldly proposed a compromise measure by which the bulk of the patents and monopolies would remain in force if the Council would only vote to eliminate the Inns and Hostelries monopoly. Beside the King, Buckingham and the rest of the Villiers family were principal beneficiaries of the monopoly, and would suffer a tremendous financial setback if it was eliminated. Bacon's proposal was put to a vote and was soundly defeated.* Perhaps the Lord Chancellor was overly optimistic about human nature as it applied to the political arena, believing that even politicians were fundamentally good and would do the right thing if properly reasoned with.

Meanwhile, Bacon's old adversary Edward Coke, of whom the King was none too fond, was unemployed and looking for a way to jump-start his slumping career. Next to Bacon, Coke was the best legal mind of the time. The basic distinction between them was that Bacon, like Thomas More, was incorruptible and steadfast to a fault, while Coke was completely unscrupulous with a killer instinct and a knack for self expediency.*



Edward Coke

Lacking the King's favor, Coke, who had (many years earlier) been Speaker of the House, decided to regain the favor of the people by getting elected back into Parliament.* Utilizing his vast experience and forceful personality, Coke's plan was to build a power base within the House by playing champion to whatever the prevailing mood happened to be—or, as Bacon put it, Coke was a man who “plowed according to his own tides.”*

It wasn't long before Coke was Chairman of the Grand Committee for Grievances. As such, he began to fan the flames of discontent with the patents and monopolies issue. Ironically, Coke, who had helped create many of the patents and monopolies, was now

conveniently voicing strong opposition to them.* The atmosphere in Parliament was fast becoming a hotbed of hostility toward anyone thought (or accused) of being responsible for abuses. The opportunistic Chairman had little difficulty playing to the emotions of Parliament's 400 members, working them into a mob-like frenzy. They were out for blood, and Coke was going to give it to them.

Since the King and his Favorite were the principal abusers—with the King above reproach, Coke had no choice but direct his parliamentary witch hunt elsewhere. Besides, Parliament was a legislative body, not a court of law. And, should matters escalate to the point of causing the King too much distress, he could always (as a last resort) exercise his prerogative of simply dissolving Parliament. As for Coke, it really didn't matter where the path of condemnation led... as long as it led to Francis Bacon.

The blame game had already commenced with members of Parliament shouting for Steenie's head. If King James had allowed his Favorite to be sacrificed, the whole affair could have ended then and there. But James wasn't about to give up his Steenie.*

Coke stood before the House pointing out that a precedent had, in the past, been briefly instituted to allow Parliament to function as a de facto court. He suggested the House reinstate the old custom in order to deal more effectively with the issue at hand.* Realizing such a measure would greatly enhance their power, the members of Parliament wasted no time enthusiastically voting it in. Coke had more surprises, but in this case, he had unwittingly opened a Pandora's Box that would have far reaching consequences for the country. Author Ross Jackson elaborates: "Coke did not mention that the custom was initiated 250 years before as a weapon of factional rivalry and had been discontinued more than 150 years ago. Thus was laid the foundation for a new instrument of terror that

would plague the nation for several decades until the whole country collapsed from exhaustion. Coke had established his new Court, which he would reign over with an iron hand as the Grand Parliamentary Inquisitor in the disguise of a reformer.”*

In a virtual blink of his eye, Coke had transformed Parliament into a kangaroo court whose members were largely untrained and lacking experience in the rule of law. In fact, Coke’s court operated in accordance with its own rules and whims.

By all rights the concern over abuses should have been directed toward the two corrupt commissioners Michell and Mompesson and the Favorite’s brother Edward Villiers. But instead, Coke turned the blame on the Lord Chancellor Bacon and the Lord Treasurer Henry Montagu, arguing that the King had been misled by his chief administrators.* Of course, Coke took care to suppress the fact that Bacon had persistently plead with the King to abolish the patents and monopolies.

King James, who was present at the session, added a bit of his own theatrics as he rose in a display of surprise, feigning indignant shock that his top executives would lead him astray.* He was expediently following Coke’s lead in setting up his loyal Chancellor to be sacrificed as Steenie’s scapegoat. Coke had artfully steered both the King and Parliament into a simple choice: condemn Buckingham or Bacon.

To further his case against Bacon, Coke introduced the same trumped-up charge that, 86 years earlier, had been used to attack Henry VIII’s Chancellor Sir Thomas More—to wit, Bacon was alleged to have accepted bribes while hearing cases put before him as Chancellor. As evidence, Coke enlisted the testimony of John Churchill who had been employed as one of Bacon’s clerks. Churchill claimed Bacon had taken bribes from various litigants, however, Coke neglected to disclose the fact that Churchill had been

suspended by Bacon for misappropriating funds from the Chancery.* Moreover, Coke hadn't revealed that he had given Churchill and other questionable witnesses immunity from prosecution in exchange for their (false) testimony.*

The immanent historian Nieves Mathews sheds further light on Coke V.S. Bacon: “if corrupted he [Bacon] was—rather than the reverse. One may wonder whether Coke himself would have done any better in his place. Or would have tried, for had he attained the desired position of Lord Chancellor there would surely have been no grand championship of reform, and we may surmise that considerably more attention would have been given to the decrying the defects of other courts of justice than to curbing the powers of Chancery.” *

The next phase of the scheme was to put Bacon on trial in which case Coke would, essentially, function both as prosecutor and judge. However, in his reckless zeal to bring Bacon down at any cost, Coke failed to consider the dire consequences such a trial would ultimately have on the King and his Favorite—or did he?

Bacon had warned that “a strike at the Chancellor would be followed by a strike at the crown.”* If a trial was to proceed, Buckingham would most certainly be examined by the defense. How would he explain (in the presence of Parliament) his Privy Council opposition to Bacon's proposal to eliminate the Inns and Hostelries monopoly? Furthermore, Coke's case against Bacon was a complete fabrication supported only by the pathetic lies of a few convicted criminals whose basic complaint was that the Chancellor had found them guilty—clearly exculpatory evidence that he had not been bribed. In fact, during Bacon's tenure as Chancellor, not a single verdict in over 8000 had ever been reversed.* Like Thomas More, Bacon's hands were clean, and the record

shows it. This was a trial Bacon couldn't lose. If allowed to proceed, however, it was also a trial that would air all of the King's dirty laundry. Therefore, there could be no trial. Yet Bacon still had to be sacrificed. But how could the Chancellor be immolated then stripped of his office without being prosecuted?

