Shakespeare's Sonnet Friend: as Pioneer of the New World (revised)

(a fresh interpretation of Sonnet 122)

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(This paper is a corollary to the author's earlier pamphlet, *Shakespeare at Gray's Inn*, and claims to show that Shakespeare and his friend were alluded to in a little-known poem by a contemporary writer - further, that his interpretation of Sonnet 122 throws light on the nature of the Friend's capabilities, and assists his identification.)

Unable to accept the view that the Friend of Shakespeare's Sonnets was a commoner, nevertheless I cannot be persuaded that either Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, or William Herbert, later 3rd Earl of Pembroke, meets the description. To my mind, Sonnets 36 and 37 undoubtedly point to a nobleman, and in this article I hope to present a plausible case for another candidate hitherto unconsidered.

Southampton, I believe, must be excluded on account of the dating of certain of the earlier-numbered Sonnets. His advocates usually think of the Sonnets being written around the years of the two narrative poems that Shakespeare dedicated to him in 1593 and 1594. Yet Prof. J. Dover Wilson, in his 1966 edition of the Sonnets[1], has pointed to the following convincing examples of dating, which lead one to infer a later start to the sequence:

> (a) Sonnet 21 appears to parody the style of Chapman's *Amorous Zodiac*, published in 1595, with a pun on his name in the last line: 'I will not prayse that purpose not to sell'.
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> (b) There are suggestive parallels between Sonnet 33 and *I Henry IV* 1 2 189; also between Sonnet 52 and *I Henry IV* III 2 56 - a play that can confidently be dated to 1597-98.

Furthermore, Dr. T. G. Tucker[2] has drawn attention to the very striking parallel between Sonnet 68 and *The Merchant of Venice*, III 2 92-98 a play generally dated to 1596-97:

SONNET 68

Before the goulden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchers, were shorne away,
To liue a s(e)cond life on second head,
Ere beauties dead fleece made another gay:
In him those holy antique howers are seene,
Without all ornament, it selfe and true, . . .

for comparison with Bassanio's lines,

So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea;

May we not conclude that these two remarkable passages owe their birth to a single poetic impulse?

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[1] In *The Works of Shakespeare*, edited for the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press (C.U.P., 1966)
[2] T. G. Tucker: *The Sonnets of Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 1924).

These four sonnets, then, are seen to be of rather too late a date for their address to Southampton. In this respect they would appear to be more suitable to Pembroke; but in my opinion there exists in a later sonnet, No. 82, a serious obstacle to Pembroke as the Friend - (apart from the possibility - favoured by Dowden, Pooler, Rowse and others - that the words 'You had a Father' in Sonnet 13 mean that the Friend's father is already dead, whereas Pembroke's own father lived until 1601)

SONNET 82

I graunt thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore maiest without attaint ore-looke
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their faire subject, blessing euery booke.
Thou are as faire in knowledge as in hew,
Finding thy worth a limmit past my praise,
And therefore art inforc'd to seeke anew,
Some fresher stampe of the time bettering dayes.

Although the first line has been differently interpreted by some scholars, I believe that Shakespeare is simply telling his Friend : 'I grant you are not a poet like me'. (Nowhere in the Sonnets is there the slightest hint that the Friend wrote verse.) Throughout the first quatrain, indeed, the Friend is seen as separate from Shakespeare and his fellow-poets. Now this can hardly apply to Pembroke, who, tutored by Samuel Daniel, was certainly a young poet of promise; Shakespeare would have hurt his feelings by such a remark.

In contradistinction, the second quatrain speaks admiringly of the Friend's mental attributes of a different kind. Lines 5 and 6, I suggest, express not only Shakespeare's amazement at the extent of his Friend's knowledge, but awareness also of his own inability for its proper appreciation. For Shakespeare to feel somewhat out of his depth, it follows that such knowledge must have been of a highly specialised kind - perhaps scientific. It is a fact that in the 16th century the word 'knowledge' was often used specifically for scientific knowledge.

And now, remembering that Shakespeare gave his Friend a blank book in which to record his ideas (Sonnet 77), we may turn to another Sonnet, No. 122, which I believe affords an insight into the real nature of the Friend's mental capabilities:

SONNET I22

Thy guift, thy tables, are within my braine,
Full characterd with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rancke remaine
Beyond all date euen to eternity.
Or at the least, so long as braine and heart
Have facultie by nature to subsist,
Til each to raz'd obliuion yeeld his part
Of thee, thy record neuer can be mist:
That poore retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy deare loue to skore,
Therefore to giue them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receaue thee more
To keepe an adiunckt to remember thee,
Were to import forgetfulnesse in mee.

