LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Identity of Shakespeare

I recently came across this *JSE* book review comment on David Roper's website (Roper 2012):

> Roper has provided in this book primary evidence relevant to an enigma of over 400 years standing: The actual identity of "William Shakespeare." (Desper 2009:375)

While it is correct that his book provides this "primary relevance," I actually made this discovery in 2008 (Ferris 2008), where it was and has been in the public forum for a number of years. As you probably know, codes and ciphers are highly suspect in the Shakespeare Authorship debate—even by some (if not most) of those who acknowledge themselves as "Oxfordians." Codes and ciphers, however, have been making headway in scholastic and in popular forums for a while now; progress is somewhat slow, but is picking up some momentum—thanks to David Roper's wonderful contributions.

I thought you might enjoy (or rather, I hope you will enjoy!) my personal graphic (Figure 1) of just one of the finds I have made in Sonnet 76. Using a skip/shift of one transposition equidistant letter sequence (ELS) technique, I placed Sonnet 76 into several arrays, but the particular array I am drawing your attention to is Array 14 (Figure 1). Although the raw probabilities noted below are rough or approximate calculations of deliberate placement with the plaintext of the sonnet, numbers exceeding one million deserve critical attention. As you can see, the word "DEVERE" attached/connected/touching the words: "MY NAME'S" is strong support for probable placement within the plaintext (i.e. put there by intelligent design, or, encrypted, if you will) as well as implying the true writer of Sonnet 76 was Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

The validity of the letter-string and the sentence it produces ("My name's de Vere") is apparent: It is absolutely there, it can be seen, there is no "torturing" of plaintext accompanied by elaborate interpretations involved. There is no bias controlling the results. The most conservative of all doubters that anyone except the Stratford Shakespeare is responsible for the Shakespeare canon, or the most skeptical of Oxfordians, can get the same results using the simple ELS method. A child can produce the same results every time (pun not intended). In fact, I believe it would be, and is, difficult

for others, especially for those with dedicated Stratfordian points of view to dismiss the array graphic with the tired and predictable response: "IT just happened by chance." But how to explain its presence otherwise—wouldn't a mathematical approach be needed to refute what is highly probable, a valid coding of de Vere's name? And not just a mathematical approach, but common sense and/or a reasonable person would be attracted to the array on its own merits.

Again, no "torturing" of the plaintext is necessary; nothing along the lines of trying to explain and/or to figure what is embedded—as is the case with Baconian ciphers.

The "u"s **intended** to be "v"s in actual pronunciation (in Elizabethan times as well as now) have been changed to "v"s, for reasons of clarity.

Sonnet 76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
So far from variation or quicke change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new found methods, and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keepe invention in a noted weed,
That every word doth almost tel my name,
Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?
O know sweet love I alwaies write of you,
And you and love are still my argument:
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending againe what is already spent:
For as the Sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is told.

"My name's DEVERE" ("My name is DEVERE")
"That every word doth almost tel my name"

Raw Probability Calculations. Total Letters: 448. Letter-String: "DEVERE":
(D = 27) (E = 57) (V = 8) (E = 56) (R = 24) (E = 55) =
[both individual numerator and denominator values are divided by 100 for ease of calculation]
(.27/4.48) (.57/4.47) (.08/4.46) (.56/4.45) (.24/4.44) (.55/4.43) =
.00091010304/7817.4858380774 = 1/8,589,671.1630338 =
.0000001164188 = 1,164,188/10,000,000,000,000 =
1 in 8,589,678 = 99.99998835812% (8.5 million to one) raw probability of occurring by chance.

Sonnet 76
Array 14

M Y N A M E I S D E V E R E

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

M O S T T E L  M Y N A M E'S

H E W I   N G T H  E I   R B I   R

T H A N D W H E  R E T H E Y

D I   D P R O C E  E D O K N O

W S W E E T L O  V E I   A L W

A I   E S W R I   T  E O F Y O U

A N D Y O U A N  D L O V E A
R E S T I   L L M Y A R G U M
E N T S O A L L M Y B E S T
I   S D R E S S I   N G O L D W
O R D S N E W S P E N D I   N
G A G A I   N E W H A T I   S A
L R E A D Y S P E N T F O R
A S T H E S U N I   S D A I   L
Y N E W A N D O L D S O I   S
M Y L O V E S T I   L L T E L
L I   N G W H A T I   S T O L D
```

E D W A R D O X E N F O R D

Figure 1. Array 14 (skip of 14) of Sonnet 76.

As for me, I am the first to find the encryption in Sonnet 76 (Ferris 2008), which reads: "My name's DEVERE". A more lengthy treatment of this find has been done by David L. Roper in his book *Proving Shakespeare* (Roper 2008) where he states this find is conclusive proof Edward de Vere is the author of the Shakespeare sonnets. Roper's website also contains information on this letter-string, as well as calculated probabilities (Roper 2012), and can be found as Proof Four at http://www.dlropershakespearians. com/ where he states (referring to my find):

> It should therefore be understood that this "autographed" sonnet proves conclusively that Edward de Vere was the poet who wrote Shakespeare's Sonnets. Once chance has been rejected, there is no other explanation. (Roper 2012)

And later:

> Acknowledgement is due to Dr. James Ferris, who first drew attention to de Vere's name in Sonnet 76. (Roper 2012)

I have many more like examples from the plays as well.

James S. Ferris
drferris68@yahoo.com

References

Desper, C. R. (2009). Review of *Proving Shakespeare: In Ben Jonson's Own Words* by David L. Roper. *Journal of Scientific Exploration 23*(3), 375–376.

Ferris, J. S. (2008). *The Truth Will Out That Ever I Was Borne. The Horatio Code: The Confession of 1623*. http://www.drjsferris.com/

Roper, D. L. (2008). *Proving Shakespeare: In Ben Jonson's Own Words*. Truro, Cornwall, UK: Orvid Publications. 556 pp.

Roper, D. L. (2012). Truth of Authorship. http://www.dlropershakespearians.com/