Until now, a key question which has not been properly examined is why would a formidable attorney as Edward Coke present such a ridiculously weak case against Bacon? The answer can be summed up in one word: "stratagem." Coke knew Bacon's mind and character only too well. He knew Bacon held to the highest standard of ethics, honor and loyalty. On many occasions, Coke heard Bacon say that he was bound by his loyalty to God, his monarch, his country, and his fellow man above himself. Coke had not forgotten how the reluctant Francis Bacon dutifully carried out his part in his brother's trial because of his sense of loyalty to the Queen who commanded him to participate.

The wily old Coke realized the only person who could bring Bacon down was Bacon himself. In all probability Coke never expected a trial to take place. In order to get to Bacon, he had to first get to the King. Coke had masterfully set up the parliamentary chess board so as to paint the King into a corner that would force him to choose one of two options. First, he could dissolve Parliament—a catastrophic choice that would further bankrupt the treasury because it would nullify much needed subsidy funds to be derived from Parliament. Moreover, dissolving Parliament would only add fuel to the incendiary public sentiment that was already raging against the crown. The other option was to appeal to Bacon's sense of loyalty and desire to do what was best for monarch and country by commanding him to plead guilty. Coke wasn't merely hoping the King would

choose the second option, in all likelihood he fully counted on it. If the thought of commanding Bacon to plead guilty hadn't already entered the King's mind, Coke most assuredly helped to plant it there.

The dirty business of "commanding" Bacon to abandon his defense and plead guilty without a trial required the discretion and secrecy of a back-room deal—thus, in a private meeting with Bacon, the King issued his command. Afterward, Bacon wrote "The law of nature teaches me to speak in my defense. If, however, it is absolutely necessary the King's Will shall be obeyed. I am ready to make an oblation [sacrificial offering] of myself to the King, in whose hands I am as clay to be made into a vessel of honour or dishonour. Yet with respect to the charge of bribery I am innocent."* Evidence that Bacon complied with the King's command, and that a deal was struck between them along with Buckingham is well substantiated by their actions and certain key documents.

On April 24, 1621, Francis Bacon stunned Parliament by reading a carefully prepared speech in which he declared that he had given up his defense, requesting that Parliament "condemn and censure" him. He further threw himself on the mercy of Coke's faux court, asking that they consider taking back the Great Seal as "sufficient expiation" (atonement). Although the statement was tantamount to a guilty plea, Bacon never actually said he was guilty of anything. Coke was furious. Not only was he out to destroy Bacon, Coke's quest was to inflict the worst possible stain of humiliation and defamation on the Chancellor's good name. In desperation, Coke had Churchill cull 28 vaguely worded cases out of 8000 to which he would falsely testify that bribery had been involved. These were then translated into specific charges and dispatched to Bacon for his written confession. On this, author William Hepworth Dixon writes: "Thus, on a

scrutiny, unparalleled for rigour and vindictiveness, into Lord St. Alban's official acts, not a single fee or remembrance, traced to the Chancellor himself, could by any fair construction be called a bribe. Not one appeared to have been given on any promise; not one appeared to have been given in secret; not one appeared to have corrupted justice.”* Yet Bacon had promised King James to plead guilty, so on 30th April he sent to the House of Lords a confession in which he pleaded guilty, answering the various counts fully.* He admitted the receipt of several gifts, fines, fees and presents, some by his officers, some by himself. If the receipt of such fees and gifts is held by the Peers to be proof of corruption, he confesses to the offense. But nowhere does he allow his judges to infer, that he has ever accepted a fee or reward to pervert justice.

Despite the fact that the respective cases mentioned in the charges failed to satisfy the legal requirements for establishing that bribery had ever taken place, or that justice had been perverted, Coke's panel of Peer judges automatically deemed all 28 of Bacon's responses to the charges as confessions of guilt. Coke's stratagem succeeded. He finally had what he wanted. The judgment (sentence) was as follows:

- (1) That the Lord Viscount St. Alban, Lord Chancellor of England shall undergo fine and ransom of 40,000 pounds.
- (2) That he shall be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure.
- (3) That he shall for ever be incapable of any office, place, or employment in the State or Commonwealth.
- (4) That he shall never sit in Parliament nor come within the verge [12 miles] of the Court.

On the day after his sentence, Bacon was officially visited by a small group of his most loyal supporters: the Lord Treasurer (Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville), the Lord Steward (Ludovic Stuart, 2nd Duke of Lennox), the Lord Chamberlain (William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke), and the Earl of Arundel (Thomas Howard, also the Earl of Surrey). The four men ceremoniously retrieved the Great Seal from the now former Chancellor.* Later that day, Bacon was taken to be imprisoned in the Tower of London. The length of time a prisoner of the Tower served was indefinite, “at the King’s [or Queen’s] pleasure.”

The proof of Bacon’s innocence and the fact that he had made a deal with the King and his Favorite is abundantly clear for a number of reasons. First, King James suspended the 40,000 pound fine, assigning it to four creditors of Bacon’s choosing. This, in effect, released Bacon from having to pay the fine. Second, upon being incarcerated in the Tower, Bacon immediately sent a letter to Buckingham demanding his liberty, it reads: “Good my Lord procure the warrant for my discharge this day... When I am dead, he is gone that was always a true and perfect servant to his master, and one that was never author of any immoderate, nor unsafe, nor unfortunate counsel, and one that no temptation could ever make other than a trusty and honest and thrice loving friend to your Lordship; and howsoever I acknowledge the sentence just, and for reformation sake fit, the justest Chancellor that hath been in five changes since Sir Nicholas Bacon’s time. Your Lordship’s true friend, living and dying, Fr. St. Alban. Tower, 31st May, 1621.”*

On receiving the letter, Buckingham immediately had Bacon released. It is the shortest confinement (two nights) in the Tower’s history. It is also noteworthy that the letter was stashed away as a state secret, not seeing the light of day until 221 years later.

Additionally, the King allowed Bacon back into to the verge. Moreover, he granted Bacon a full pardon, thereby overruling the verdict, with one exception, the provision barring the ex Chancellor from holding public office remained in force.

Eventually Bacon appealed to Parliament for a complete reversal of his sentence which was granted along with a 1,200 pound annuity which had been withheld from him. John Churchill was allowed back into the Chancery where he resumed his nefarious ways only to be convicted of fraud and forgery. Coke was permanently banished from the Privy Council and the Royal Court. Years later, Buckingham was stabbed to death. King James died in 1625, passing the legacy of his highly unstable monarchy on to his son Charles.

In creating his parliamentary court, Coke had let the malevolent genie out of the bottle. With its new found power, Parliament continued to hunt for more victims, culminating in the trial and execution of King Charles I, followed by civil war. Bacon's warning that a strike against him was equivalent to a strike against the crown proved to be prophetic.