The correct interpretation of this Sonnet seems to me of cardinal importance in our estimate of the Friend. We may note, first of all, that the phrase 'Thy guift, thy tables', evidently denotes the Friend's own compilation; indeed, there seems to be wide critical agreement on this point. But there is at present only a hazy conception of the nature of these tables, which are usually dismissed as mere memorandum-books.

I myself feel sure that they were of much greater account. Such phrases as ‘Beyond all date euen to eternity’, ‘thy record’, ‘tallies’, ‘skore’(score), convey to me the impression of scientific tables of mathematical precision. And the fact of Shakespeare’s passing on his Friend’s gift to somebody else rather confirms this: we do not give away gifts from our Friends unless they lie outside the sphere of normal usefulness. The suggestion, therefore, is that these tables were strictly technical.

If I am right, we have to look for a young nobleman who was no poet, but a mathematician capable of producing scientific tables. This is a strong pointer to one particular person, who - alone amongst young noblemen of the time had compiled navigational tables of professional competence: Sir Robert Dudley (1574-1649), titular Duke of Northumberland and son of the Earl of Leicester.

For a full life of Dudley the reader is referred to *The Son of Leicester* (1964) by Arthur Gould Lee, to whom I am indebted for the following brief biographical sketch. The author describes several early M/S technical works on nautical subjects produced by Dudley: notably, ‘a volume on the true and real art of navigation, with many curious mathematical and astronomical figures, and other things never before seen, such as nautical instruments for the observation of the variations of longitude and latitude, and others for the horizontal and spiral navigation, and about the Great Circles’ (Dudley’s own words.) This navigational-treatise: (unpublished though perhaps copied) was produced in England within the last few years of the 16th century[3], and eventually comprised the first and fifth books of Dudley’s great contribution to marine-science, *Dell’Arcano del Mare*, published in Italy in 1646-47, a copy of which is in the National Maritime Museum.

Sets of tables for use in navigation were compiled by various people in the 16th century: Martin Cortes, in *The Art of Navigation*, published *Declination Tables*; and Edward Wright, in *Certain Errors of Navigation* (1599), issued *The First Printed Table of Meridional Parts for every 10 minutes of Latitude*. Similar tables were produced by William Bourne, Henry Briggs and Thomas Hariot, to whose important *Tables of Amplitudes* Dr. A. L. Rowse makes reference in writing of Elizabethan navigation[4]. Dudley’s own navigational work contained tables both in columnar and diagrammatic form. May not the Friend’s tables be these?

Robert Dudley was born on 7th August, 1574 at Richmond, Surrey, the son of Robert, Earl of Leicester and the Lady Douglas Sheffield. Widow of Lord John Sheffield and daughter of William Howard, First Baron Effingham, she was renowned for her radiant beauty. From his earliest years Dudley must have been aware that, though his mother believed she had been legally married to Leicester (in May1573, at Esher), his father later denied the marriage, regarding his son as illegitimate, and felt free to enter into another marriage - with Lettice, Countess of Essex - in 1578. Unhappy though she must have been at the treatment, Douglas also felt free to remarry, her next husband being Edward Stafford of Grafton, whom she married in 1579.

Following a good education, Robert Dudley was received at Court about 1590, and - still in extreme youth - married Margaret Cavendish, cousin of the famous navigator, Thomas Cavendish. From boyhood, Dudley was intensely fond of the sea, exercising his brilliant mind on the quest of further knowledge of the New World and the solution of problems of navigation and marine-science generally. In 1594, in command of a small squadron of vessels, he set out on a voyage of exploration to Trinidad and the Orinoco River. When after many months he finally reached an English port towards the end of May 1595, he learned that he was a widower, his wife Margaret having died of the plague in his absence. They were childless.

From this date until March 1596 he seems to have remained in England, then joined Essex in the successful Cadiz expedition, being appointed captain of the 500-ton man-of-war *Nonpareil*, and was knighted by Essex shortly after the campaign. Dudley’s star was in the ascendant: brave, adventurous,

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[3] A. G. Lee : *The Son of Leicester*, p. 88 (Gollancz, 1964).

