

OXMYTHS: SECTION III

The 'myths' below are arranged chronologically.

MYTH: Lord Burghley claimed to have been born during the Diet of Worms.

William Cecil, Lord Burghley was born 13 September 1520. The Diet of Worms took place from January 27-May 25, 1521.

References:

(1) *Dictionary of national biography*. Edited by Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967-8, vol. 3, p. 1315.

(2) Hillerbrand, Hans J. *The Oxford encyclopedia of the Reformation*. 4 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, vol. 4, pp. 300-1.

MYTH: Sir Thomas Darcy's letter of June 27, 1548 concerning the 16th Earl of Oxford's marriage is addressed to William Cecil.

The addressee of this letter is unspecified.

References:

(1) TNA SP10/1/45, where it is incorrectly calendared under 1547.

(2) Knighton, C.S., ed. *Calendar of state papers of the reign of Edward VI 1547-1553*. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1992, p. 14.

MYTH: The 16th Earl's second marriage, to Margery Golding, was 'irregular'.

There is no evidence of this. The 16th Earl of Oxford died on 3 August 1562. In order to claim the de Vere inheritance for herself, in 1563 Katherine (nee de Vere) Windsor, the 16th Earl's daughter by his first marriage to Dorothy (nee Neville) de Vere, complained to the Archbishop of Canterbury that the 16th Earl had married one Joan Jockey after the 16th Earl's first wife, Dorothy (nee Neville) de Vere died circa January 12, 1547. Had the 16th Earl married Joan Jockey after the death of his first wife, and before the death of Joan Jockey, his second marriage to Margery Golding (d.1568) on 1 August 1548 would have been bigamous and legally invalid. However, the evidence of all witnesses who had knowledge of the matter was that the marriage between the 16th Earl and Joan Jockey, if

it took place at all, had occurred during the lifetime of the 16th Earl's first wife, Dorothy (nee Neville) de Vere. In these circumstances, the 16th Earl's alleged marriage to Joan Jockey would have been bigamous, and could have had no legal effect, either during the lifetime of the 16th Earl's first wife, or after her death. The 16th Earl's second marriage to Margery Golding on 1 August 1548 was therefore not in any way 'irregular'. Katherine (nee Neville) Windsor must have been made aware of this, because after her initial complaint to the Archbishop of Canterbury, she took no further action, and the de Vere estates descended to the 16th Earl's children by his second marriage to Margery Golding.

References:

(1) Depositions in Huntington Library EL 5870, available on this website.

MYTH: Lord Burghley arranged the 16th Earl of Oxford's marriage to Margery Golding

There is no evidence that William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, was involved in any way with the 16th Earl of Oxford's marriage to Margery Golding. The marriage was 'wrought' 'by the means of the vicar of Clare'.

References:

(1) Depositions of John Anson, Richard Enews and Thomas Knollys in Huntington Library EL 5870, available on this website.

MYTH: Margery Golding remarried in excessive haste after the 16th Earl of Oxford's death.

A reference by Margery Golding to Charles Tyrrell in a letter to William Cecil of 11 October 1563 could be construed to imply that Margery Golding and Charles Tyrrell were married by that date. The 16th Earl of Oxford had died more than a year before, on 3 August 1562. Remarriage more than a year after a spouse's death does not comprise 'excessive haste'.

References:

(1) Bowen, Gwynneth. "What happened at Hedingham and Earls Colne?" *Shakespeare Authorship Review*, no. 23 (Summer 1970), pp. 1-11, at p. 4.

MYTH: Arthur Brooke, the alleged author of Romeus and Juliet, was not a real person.

Arthur Brooke, the alleged author of *Romeus and Juliet*, was the son of Lord Cobham's first cousin, Cranmer Brooke.

References:

(1) Green, Nina. "Who was Arthur Brooke, author of The tragical historye of Romeus and Juliet?" *The Oxfordian*, vol. 3 (October 2000), pp. 59-70.

MYTH: George Gascoigne was appointed poet laureate on 1 January 1576.

The first poet laureate in the modern sense was Ben Jonson, although the title seems to have been first officially given to his successor, William Davenant (appointed 1638).

References:

(1) 'Laureate', *Oxford English dictionary, online edition*.

MYTH: Thomas Dymoke 'of Gray's Inn' served as a gentleman of the bedchamber to Henry Wriothesley (bap. 1545, d.1581), 2nd Earl of Southampton.

Thomas Dymoke of Gray's Inn lived almost a century later, circa 1660. He was a great-grandson of Sir Edward Dymoke (d.1566), champion at Queen Elizabeth's coronation.

References:

(1) Pedigree of Dymoke of Scrivelsby, *Burke's landed gentry*, 18th ed., vol. 1, p. 220.

MYTH: Thomas Dymoke, who served as a gentleman of the bedchamber to Henry Wriothesley (bap. 1545, d. 1581), 2nd Earl of Southampton, was the Queen's special agent in the Earl's household, and 'not only received his orders from the Queen but also acted only in her interests'.

Thomas Dymoke, who served as a gentleman of the bedchamber to Henry Wriothesley (bap. 1545, d. 1581), 2nd Earl of Southampton, was a Catholic recusant who was arrested in the Babington plot of 1586.

References:

(1) Questier, Michael. *Catholicism and community in early modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 64-5, available online.

MYTH: The 3rd Earl of Southampton was a ward of Lord Burghley.

Queen Elizabeth sold both Southampton's wardship and lands to Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham on 28 June 1582. There may have been a later transfer of Southampton's wardship and marriage (but not lands) to Lord Burghley, but if so, no record of the transfer exists.

References:

(1) Akrigg, G.P.V. *Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968, pp. 21-22.

(2) TNA Wards 9/157 ff. 74v-75r.

(3) Hampshire Record Office, 5M53/273.

MYTH: Lord Burghley affixed the Great Seal to the death warrant of Mary, Queen of Scots

The Great Seal was affixed to the death warrant of Mary, Queen of Scots by the Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas Bromley.

References:

(1) Read, Conyers. *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the policy of Queen Elizabeth*. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925, vol. 3, p. 64.

MYTH: Lord Burghley was known as Polus.

There is no evidence of this.

References:

Ross, Terry. "Oxfordian myths: Was Burghley called 'Polus'?", posted on the Shakespeare Authorship Page at <http://www.shakespeareauthorship.com/polus.html>.

MYTH: The 3rd Earl of Southampton is mentioned as a possible successor to the Crown in the Peyton report of 1603.

There is no reference to Southampton as a possible successor to the Crown in the Peyton report.

References:

(1) Price, Diana. "Rough winds do shake; A fresh look at the Tudor Rose theory". *The Elizabethan Review*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Autumn, 1996), p. 18.

(2) *Calendar of state papers, domestic, 1603-10*, p. 5.

(3) Sir John Peyton's letter and report regarding events in March, 1603, TNA SP14/4/14, ff. 27-29, available on this website.