George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham

9

End Game

Bacon's experience with the malicious attack on him and the subsequent acts of betrayal and humiliation at the hands of his "false friends" left him with a bitter taste. His pardon from King James came only after he turned over his beloved childhood residence of York House to Buckingham.* The King had also promised a healthy pension which Bacon never received. Now at the age of 61 he knew his days were numbered, and he began to plan accordingly. However, the great irony of Bacon's political fall is that it freed him up to resume his writing.

Had the plot against him failed, we might never have come to know Shakespeare or the modern scientific method. Bacon's ordeal had given him a new view of posterity and the effect it would have on his work. The years 1621-1623 witnessed a creative explosion from his pen. At least three new Shakespeare plays were written: *Coriolanus*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Henry VIII*.

In 1623, the first Shakespeare Folio was published along with the expanded version of *The Advancement and Proficiency of Learning* including the *Novum Organum*. Prior to that, a number of quarto versions of the plays had been published anonymously, and some were printed under the hyphenated name (i.e. Shake-speare). But more importantly, the Folio systematically integrated all of the plays into one, cohesive volume of work—without which most (if not all) of the Shakespearean work might not have survived intact.

Most of the Shakespeare plays are rich in references to events that occurred in Bacon's life. The single work that clearly deals with the effects of his downfall is *Timon of Athens*. Bacon carefully chose the title of the play for two fundamental reasons: first, he admired the Greek philosopher Timon's satires of various dogmatic philosophers. And second, both of the names Timon and Francis correspond to the number 67 in the Simple Cipher. Furthermore, the title *Timon of Athens* adds up (in the Kaye Cipher) to 330, i.e. **33**. Thus, Timon is a personification of Bacon—a man who is charitable and generous to a fault. He tends to place the welfare of his friends above his own, patronizing their arts and crafts, and lavishing them with gifts and extravagant banquets. Upon hearing of the imprisonment of one of his friends for failing to pay a debt, Timon immediately arranges to pay off the debt, setting his friend free.

Naturally, Bacon wrote Edward Coke into the play under the guise of “Apemantus” a “churlish” (crude and intractable) philosopher. One senator in the play describes Apemantus as being “opposite to humanity.”* And, of course, the name Apemantus is actually a Latin form of Ape-man.

Timon's philanthropy eventually turns into a reversal of fortune when he discovers that he has gone bankrupt. He turns to the people he has helped, but they all shun and betray him. A revengeful Timon then invites his false friends to a feast. They all attend, believing he has somehow regained his financial resources. But instead of a feast, Timon removes the lids from the serving trays revealing only lukewarm water which he liberally splashes in their faces. Lukewarm water symbolizes disgust and uselessness. Bacon may also have used the splashing of lukewarm water as a metaphor for urination.

Filled with disillusionment and scorn for humanity, Timon leaves the city to live alone in a cave. He lives off the land, spending much of his time bitterly cursing the fickle nature of humankind. One day while digging for roots to eat, he uncovers a large cache of gold. Meanwhile, back in Athens, the military general Alcibiades falls out of favor with his fellow citizens who banish him from the city. Riding alone in the country, he happens upon Timon who greets him with insults and profanity. Alcibiades respectfully tells Timon he has heard of the misfortune the Athenians have inflicted on him, and that he is raising an army for a war against Athens. Timon gives Alcibiades gold to finance the endeavor.

Following Alcibiades' departure the troublesome Apemantus shows up harassing Timon with his pesky advice. Timon responds with curses. The exchange of words that follows is nothing less than a reenactment of the infamous verbal duel between Bacon and Coke thirty five years earlier:

Apemantus. "Thou art the cap of all fools alive."

Timon. "Would thou wert clean enough to spit upon!"

Apemantus. "A plague on thee, thou art too bad to curse."

Timon. "All villains that do stand by thee are pure."

Apemantus. "There is no leprosy but what thou speak'st."

Timon. "If I name thee.—I'll beat thee, but I should infect my hands."

Apemantus. "I would my tongue could rot them off!"

Timon. "Away, thou issue of a mangy dog! Cholera does kill me that thou art alive; I swoon to see thee."

Apemantus. "Would thou wouldst burst."

Timon. “Away, thou tedious rogue! I am sorry I shall lose a stone by thee.”

[*throws a stone at him*].

Apemantus. “Beast!”

Timon. “Slave!”

Apemantus. “Toad!”

Timon. “Rogue, rogue, rogue!”

*

Later, Alcibiades and his newly gathered army lay siege to Athens. The Athenians beg for mercy. Alcibiades agrees to spare only those who have not wronged him or Timon. But alas, a messenger arrives with news that Timon has died.

Like *The Tempest*, *Timon of Athens* falls under the category of the “strange plays” as it is both a tragedy and a biting satire. From an autobiographical standpoint, next to *Hamlet*, *Timon* is clearly Bacon’s most cathartic work.

During his final few years, Bacon took care to preserve his work for posterity while putting his affairs in order. Following his impeachment as Chancellor, Bacon was abandoned by some of his good pens primarily because he could no longer afford to pay them. However, there were a number of friends whom he called his “good pens who forsake me not” whose labors for their master remained steadfast to the end.* These included Ben Jonson, Tobie Matthew, Thomas Hobbes, George Herbert, Peter Boener, Sir Thomas Meautys, and Dr. William Rawley. Each man served as a secretary to Bacon, fulfilling a specific purpose according to his talent and ability. Author Peter Dawkins writes: “Francis Bacon was known to work fast, quoting from memory, from an enormous store of sources. He usually knew exactly where to find a quotation, often

pointing it out to his secretaries for them to check. His mind was so active and his capacity for work was so enormous that he kept his scribes busy day and night. He would have a secretary sit by his bed while he slept, so that he could dictate his dreams as soon as he woke.”*

Since Ben Jonson was an early innovator of the Folio format, and his own “Workes” had been published in Folio seven years earlier, he was given the task of overseeing the publication of the first Shakespeare Folio. It was tricky work as Bacon’s front man Shaksper died in 1616. Shaksper’s essential role in the enterprise was to function as a lightning rod in the event that any political thunderstorm should strike at the Shakespeare circle. But the need to perpetuate the myth of “William Shakespeare” as the presumed author of the work remained imperative despite the fact that many more Shakespearean plays had been written well after Shaksper’s death.

Until 1623, Bacon privately regarded the name Shakespeare to be an abstract extension of himself. To the public, however, Shakespeare was nothing more than a name that appeared on a number of in-quarto plays and poems. With the exception of Elizabeth’s concerns over *Richard II*, no one ever bothered to consider who the actual author was.