[4] For detailed references to the tables of various Elizabethan navigators, v:

(a) David W. Waters: *The Art of Navigation in England in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Times* (Hollis and Carter, 1958)). ,

(b) A. L. Rowse: *The Elizabethan Renaissance: The Cultural Achievement*, Chapter 7 (Macmillan, 1972).

of brilliant intellect, and extremely handsome, he was a popular hero, liked and admired everywhere; and at some unknown date in 1596 he married Alice Leigh, daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh of Stoneleigh Abbey, Warwickshire, a few miles from his seat at Kenilworth Castle, inherited from his father.

But, in spite of all, his estates and great wealth, his success as a seafaring explorer and in naval battles, he was evidently torn by the discrepant accounts of his parents' marriage. In his will, Leicester had called him his base son, but evidence was not lacking that the marriage was perfectly valid; and whatever explanation his mother may have given him in his early years, she later offered sworn testimony to his legitimacy. Adopting his grandfather's title, Duke of Northumberland, he was also known as the Earl of Leicester or Earl of Warwick.

Slightly implicated in the Essex revolt,, Dudley waited until almost the beginning of the new reign before going to law in the matter of his legitimacy. It was a lengthy process, extending over the years 1603-1605. But in the end the Star Chamber proved unjust to him, flatly refusing what he believed to be his rightful claims; so that on 2nd July, 1605 this brilliant, disappointed man (incidentally abandoning his wife and family, and accompanied by a cousin, Elizabeth Southwell) left England for ever, and spent the remainder of his long life in Florence, as naval-architect to the ducal family of Medici, who accorded him all deference and honours. While in England, Dudley had invented several instruments for use in navigation, and continued his inventiveness and writings on naval matters throughout his Italian sojourn. He died at Castello Villa, Florence, in September 1649.

Despite his callous treatment of his wife Alice and their daughters, Robert Dudley is seen to have had a very remarkable and engaging personality. When publishing *The Shepherd's Garland* in 1593, Michael Drayton addressed the dedication 'to the noble and valorous gentleman Master Robert Dudley, enriched with all vertues of the minde and worthy of all honourable desert. Your most affectionate and devoted Michael Drayton'.

Besides Shakespeare's Sonnets Nos. 82 and 122, we find several others in the sequence that seem to point particularly to Dudley. The well-known lines in Sonnet 3, for instance,

Thou art thy mother's glasse and she in thee
Calls backe the louely Aprill of her prime,

fit Dudley and his mother well enough. Her celebrated beauty caused Gervase Holles to write of 'the Lord Sheffield and the fair young lady of his, who shone like a star in the Court, both for her beauty and the richness of her apparel'[5]. And George Peele, describing in *England's Holidays*, a Tilt on 17th November, 1595, wrote of Dudley in similar terms to Shakespeare's in Sonnet 3:

Like Venus' son in Mars his armour clad,
Beset with glorious globes and golden flames,
Came Dudley in, . . .

From the detailed description of this Tilt, here is evidently an account by an eye-witness, to whom Dudley appeared to be of almost feminine beauty. To other people, also, his facial delicacy seems to have been noticeable: 'having a fresh and fine complexion' (G. Adlard)[6].

Moreover, Hilliard's miniature of Dudley as a young man has suggested both to Sir Sidney Lee and Richard Garnett[7] a resemblance to the features of Shelley, whose complexion - according to T. J. Hogg - was 'delicate, and almost feminine, of the purest red and white'.

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[5] *Memorials of the Holles Family* (1658).
[6] *Amye Robsart and Ihe Earl of Leicester* (1870).
[7] v. D.N.B. articles on Sir Robert Dudley and P. B. Shelley.

Indeed, one feels that the line in Sonnet 20,

A Woman's face with natures owne hand painted,

might have been appropriate equally to Dudley or Shelley.

Another reference that seems applicable to Dudley occurs in Sonnet 16.

So should the lines of life that life repaire
Which this (Times pensel or my pupill pen)
Neither in inward worth nor outward faire
Can make you liue your selfe in eies of men,
To giue away your selfe, keeps your selfe still,
And you must liue drawne by your own sweet skill.

May not these concluding words be Shakespeare's way of acknowledging his Friend's skill as a draughtsman? As shipwright, inventor and cartographer, Dudley's own skill was of a very high order.

Sea-images occur in Sonnets 80, 86, 116 and 117, and in two of these the Friend is pictured as captain of a ship at sea. In particular, we may note that the words 'your fame' in Sonnet 80 are immediately followed by the vivid eight-line sea-metaphor, beginning

But since your worth (wide as the Ocean is)
The humble as the proudest saile doth beare, . . .