Bacon’s massive task of amalgamating 36 plays into one book required considerable planning and financing. The wealthy Herbert family (in whose house Queen Elizabeth and Robert Dudley were secretly wed) had spawned a line of Pembroke Earls all fiercely loyal to the Tudors. Although it cannot be proven, it was the Herbert brothers William (3rd Earl of Pembroke) and Phillip (4th Earl of Pembroke and 1st Earl of Montgomery) who were long time patrons of the Shakespeare circle, who most certainly provided the necessary funding for the Folio—which would explain why the Folio is dedicated to

them. Additionally, whoever commissioned the Flemish artist Martin Droeshout to create the mysteriously contrived image of the Folio's supposed author had to have had deep pockets—this, again fits the “Incomparable pair of Brethren” perfectly.*

It is not clear if Bacon intended Droeshout's engraving to bear any resemblance to Shaksper, but it is clear that great measures were taken to present the “portrait” as a coded message (see Droeshout Portrait in chapter 25). To this day, no one knows what the Stratford man Shaksper really looked like (if indeed he actually existed). However, it is quite remarkable that most depictions of the “author Shakespeare” are based on the Droeshout engraving.

Aside from the fact that Ben Jonson disliked Shaksper, the problem of the conspicuous time-gap between Shaksper's death and the publication of the Folio posed still another problem. The shroud of mystique blanketing the authorship of the plays had served Bacon well, but the need for the decoy front man hadn't diminished. Now, in giving Shakespeare a face, Bacon was definitely stretching the envelope. If the Stratford man was to provide further use as a front for Shakespeare, where would fresh manuscripts for 36 plays suddenly come from, and who had been quietly sitting on them for the past seven years? Furthermore, who was going to step forward with the newly edited manuscripts claiming to have the authority to publish them under the assumed name of the deceased man? It was all a sticky business. The cover story needed an upgrade, and Jonson had a solution.

Two actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, had performed in Johnson's play *Every Man in His Humour* as well as several Shakespeare plays. They had been associated with Shaksper through his dabbling in the theater business both as a bit actor and a small

owner of stock in the Globe and Blackfriars Theaters.* Although they were not literary men, Jonson recruited them to pose as editors seeking to publish the Shakespeare plays in Folio.

The new cover story became a masterpiece of innuendo through which Heminge and Condell seem to convey the idea that they are somehow carrying out the “author’s” wishes as his executors, even though they never specifically say what the author wished, or who he was. Along with Droeshout’s engraving, the Folio has eighteen dedicatory pages cryptically praising the author. The carefully worded dedications resonate with a distinctive legal tone, as if written by a lawyer. The deliberate and incessant mixing of allusions to Shakespeare the author and Shakespeare the actor tends to lead the reader to assume that they are one and the same. But Jonson issues a caveat as he writes “Reader, look not on his picture, but his booke.”*

Another important factor in the Folio’s publication is that its patron, William Herbert (3rd Earl of Pembroke), was also Lord Chamberlain to King James. As head of the King’s Office of Revels, one of the Chamberlain’s duties was to decide which plays were suitable for public consumption. Naturally, the Folio was approved for publication without any question regarding its authorship.

Next to the King James Bible, the Shakespeare Folio was Bacon’s greatest literary achievement. But his restless mind was further engaged with the implementation of his new scientific methodology as set forth in the *Novum Organum*. Unlike his literary works, Bacon struggled with the dilemma of whether to publish his scientific and philosophical labors under his own name or use another pseudonym. In truth, he came

dangerously close to choosing the latter option—in which the case Bacon could very possibly have been lost to history.

In the end, Bacon spent his days pursuing of his passion for unveiling the secrets of nature. One of the projects he proposed for his Fra Rosi Crosse society was to create a scientific society (later known as the “Royal Society”) dedicated to testing his inductive method through experimentation.* His book the *Sylva Sylvarum* was the first work to show how the modern scientific method should be applied. A particular experiment in the book dealt with the preservation of the body by means of refrigeration. In a demonstration to the King’s physician, on a cold winter’s day, Bacon stuffed a chicken carcass with snow. The experiment was a success, but, in the process, Bacon caught pneumonia. Within a week, the greatest genius the world has ever known passed into posterity (or so the story goes).

Sir Thomas Meautys had a marble tomb placed inside St. Michael’s Church, St. Albans to serve as Bacon’s final resting place. The outpouring of praise for the “Apollo of the ages” was immense. His personal chaplain (and secretary) Dr. William Rawley edited and published a collection of 33 eulogies (including his) titled the *Manes Verulamiani*.

Perhaps Ben Jonson eulogized Bacon best, writing: “One, though he be excellent and the chief, is not to be imitated alone; for never no imitator ever grew up to his author; likeness is always on this side truth. Yet there happened to be in my time one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking; his language, where he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more presly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from

him, without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.”*

After Bacon

Dr. William Rawley was executor to Bacon’s estate which for the most part had been appropriated by creditors. All that remained were his manuscripts, letters and notes. Most of the letters and some of the notes are preserved in the British Museum. As to the manuscripts, Rawley was instructed to “publish some” and reserve the rest for a “private succession of literary sons.”

Bacon’s literary sons were the members of his Fra Rosi Crosse society who, upon his death, inherited his Rosicrucian-Masonic infrastructure. The manuscripts, very likely, went from Rawley’s hands into their care. There has been much speculation and debate over the fate of the manuscripts. Some scholars believe they made their way to Scotland where they were hidden away along with the lost treasure of the Knights Templar in the underground vaults of Rosslyn Chapel near Edinburgh. Still, others are convinced that the treasure trail extends from Rosslyn to Oak Island in Nova Scotia,* while others have staked their bets on the Bruton vault under William and Mary College in Virginia near Jamestown.

Bacon’s vision of a scientific society came to fruition 34 years after his death in the form of the Royal Society during the reign of Charles II. Its Rosicrucian-Masonic founders included Elias Ashmole, Robert Boyle, Christopher Wren, and Sir Isaac Newton. The age of modern science had arrived.

The Rise of the Stratfordians

At the time the 1623 Shakespeare Folio was being published, a mysterious monument featuring a bust of Shaksper was erected in the Stratford parish church. No one knows who arranged for its construction or who paid for it. Ostensibly, the monument's purpose was to direct the reader of the Folio to Stratford. A brief eulogy of Shakespeare written by the poet Leonard Digges makes a strange allusion to "thy Stratford *Moniment*."* Digge's eulogy appears to have been tacked on toward the end of the Folio's dedications as an afterthought. It would also appear that the monument was built prior to the publication of the Folio, and that Digge's eulogy was added so that the reference to the Stratford Monument would not be overlooked.

Another peculiarity about the monument is that the bust of Shaksper bore no resemblance to the Droeshout engraving. Moreover, there was nothing about the image to suggest any connection to literature. Instead, the bust depicted a rustic looking man with a stern face and a drooping mustache clutching a sack of grain—a fitting representation, considering Shaksper of Stratford was known to have been a grain merchant in his latter years.*

After a century of neglect, the original bust was removed and replaced (1748) by a completely different looking bust that remains to the present day. Author Alfred Dodd

offers an apt description: “The effigy which stands in place of the ‘curious original’ is in general outline the same, but a cushion takes the place of ‘the bag’ and a large quill pen is placed in his hand. His hands no longer suggest that he hugs his money bag or wool sack in an almost miserly fashion, and the smirking, doll-like face is very different from the shrewd, hard-faced man who knew excellently well how to drive a bargain.”* The reason we know about the original bust is due to an engraving of the Stratford Monument which appears in Sir William Dugdale’s book “Warwickshire,” published in 1656.*

Despite the existence of the Stratford Monument, people remained largely unaware and unconcerned about the Shakespeare authorship for nearly one and a half centuries.

In 1769, the celebrated London actor David Garrick traveled to the village of Stratford to pay homage to a man he erroneously thought to have authored the Shakespearean work. Upon his arrival, Garrick found the Stratford citizens to be profoundly oblivious to who Shakespeare was. The village was ravaged by filth and decay. All vestiges of the mud wall houses in which the Shaksper family had dwelled were long gone. But Garrick the actor became Garrick the entrepreneur. He saw an opportunity to turn Stratford and Shakespeare into a profitable enterprise. Thus, Garrick unwittingly cashed in on the specious legacy of the 1623 Folio, and the Stratfordian myth of the man the world came to know as William Shakespeare was born.

Almost instantaneously, Garrick began to use his celebrity to attract outside visitors (with money to spend) to his Stratford “jubilees”* in which he produced and starred in virtually all of the Shakespearean plays. Other profitable jubilee attractions included guided tours of Shakespeare’s alleged birthplace and souvenirs of furniture and other

miscellaneous items supposedly owned by Shakespeare—along with plenty of food and ale.

“Shakespeare” of Stratford had become a cottage industry. In many respects, it was a forerunner of the modern Renaissance Faire. But more importantly, as the popularity of the Shakespearean work increased, the Stratford myth of Shakespeare gradually worked its way into the hallowed halls of orthodox history. Eventually, biographical books about the life of a man named Shakespeare (who, technically, never really existed) began to materialize out of sheer invention and supposition. On this, author Ross Jackson states “Many books were written about Will Shaksper, and an uncritical and unquestioning public consumed them with great interest. What the public did not notice was that these books invariably started out with the unstated but tenuous assumption that the man from Stratford wrote the works. These biographies were not based on the known facts of Will Shaksper’s life... but consisted mainly of speculations about how ‘he must have done that’, how ‘he must have traveled there’, how ‘he must have known this person’, how ‘he must have been proficient in this language’, and how ‘he must have been the greatest genius that ever lived’, with little or no hard evidence to back up the assertions. Generations were brought up to accept this myth about Will Shaksper without question.”*

Amazingly, by the onset of the nineteenth century, the Stratfordian version of William Shakespeare the author was generally adopted as gospel among historical and literary academicians. Most learning institutions in Britain and America were busily teaching the Stratfordian doctrine to a naïve and uninformed public.

The first known published statement questioning the authorship of the Shakespearean works appeared in *Life and Adventures of Common Sense* by Herbert Lawrence in 1769. By the mid nineteenth century, many prominent writers and scholars had begun to scrutinize the Stratfordian doctrine. They discovered glaring holes and inconsistencies in the traditional story. One Shakespearean scholar, Delia Bacon (not related to Francis Bacon) wrote a book titled *The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare Unfolded* (published 1857) in which she proposed a carefully documented thesis showing the Shakespearean works to be the product of an elite group of writers led by Francis Bacon.* Not to be undone, the Stratfordians launched an all-out attack on Delia Bacon, denouncing her as “the woman who hates Shakespeare.”

Many prominent people in the academic world such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Thomas Carlyle, responded to the Stratfordian abuse of Delia Bacon with supportive words in her defense and proclamations of advocacy for the new Baconian thesis concerning the Shakespearean authorship. Most notably, Mark Twain became the staunchest anti-Stratfordian (and Baconian supporter) with his book *Is Shakespeare Dead?* in which he severely lampooned the Stratfordians as mindless “Troglodytes.” Regarding the Stratfordian biographies, Twain writes “we set down the ‘conjectures’ and ‘suppositions,’ and ‘maybes,’ and ‘perhapses,’ and ‘doubtlesses,’ and ‘rumors,’ and ‘guesses,’ and ‘probabilities,’ and ‘likelihoods,’ and ‘we are permitted to think,’ and ‘we are warranted in believing,’ and ‘might have beens,’ and unquestionablys,’ and ‘without a shadow of a doubt,’—and behold! *Materials?* Why, we have enough to build a biography of Shakespeare.”* He then compared the Stratfordian myth of Shakespeare to a Brontasaurus skeleton which was on display at the New York

Museum of Natural History. The enormous skeleton only had nine actual bones, the rest of the colossal structure consisted of plaster.

Myths and legends are hard to deal with. Once they get started, they take on a life of their own. This phenomenon is commonly called “The Liberty Valance Effect.” You know, from the old movie “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance” in which John Wayne shoots the menacing outlaw Liberty Valance then makes it look like Jimmy Stewart did the deed. Even Jimmy believes he killed Valance. The townspeople treat him like a hero. Thereafter, Jimmy’s character moves up in the world as a very important man. Years later, he finds out the truth. But it’s too late. The legend has become history. He tells the real story to a prominent news reporter who has no interest in seeing history revised, even though it is contrary to the truth. The reporter says “When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.”* And so it is with the Stratfordian legend of Shakespeare!

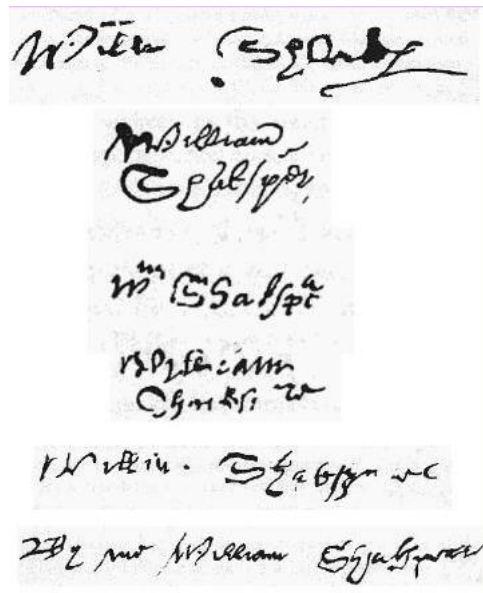
The Shakespeare Problem

In order to create the Shakespearean works the author had to meet certain criteria.