For Shakespeare, it would seem that the Friend's fame was directly associated with the sea.

I think there may be significance in the sea-metaphors in these four Sonnets; one or two such Sonnets might be dismissed as without literal application to the Friend's activities at sea - not four, surely.

It will be seen from the above account of Sir Robert Dudley's early life that the most likely time for anyone to begin writing sonnets urging him to marry would have been between the end of May 1595 and the date of his marriage to Alice Leigh in l596. Here we may recall that Sir Edmund Chambers dated the first meeting between Shakespeare and his Friend as the autumn of 1595[8].

And now I shall advance another reason for Dudley's being the Friend - a reason for the whole purpose of the start of the Sonnets. Rightly, it has been generally accepted that Shakespeare must have been asked by those closest to the Friend to induce him to marry and perpetuate his line. But in Dudley's case there would be an additional prompting: reassurance of title. And this, I think, can be correlated to the particular times in which they were living. The beginning of 1596 saw preparations in hand for a full-scale national offensive against Spain, to result eventually in the victory at Cadiz. To this, Dudley (very much 'the world's fresh ornament') contributed his full share, thereby adding to his fame and gaining a knighthood.

Nevertheless, his position at Court remained somewhat uncertain; and this might be reflected in a certain hesitancy on Shakespeare's part when writing Sonnet 37,

For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Intitled in their parts, do crowned sit,
I make my loue ingrafted to this store; . . .

May not Shakespeare here be making delicate reference to the fact that the Friend's title of birth or wealth still awaits the hand of the Sovereign? In Dudley's case - unique among young noblemen of the time - title of birth remained in question, and to some extent that of wealth also; for, although he had received a vast inheritance from his father, his uncle Ambrose's property of Warwick Castle and

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[8] *Sources for a Biography of Shakespeare*, p. 71 (Clarendon Press, 1946).

its manors had been escheated to the Crown on his death without heir in 1590, so that it remained a matter of speculation whether Robert Dudley could ever successfully lay claim to them[9].

In default of any positive evidence associating Shakespeare with Dudley, I would point to mutual Friendships with the families of Herbert and Leveson. The brothers William and Philip Herbert, Friends of Dudley (op. cit., p. 92), were clearly acquainted with Shakespeare; and the naval-captain Sir Richard Leveson, Dudley's first-cousin by marriage, was also first-cousin to William Leveson (or Levison), of Aldermanbury, appointed Trustee of the Globe Theatre property by Shakespeare and his fellows in 1599[10].

Those who favour 1596 as the date of some noble wedding likely to have occasioned the writing of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* might consider Dudley's wedding to Alice Leigh. Wherever the actual marriage-ceremony was performed, celebrations must have taken place at Kenilworth Castle or ,Stoneleigh Abbey in that year. Moreover, - though perhaps not too much should be made of it - there still persists a legend of Shakespeare's association with Stoneleigh Abbey; and the play itself contains a clear reference to the Earl of Leicester's entertainment of the Queen in 1575 at Kenilworth.

Finally, I would point out that the 'Mr. W. H.' of Thorpe's dedication cannot possibly apply to Dudley under any of his titles. But actually, need it refer to the Friend? After all, Thorpe included the whole of the 154 Sonnets in his dedication, not merely those addressed to the Friend.

Such is the case for Shakespeare's Friend being Sir Robert Dudley, who - in the words of Gervase Holles[11] -'called himself Duke of Northumberland'. And, as indicated in my pamphlet *Shakespeare at Gray's Inn (1967)*[12], there is a reference to 'Glorious adopted fayre *Northumberland*' in Stanza 18 of Gervase Markham's long poem *Devoreux* - written late in 1597 in support of the Essex group - which may be thought to apply to him and link him with Shakespeare, for the following reasons:

Devoreux (Stanza 18)

Heare mee, o holy ones, and helpe my stile,
Glorious adopted fayre *Northumberland*,
And thou rich *Rich*, richest did ere compile,
Th'onely history shall eternell stand
When ruine els shall all records defile,
And burne out mem'ry with Oblivion's brand;
Ayde you those Muses that should ayde my pen,
For you'r ador'd of Muses, Gods, and men.