The first and most important criterion is that he was a genius of the highest magnitude. He also had an education that far exceeded that of any ordinary university graduate. He was a master linguist, fluent in Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish, French, and German. He possessed a mastery of all Classical Literature which included Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Cicero, Pliny, Seneca, Plutarch, Tacitus, etc. He also had a superior knowledge of philosophy and science. He owned or had unlimited access to a vast library. He was a well trained lawyer possessing a highly sophisticated knowledge and understanding of the finer points of law. He was familiar with and accustomed to the protocols, manners, and conduct of the royal courts of Queen Elizabeth and King James—including privileged information known only their courtiers and high ranking government officials. He had attended both Cambridge University and Gray's Inn. He traveled abroad in many different foreign countries. He was an expert on ciphers and encryption techniques used in the royal secret service. He had knowledge of various sports enjoyed only by the noble class—most notably, falconry. And finally, he was both a Rosicrucian and a Freemason.

The greatest flaw in the Stratfordian doctrine is that there is absolutely no evidence that the man the “Strats” insist was Shakespeare fulfills any of the above criteria! There is not

a shred of evidence that Shaksper of Stratford ever received an education, or that he ever owned a book, or that he ever wrote a letter, or that he ever traveled abroad. As far as the record shows, there are only six alledged instances in which he awkwardly scrawled a barely legible signature on various documents throughout his life. Each of the signatures suggests he was remarkably unskilled with a pen, apparently requiring assistance in applying his mark.*



The only Shaksper signatures known to exist

Evidence of Shaksper's illiteracy should come as no surprise considering the environment from whence he came. As a matter of record, the majority of Stratford's citizens, including its village officials, were uneducated. Shaksper's entire family, even his own children were illiterate. His last will and testament makes no mention of books,

manuscripts, notes, letters, or anything of a literary nature. The most significant item mentioned in the will is his second best bed which he left to his wife.

Also remarkable, is the fact that, at the time of Shaksper's death, there was an absolute vacuum of eulogy or praise for the man. Moreover, neither the citizens of Stratford nor anyone remotely connected to the literary world acknowledged him as having been a writer.

Yet, the Stratfordians stubbornly maintain that Shaksper was the true author of the Shakespearean work. Their claim rests on two fundamental arguments. First, the name Shaksper resembles the name Shakespeare. The adherents of the Stratfordian doctrine insist the two names are one and the same despite evidence to the contrary, and despite the fact that Shaksper never signed his name as Shakespeare. Second, the Strats are adamant in their view that Ben Jonson's phrase "Sweet Swan of Avon,"* which appears in his eulogy of Shakespeare the author (in the 1623 Folio) is a reference to their Stratford man. However, this point is remarkably weak considering Shaksper (in any context) was never associated with swans or with sweetness. Furthermore, the word "Avon" is too generic a word to be specifically connected to Shaksper over anyone else. If it had been Jonson's intent to link the term "sweet swan" with Shaksper, he would have written "sweet swan of Stratford."

If the question of Shakespeare's authorship had been left to the discretion of a court of law, the remarkably flimsy Stratfordian case would have been thrown out long ago. Unfortunately, the matter is governed by the court of orthodox history which, owing to The Liberty Valance Effect, has backed the Stratfordian position for nearly three

centuries. It is no wonder that the emotionally charged Strats have grown cocky and arrogant, viciously attacking anyone who has the temerity to challenge their authority.

Until the nineteenth century, the Shakespearean works had gone unappreciated as masterpieces. The heightened interest in Shakespeare brought hard questions regarding the authorship. The issue had remained unchallenged for so long, and the Stratfordian dogma had become so deeply ingrained in the academic community that a great many careers were (and still are) heavily invested in the Stratfordian myth. Any threat to the traditional view of Shakespeare meets with fierce resistance. However, the problem facing the besieged Strats is that their whole premise rests on a house of cards held together with the smoke and mirrors of pure supposition. The great betrayer of Stratfordian dogma is that it has no hard, “smoking gun” evidence to support its crumbling position. Time has a way of revealing truth. More and more facts that were not known, or were suppressed, or overlooked centuries ago are coming out into the light. A progression of facts and funerals should eventually lay the Stratfordian myth to rest.

Character Assassination and Disinformation

Mark Twain's critique of the Stratfordians was both compelling and straightforward. Soon thereafter, the Baconian thesis gained significant recognition throughout Europe and the United States. The Stratfordian dogmatists who were totally unaccustomed to being subjected to academic scrutiny were placed in the untenable position of trying to explain the unexplainable. It became evident that the Stratfordian premise rested on faith rather than fact. In order to sustain the myth, the Strats began to search for ways to shift attention away from the Baconians by means of propagating disinformation.

In 1837, Thomas Babington Macaulay, an English writer and politician, wrote a false and libelous essay about Francis Bacon. Macaulay (later Lord Macaulay) was a flamboyant, forceful writer whose specialty was "sensationalized history." In other words, he was a hack writer with little concern about getting his facts straight. In essence, he was an English counterpart to the American "dime novelist." Naturally, his essay, titled *Lord Bacon*, focused on Bacon's impeachment. Macaulay vilified Bacon in every conceivable way, calling him a "corrupt judge" who "persecuted the innocent, had tampered with judges, had tortured prisoners, and had plundered suitors"... "was not likely to be scrupulous as to the means by which he enriched himself... the amount of plunder which he collected in this way was impossible to estimate"... "The moral

qualities of Bacon were not of a high order...“the unfortunate husbands who caught him in their houses at unseasonable hours are forgotten”...“his faults were coldness of heart and meanness of spirit”...“he was at that very time employed in perverting those laws to the vilest purposes of tyranny,” etc.* It was a classic case of pure tabloid character assassination. Unfortunately, many uninformed people blindly accepted Macaulay’s lies as history. To this day, numerous Stratfordians (who know better) shamelessly cite Macaulay as a historical source in spite of the fact that Oxford University ordered all of Macaulay’s works to be placed in a special category as “not trustworthy to history.”

Winston Churchill referred to Macaulay as “the prince of literary rogues who always preferred the tale to the truth.”* Ironically, near the end of his life, Macaulay said he regretted having written the essay on Bacon. However, the damage was done—it had gone viral, and the stain to Bacon’s good name still persists, effectively casting aspersions on all things Baconian.