We find this particular stanza sandwiched between others in which Markham heaps lavish praise upon Essex's sisters, Dorothy Countess of Northumberland and Penelope Lady Rich. At first glance it would seem that stanza 18 also continues in their praise; but in my opinion the ladies' names are used here as a cloak to invoke two men, Northumberland and Rich whom Markham wishes to proclaim as Essex supporters. In judging the truth of this assertion, the reader may be assured that elsewhere in *Devoreux* the author indulges in similar devious and cryptic methods. Discussing the poem in '*Shakespeare's Rival*'[13] (p. 107), Robert Gittings points out that 'under cover of panegyrics on the dead Walter Devoreux, the same terms are made to apply to the living Essex'. Moreover, it is at least arguable that an invocation to 'Fraunce' in Stanza 17 - though ostensibly referring to the country - is actually an appeal to the Gray's Inn poet, Abraham Fraunce (v. Appendix).

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[9] A. G. Lee, ibid. p. 102.
[10] v. Leslie Hotson: 1, William Shakespeare (Jonathan Cape, 1937).
[11] Gervase Holles, op. cit.
[12] Reviewed in *The Shakespeare Quarterly*, No. XX.
[13] Robert Gittings : *Shakespeare's Rival* (Heinemann, 1960)

(Admittedly, there occurs in a stanza towards the end of the poem - Stanza 255 - a comparable passage which can only apply to the Countess of Northumberland and Lady Rich:

You Soveraigne Ladies thron'd in my harts seate,
Northumberland, and *Rich*, for charritie -

Nevertheless, this doesn't alter my conviction that in the earlier stanza the word 'adopted' is so incongruous an epithet for the Countess of Northumberland that a different meaning must be intended.)

Assuming that '*Northumberland*' and '*Rich*' are two men, I think we may reasonably identify the first as Essex's step-brother, Sir Robert Dudley. Now here I must make a correction. In my pamphlet, I misinterpreted the word 'history' in stanza 18, and see now that in this context it means simply 'story''. As such, it is presumably a story compiled by Rich about Northumberland and himself.

Who, then, was this writer named Rich? The only professional writer of the name at that time was Barnabe Rich, for whom such praise would have been wildly excessive and inappropriate, besides his being 34 years older than Dudley. Therefore, someone else must be indicated. We may remark in lines 4-6 of the stanza a strong resemblance to phraseology in Shakespeare's Sonnet 55[14] (with its echoes of Ovid), so that we are led to suspect a deliberate allusion, and that Markham is referring here to the story of the Shakespeare Sonnet-sequence itself, with Northumberland (Dudley), as the Friend. Was Rich, then, an alternative name for Shakespeare?

The reader may consider the following as evidence of such a possibility. In the opening section of *Shakespeare's Rival* - 'The Pun and the Poet'- the author examines a few lines of the verse-satire *Skialethia* (1598) by Evrard Guilpin, of Gray's Inn, commenting on Markham's *Devoreux*:

Markham is censur'd for his want of plot,
Yet others thinke that no deep stayning blot;
As *Homer* writ his Frogs - fray learnedly,
And *Virgil* his Gnats unkind Tragedy:
So though his plot be poore, his Subject's rich,
And his Muse soars a Falcon's gallant pitch.

Our attention is drawn to a clear pun on the word 'rich' in the final couplet, together with a possible reference ('Falcon') to Shakespeare's newly-acquired coat-of-arms. With this I agree; for the well-known reference to Essex in *Henry V* seems to label Shakespeare as a partisan, and - as Dr. Gittings emphasised (ibid. p. 41) - the pun on 'Falcon' occurs in a clear reference to the Essex circle, and no one else in that circle fits the pun.

But here I must presume to differ from Dr. Gittings' interpretation of this couplet. To 'soar' or 'fly a pitch' was a common expression in falconry at that time, Shakespeare himself giving us this example in *Richard II* 1 i:

How high a pitch his resolution soars!

Guilpin's use of the phrase seems exactly similar, so that I think we may adopt a simpler reading, without any implication of emulating or harming. If we regard the pronoun 'his'' in the last line as standing for 'rich' rather than for' Markham', the sense would then be:

And his (Rich's) Muse soars (at a) Falcon's gallant pitch.

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[14] Shakespeare:

Nor Mars his sword, nor warres quick fire shall burne
The liuing record of your memory.
Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth. . . .

From *Skialethia*, interlinked puns on ‘rich’ are traced, through the puns in *Devoreux*, to examples of the use of ‘rich’ and ‘richly’ in Shakespeare’s ‘Rival Poet’ Sonnets 84 and 85:

84.
Who is it that sayes most, which can say more
Then this rich praise, that you alone, are you,
(cf. But you ! ô you, you that alone are you, (*Devoreux*, Stanza 16)).