Another misconception blocking the reconciliation of the Baconian thesis with public sentiment is the utterly erroneous assumption that the famous cryptographers William and Elizabeth Friedman “proved that Bacon wasn’t Shakespeare.” The Friedmans never said or implied any thing of the sort. They simply said they couldn’t find the hidden messages Elizabeth Wells Gallup (a Baconian scholar) claimed were encrypted in the Shakespearean works, using Bacon’s bi-lateral cipher.* Yet, I still come across misinformed people who say “Didn’t the Friedman’s disprove all that stuff about Bacon being Shakespeare?”

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of Francis Bacon’s life is that, in death, he continues to suffer the same injustices and attacks from individuals who still don’t know him!

The Oxfordians

Misconceptions over Macaulay and the Friedmans proved sufficient to cause many anti-Stratfordians to shy away from the Baconian camp. The Strats (for the time being) were breathing a sigh of relief. However, the “Shakespeare Problem” refused to go away.

In 1920, an English school teacher by the name of Thomas Looney presented a third possible Shakespearean author in his book *Shakespeare Identified*. Looney correlated places and events mentioned in the Shakespeare works with the travels and circumstances in the life of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Furthermore, De Vere made a compelling match with most of the criteria essential for the Shakespeare authorship.

The Oxfordian thesis seductively attracted a legion of enthusiastic followers and converts. Even Orson Welles remarked “If De Vere wasn’t Shakespeare there are a lot of interesting coincidences to explain.”* Gradually, more books about De Vere as Shakespeare began to fly off the printing presses—eventually leading to Charlton Ogburn’s voluminous 800 page work titled *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* which became the Oxfordian bible.

Since the publication of Ogburn’s book in 1984, the Oxfordian thesis has enjoyed considerable popularity—hailed by many Shakespeare enthusiasts as the “leading

contender” for the Shakespeare authorship. Most recently, Mark Anderson’s book *Shakespeare by Another Name* (2005) has received rave reviews.

However, unlike solid concrete, the great problem with plaster is that it cracks easily. While basking in the glory of Oxfordian popularity over the past several decades, the “Oxies” failed to take notice of the cracks and crevices that began to appear in their seemingly invincible case. The biggest crack of all is the pesky “timeline dilemma” which clearly shows that a substantial portion of the Shakespearean work continued to be written well after De Vere’s death in 1604. The Earl of Oxford had prematurely exited the Shakespeare scene nearly 20 years before the final curtain.

In response to the timeline problem, the Oxies conveniently rolled back the dates in which all of the later plays had been written. They further altered or at least reinterpreted numerous facts, events, and references in a sly attempt to be consistent with an earlier timeline. Anderson managed to artfully smooth over some of the cracks by conceding that De Vere must have been working with collaborators*—some of whom must have kept on collaborating without De Vere. But the cracks kept getting wider and wider as it became apparent that the Oxfordian case was beginning to resemble Mark Twain’s Brontosaurus skeleton—too much plaster, with little or no real substance.

After all this time, it turns out that the Oxies, just like the Strats, had built their case on supposition. Ogburn and Anderson had carefully constructed the Oxfordian thesis by skillfully connecting various people, places, and events to De Vere by means of sheer extrapolation. The pages of their books are suspiciously excessive in the use of auxiliary modifying words and phrases such as “probably, possibly, had probably, might have, may have, could have, would have, may be, may well be, would have been, could have been,

must have been, most likely, more likely to have been, could be, had probably, may have met, would likely to have met, may be referring to, could have acquainted himself with, may have crossed paths with,” etc.*

The mere use of such phraseology, when reasonably applied, is not a problem—however, when the pages of a book are incessantly overflowing with it, I suggest something is amiss. The superfluous extrapolations used by Ogburn and Anderson do not constitute evidence—they are hollow substitutes for evidence. Good, reliable, historical evidence consists of tangible things such as letters, notes, and artifacts that clearly and unambiguously demonstrate a connection between people, places, and events. Like the Stratfordians, the Oxfordians simply do not have the hard, “smoking gun evidence” necessary to support their case. Writing voluminous books often creates the illusion of a weighty argument presumably backed by a vast quantity of impressive facts. However, I submit that the bulk of material the Oxfordians are presenting is pure plaster.

The great supposition upon which the Oxfordian case primarily rests is that De Vere traveled to or near most of the locations mentioned in the Shakespeare plays—therefore, he must be Shakespeare! But De Vere is not as unique in meeting that criterion as the Oxfordians would have us believe. Actually, most of Elizabeth’s noblemen enjoyed extensive journeys abroad—including both of the Bacon brothers.

Furthermore, the assertion that De Vere “must have” visited all of the locales, or that he “probably met” all of the principle characters in the plays is simply not true. *Love’s Labours Lost* is a prime example. In typical Oxfordian style, Anderson magically extrapolates De Vere into the court of Navarre as he writes “During the celebrations surrounding the coronation and wedding, De Vere must have met Henri of Navarre.”* In

the very next sentence, Anderson says “De Vere probably also met the fifty-one-year-old poet Pierre de Ronsard.” Yet, there is absolutely no evidence that de Vere ever met Henri of Navarre, or attended his court—or ever met Pierre Ronsard.

Navarre is critical because it is abundantly clear that the author of *Love’s Labours Lost* is totally familiar with specific details of the region and Henri’s court. Anderson’s misleading attempt to connect De Vere to the court of Navarre is not an isolated case of Oxfordians taking liberties with history through supposition. Furthermore, with regard to Navarre, the Oxies tend to capitalize on the often confusing references to the contemporaneous Kings Henri III of France with Henri III of Navarre (later Henri IV of France).

In an online article titled *The Case for Oxford* (published by the Atlantic Monthly website) Oxfordian author Tom Bethell states “Oxford and a party stayed six weeks or more in Paris and were introduced to the French King, Henry III. It is possible that at this time Oxford met Henry of Navarre* (King of France 1589-1610), whose brother-in-law, the Duke of Alencon, was then being considered as a husband for Queen Elizabeth. Henry of Navarre and Oxford were about the same age, and in many respects Henry seems to have been a man after Oxford’s own heart. We know that Shakespeare was familiar with both the layout and protocols of the Navarre court in 1578 (described in *Love’s Labours Lost*).” Notice how Bethell uses exactly the same sort of cozen wording employed by Ogburn and Anderson to create the impression that De Vere and Henri of Navarre were friends. Again, the Oxies are attempting to connect De Vere with Henri of Navarre through the power of assumption. On the other hand, both Francis and Anthony

Bacon's friendship with Henri III, and their prolonged stays at Navarre are very well documented.



Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford

The great trick with the Oxfordian methodology is to fabricate a historical scenario out of thin air by maneuvering the reader into creating a connection by assuming the connection actually exists. Whereas magicians are masters of sleight of hand, Oxfordians are adept at sleight of mind. An excellent example of this is Anderson's audacious insinuation that De Vere is somehow connected to the famous document known as the *Northumberland Manuscript*. Anderson writes: "A tantalizing cover page for a circa-1597 manuscript of *Richard III*—and a number of other controversial works—has survived the centuries and now sits in the archives of Alnwick Castle in

Northumberland.* The manuscripts for which this page serves as the cover have all, however, been lost or destroyed. The one-page document is a list of seditious or surreptitiously obtained texts: *Richard III*, *Richard II* (treasonously depicting the deposition of a sitting monarch), Nashe's *Isle of Dogs*, and the libelous *Leicester's Commonwealth*. On this single surviving sheet, a scrivener, whose handwriting has never been identified, scratched out two words that would henceforth be seared into the flesh of every mature play from De Vere's pen. There on a single page, scattered amid sundry sentence fragments, quotes, and titles, are written the words 'Willi...Sh...Sh...Shak...will Shak...Shakespe...Shakspeare...Shakespeare...william... william Shakespeare...William Shakespeare.'

Although he takes great care not to directly say that De Vere wrote the page, Anderson is deliberately trying to steer the reader toward the assumption that De Vere could be the document's author. Furthermore, Anderson brazenly conceals the fact that the *Northumberland manuscript* was the property of Francis Bacon. He further neglects to inform the reader that both the names Francis Bacon and William Shakespeare are repeatedly written all over the page in various forms, including the words "By Mr. FFrancis William Shakespeare (more on the *Northumberland Manuscript* in Chapter 19).

Amazingly, in the following sentence, Anderson writes: "Thence comes it,' in the words of Sonnet 111, 'that my name receives a brand.'"* It would be naïve to think Anderson is unaware that the number 111 matches the name Bacon in the Elizabethan Kaye Cipher. It's both uncanny and strange. The sentence is tantamount to saying "I am Bacon." We are compelled to ask why is Anderson going to such bizarre lengths to deceive the reader, and why is he putting on such an outrageous display of chutzpah? It

seems he has a hidden agenda. I personally distrust hidden agendas, particularly when they involve deception.

As mentioned in the third chapter of this book, De Vere was too closely connected to most of the members of the “Shakespeare circle” not to have been involved with the enterprise in some capacity. If a few of his “tall tales” (Anderson’s words) made their way into several of the Shakespearean storylines, I would not be surprised. In fact, I believe some aspects of De Vere’s reckless life are portrayed in at least two of the plays. Could that make him one of Bacon’s numerous collaborators? Perhaps—but even if that’s true, it hardly qualifies De Vere as the author of the Shakespearean work.

The Concealed Poet

The Stratfordians and Oxfordians concede that Bacon fits all of the required criteria for the Shakespeare authorship. They have only one argument against Bacon. Actually it's not so much an argument as it is another erroneous assumption. They like to say that Bacon's writing style was too "stiff" or "stilted" to be consistent with the "Shakespearean style." But they are conveniently ignoring the fact that the "writing style" of Shakespeare is a deliberate mixture of styles which evolved over a span of nearly five decades. For example, the writing style of the early Shakespearean comedic plays are eerily similar to the style of Peele, Green and Sidney. A little later, aspects of Florio, Spenser, and Marlowe seem to shine through. And some of the later plays appear reflect a hint of Jonson's style. Trying to match the style of *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* with the style of *Macbeth*, or the style of *Love's Labors Lost* with the style of *The Tempest* is a matter of comparing apples to oranges. Bacon didn't adhere to just one standard writing style.

What makes Shakespeare SHAKESPEARE has less to do with an individual writing style and more to do with overall composition. The one constant that runs through all of the plays, in their various stages of experimentation, is the methodology with which they are carefully and coherently arranged. It is clear that the same mind that crafted *Measure*

for Measure is the same mind that molded *Timon of Athens*. It's the ineffable guiding force of the "master's touch" that is at work in all of the Shakespearean plays.

All of the plays, from the earliest to the last, draw on consistent philosophical themes intended to instruct the reader in lessons about nature both on the cosmic and human levels. As we shall later see, Bacon designed the work more to be read than performed.

What Stratfordians and Oxfordians fail to acknowledge was that Bacon was able to shift his writing style from the left analytical side of his brain to the right creative side without breaking stride—thus, being capable of expressing the same thought in two, distinctly different ways. The author Edwin A. Abbott wrote "His [Bacon's] style varied almost as much as his handwriting; but it was influenced more by the subject-matter than by youth or old age. Few men have shown equal versatility in adapting their language to the slightest change of circumstance and purpose. His style depended upon whether he was addressing a king, or a great nobleman, or a philosopher, or a friend; whether he was composing a state paper, magnifying the prerogative, extolling truth, discussing studies, exhorting a judge, sending a New Year's present, or sounding a trumpet to prepare the way for the kingdom of man over nature."* It should also be noted that Bacon often wrote letters and speeches for others (especially Essex) perfectly mimicking both their writing style and handwriting.

Naturally, writing a scientific work such as the *Novum Organum* required Bacon to resort to the more formal tone his detractors allude to. But they ignore the fact that Bacon's philosophical prose works received much praise from many later poets who recognized the Shakespearean elements in his style. For example, the poet Gerald Massey noted "The philosophical writings of Bacon are suffused and saturated with

Shakespeare's thought." The poet and essayist Alexander Smith wrote "He [Bacon] seems to have written his Essays with the pen of Shakespeare"—while the essayist and historian Thomas Carlyle proclaimed "There is an understanding manifested in the construction of Shakespeare's plays equal to that in Bacon's *Novum Organum*."* The true essence of Bacon's Shakespearean style was the unique structure of the underlying thought and natural philosophy upon which it rested.

Beyond his Shakespeare circle, Bacon took great care to conceal the fact that he was a poet. In a letter to one of his good pens, John Davies of Hereford, Bacon writes "So desiring you to be good to concealed poets, I continue, your very assured, FR. Bacon."* In the same vein, Bacon's secretary Tobie Matthew wrote his master a letter in which he states (about Bacon) "The most prodigious wit that ever I knew though he be known by another."* Years later, John Aubrey described Bacon as "a good poet, but concealed."*

Great poets always recognize the genius of other great poets, even when they are concealed. With regard to Bacon the concealed poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley may have said it best: "Lord Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost super human wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect. It is a strain which distends and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy."*