85.
My toung-tied Muse in manners holds her still
While comments of your praise richly compil’d
Reserve their Character with goulden quill.
(cf. *Devoreux*, Stanza 18.)

I agree with Dr Gittings that Shakespeare is piqued by Markham, and ‘takes notice of whole phrases and ideas from *Devoreux* in his own Sonnets’ and I find the argument convincing that the punning on ‘rich’ by these three authors is interconnected, Shakespeare and Guilpin commenting on Markham.

However, my own theory about the pun goes further: that in Shakespeare the puns on ‘rich’ or its compounds are not confined to the ‘Rival Poet’ Sonnets, but are evident in at least seven Sonnets: Nos. 29, 34, 84, 85, 97, 102 and 146 (and probably also in 52 and 87); so that the punning extends over most of the period when he was writing to the Friend. Furthermore - and distinct from the opinions expressed in *Shakespeare’s Rival* - the significance of the pun seems to me quite plain: that the word ‘rich’ refers, not to Lady Rich, but to Shakespeare himself, implying that he was also known by the name Rich to the Friend, to Gervase Markham and to Evrard Guilpin. For this reason - and on the evidence of *Polimanteia* (1595) by William Covell, where Shakespeare’s name is linked with various members of the Universities and Inns of Court - he might be identical with a certain William Rich who was admitted to Gray’s Inn in 1579[15], and called to the Bar in 1587.

(We may note, in passing, that Evrard Guilpin, admitted to Gray’s Inn in 1591, may well have witnessed the performance there of The Comedy of Errors at Christmas 1594, and known friends of the author.)

The idea of Shakespeare’s being known in London by another name may seem less quixotic if we accept, tentatively, the hypothesis advanced by some commentators that, in their Satires of 1598, Joseph Hall and John Marston represent Shakespeare by the character *Labeo*, a Roman lawyer. From oblique allusions, it seems reasonable to infer that both satirists had Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* in mind, when they wrote of a poem whose author they had known under another name - Hall saying of *Labeo*:

Who list complaine of wronged faith or fame
When hee may shift it to another’s name
(*Virgidemiarum* IV 1).

[15] It should be noted that the only other person named Rich to be recorded as a member of Gray's Inn at this date was Robert 2nd Lord Rich. Son of the Lord Chancellor, he was brother-in-law to Sir Henry Dudley, a brother of the Earls of Warwick and Leicester.

Robert 2nd Lord Rich was the first of the Rich family to be admitted to Gray's Inn (in 1573). All other persons named Rich at Gray's Inn during the next three generations can be recognised as tlie Lord Chancellor's descendants - with the exception of tlie William Rich under discussion.

And Marston, following Hall:

So *Labeo* did complaine his loue was stone,
Obdurate, flinty, so relentlesse none:
Yet *Lynceus* knowes that in the end of this,
He wrought as strange a metamorphosis.
Ends not my Poem then surpassing ill?
Come, come, *Augustus*, crowne my laureat quill.
(*Pygmalion*).

Concerning the character *Lynceus* (also introduced by Hall), we may recall the opinion of Arnold Davenport, in his edition of Hall's Poems (Liverpool University Press, 1949), that *Lynceus* (the Argonauts' navigator) may have been taken from Lucian's *Timon* (25), where we find him as companion to *Ploutos*, a convenient synonym for anyone surnamed Rich, (To this day, Mr. Michael Rich contributes to *The Listener* under the name *Ploutos*).

Marston, then, may be implying that *Lynceus* knows all about the lawyer's metamorphosis, by reason of his association with *Ploutos* - this being an extension, of course, of the direct allusion to the transformation of *Adonis* into a flower. Of two other suggested contemporary allusions to Shakespeare as Rich, I offer this quotation from *Narcissus*, by Thomas Edwards, published in 1593:

Adon deafly masking thro,
Stately troupes rich conceited,
Shew'd he well deserved to,
Loues delight on him to gaze
And had not loue her selfe intreated,
Other nymphs had sent him baies.

Whereas in *Skialethia* we have a clear pun on 'rich', coupled with a possible reference to Shakespeare, in *Narcissus* we find a clear reference to Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* (as conceded by E. K. Chambers), coupled with a possible pun on 'rich'. If there is indeed a pun here, it would seem that Edwards believed the poem to be the work of someone he knew already as Rich but now writing under the name of William Shakespeare.

I am aware that not everyone will agree with the suggested puns on 'rich' in the Sonnets. Some examples, indeed, are clearer than others. But I would point to one particular instance where the acceptance of a pun helps to clarify a somewhat difficult passage. This is in Sonnet 97, where the abrupt juxtaposition of the seasons in lines 5 and 6 seems a little strange:

And yet this time remou'd was sommers time,
The teeming Autumne big with ritch increase, . . .

However, if for 'ritch increase' we read 'Shakespeare increase', it becomes clear that in lines 5 - 10 the Poet is speaking of the fruit of his own brain: he has been engaged on some major work. The general sense of the Sonnet would thus be: 'the Summer has been as an Autumn with the fruitful harvest of the Poet's work, yet that Summer brought him no enjoyment since absence from the Friend had turned it into Winter'.

By way of postscript, I must point to the distinct possibility of a Shakespeare-Dudley association in a comedy by Ben Jonson: *Every Man Out of His Humour*, written in 1598 and first performed in 1599. This is contingent, however, upon our acceptance of the character Sogliardo as vaguely (a parody rather than a portrait) based upon Shakespeare himself. The bye-play on Sogliardo's efforts to obtain a coat-of-arms might certainly be in topical regard to Shakespeare's, - and the remark to Sogliardo by his Friend Sir Puntarvolo (Act 111, Scene 4) -'Let the word be, *Not without mustard*; your crest is very rare, sir' - has long been recognised as a mocking allusion to Shakespeare's own motto. Furthermore, Sogliardo is referred to later on as 'a kinsman to justice Silence' (Act V, Scene 2). Certainly, Sogliardo may well be intended for Shakespeare.

It is Sir Puntarvolo who shares so many characteristics with Sir Robert Dudley. Like Dudley, Puntarvolo is well-known for his voyages, and is lord of a castle ('a most sumptuous ,and stately edifice'). Like Dudley, he is noted for his skill at the tilt, for training horses and dogs, and for falconry. In particular, there is a common familiarity with nautical instruments: in his preface, Jonson calls Puntarvolo 'the very Jacob's staff of compliment', a Jacob's staff being an instrument (now obsolete) for taking altitudes. And Puntarvolo is made to affect a jocular manner emphasising this:

Act 11, Scene 2:

> *Puntarvolo* (to a Gentlewoman) : 'To the perfection of compliment (which is the dial of the thought, and guided by the sun of your beauties) are requir'd these three specials; the gnomon, the puntilios, and the superficies; the superficies, is that we call place; the puntilios, circumstance; and the gnomon, ceremony; in either of which, for a stranger to err, 'tis easy and facile, and such am I.'
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> *Carlo Buffone* : 'True, not knowing her horizon, he must needs err; which I fear he knows too well.'

Act 11, Scene 3:

> *Puntarvolo* (to his Lady)) : 'Most debonair, and luculent, lady, I decline me low as the basis of your altitude.'
>
> *Cordatus* : 'He makes congees to his wife in geometrical proportions.'

These references to taking the sun's altitude certainly suggest navigation[16]. Indeed, in his edition of Jonson's Works, H. C. Hart seeks to identify Puntarvolo with Sir Walter Ralegh. But Ralegh was not famous for tilting (at any rate at this period), as were Dudley and Puntarvolo. For several years prior to 1598, Dudley was particularly well-known for his daring riding at the Accession Day Tilts, so that the identification fits him better than Ralegh.

My main arguments for this double-theory may now be summarised:

1. Sonnet 122 describes tables compiled by the Friend, which appear to be scientific. On the assumption that the Friend was a young nobleman, nobody but Sir Robert Dudley is known to have been compiling such tables in the late 1590s.

2. Dudley was self-styled Duke of Northumberland, so that the expression 'Glorious adopted fayre *Northumberland*' in Stanza 18 of Markham's *Devoreux* (1597-98) may be thought to apply to him.

3. With '*Northumberland*' in this stanza is linked a person named '*Rich*' who has been compiling a 'history' or story - presumably about '*Northumberland*' and himself. Evrard Guilpin, in *Skialethia*, and Shakespeare himself in two of the 'Rival Poet' Sonnets, Nos. 84 and 85, are seen to pun on the word 'rich' in allusion to the punning in *Devoreux* (v, Robert Gittings: *Shakespeare's Rival*, pp. 111 and 41).

4, But in my view, Shakespeare puns on 'rich' in several other Sonnets outside the 'Rival Poet' group - in a way that can hardly apply to anyone but himself.

5. Although there is no direct evidence of Shakespeare's Friendship with Dudley, it seems likely that Ben Jonson is mildly satirising the pair as *Sogliardo* and *Sir Puntarvolo* in *Every Man Out of His Humour*.

6. On the evidence of *Polimanteia* (1595), it is possible that Shakespeare was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1579 - but under the name William Rich.

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[16] cf. Sonnet 77, 'Thy dial'.

It may well be that further research into the life of Sir Robert Dudley during the closing years of the 16th century will eventually be repaid by a fuller understanding of Shakespeare himself.

ADDENDUM

Those who accept Dr W.M. Jones's reasonable assumption that William in *As You Like* It represents Shakespeare himself, may well ponder Touchstone's question: 'art rich?' and William's reply.

Rival, op. cit. A further significant fact may be found in an anonymous private poem addressed to Lady Ann Vavasor, first printed in 1660, though evidently written some 70 years earlier. The opening lines run:

Many desire but few or none deserve
To win the fort of thy most constant will

These lines recall the desire/deserve contrast in the casket scene of The Merchant of Venice.

In addition, the poem includes the same metaphor employed in Shakespeare's Third Sonnet viz, the tilth disdained.

The 1660 version is subsribed W.R. which leads some editors to accord the poem to Sir Walter Raleigh. But need this be so?

ADDENDUM

Another point may be made from the study of Ben Jonson's play "Poetaster", where we find the youthful Ovid as a law student, berated by his noble father for writing poetry and plays to the neglect of his law studies. I quote from Act 1 Scene 2:

Ovid sen: "Now Captaine Tucca, what say you?"

Tucca: "Why, what should I say? or what can I say, my flowre o' the order? Should I say, thou art rich? or that thou art honourable? or wise? or valiant? or learned? or liberall? Why thou art all these, and thou knowest it"

I share the opinion of the commentator C W Sykes that Ovid is meant to be Shakespeare, but would make the further suggestion that Jonson is punning here on the name Rich.

ADDENDUM

There is a possibility (still to be tested) that the wife of Lord Chancellor Rich, Elizabeth Gynkes or Jenks, was closely related, either to Sir William Jenks of Aston Cantlow (Mary Arden's parish) or to the later Dorothy Jenks, daughter of Richard Shakespeare of Rowington (Will 1591/2)

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APPENDIX

Stanzas 15-20 of *Devoreux*, by Gervase Markham (1598).

15

0 you immortall Daughters of delight,
Admir'd alone, triple triplicitie,
Fayre *Thespyan* Goddesses, whose onely might,
With holy fire inspires our memorie;
Even you deare Muses, ayde me to recite
Her dolefull accents, and her agonie:
Bathe my cold temples in some blessed spring,
That dare not else dreame of so great a thing.

16

The Countesse of Northumberland and the Lady Rich

But you! ô you, you that alone are you,
Whom nothing but your selves your selves can match,
From whom, and to whom, all the Vertues flew:
For ere high *Iove* the worlds worke did dispatch,
Your curious moulds within himselfe he drew,
Making his Dietie thereon to watch,
Vowing, Beautie and Vertue, till your birth
Should not be seene, or knowne vpon the earth.

17

You, Sisters both in nature and admire,
The golden typ of every praysing tonge,
That make one Ile bove all the world aspire.
(0 thinke not Fraunce this furie doth thee wrong,
For who that speakes, speakes not with double fire
If but one thought of them glaunce in his song?
Then pardon mine invoke, and let me ring
Iustly on them that teach all Swannes to sing.)

18

Heare mee, ô holy ones, and helpe my stile,
Glorious adopted fayre *Northumberland*,
And thou rich *Rich*, richest did ere compile,
Th'onely history shall eternell stand
When ruine els shall all records defile,
And burne out mem'ry with Oblivion's brand;
Ayde you those Muses that should ayde my pen,
For you'r ador'd of Muses, Gods, and men.

19

Even for his soules sake whom your soules lov'd deare,
Fayre Ladies lighten favour on my lay,
That him behold, though mee you will not heare,
Him, whose omnipotence of fames beares sway
Farther then from the high Alpes highest staire
That worlds great eye hath power to see by day
You that live aye in him, hee in your thought,
Exhalt my Muse, untutered, not untaught.

20

Be you, you glorious Angels of his prayse,
(Whose but report lends earth a heav'nly soule)
The first beholders of my tragic layes,
Whom if you blesse, tbere's none dares to controule,
(For curst is hee that what you say, gaine-sayes)
Or chyde mee for your Brother I enroule
Above the host of former living men;
A noble worke, fit For a golden pen.

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