

(5) Period 1590-1594

Time	Event	Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford	William Shakespeare of Stratford
1590	<p>April 16 (6 in Julian calendar) : Death of Secretary of State Sir Francis Walsingham. Lord Burghley now holds both offices of Treasurer and Secretary of State. Edmund Spenser and Thomas Watson write elegies, Watson both in Latin and English.</p> <p>August: The Duke of Parma invades France.</p> <p>November: Decision to send an expeditionary force under Sir John Norris into Brittany.</p> <p>Edmund Spenser publishes the first three books of <i>The Fairie Queene</i>.</p>	<p>Oxford is one of the dedicatees of <i>Spenser's Fairie Queene</i>.</p> <p>Oxford seems to have fallen into disfavor at Court. Whereas he received several votes at the elections for the Order of the Garter from 1585-1588, he receives none in 1590 and afterwards, except one in 1604, the year of his death (see appendix).</p>	
1591	<p>July: A second English expeditionary force under the command of the Earl of Essex is sent to Normandy.</p> <p>Sir Robert Cecil becomes a Member of the Privy Council. Actually, though not officially, he has already taken over the duties of Secretary of State from his father.</p>	<p>May 18: After the death of his wife Anne in July 1588, Oxford's three daughters had moved into Burghley's household. In a letter Oxford asks Burgley "for an equal part in the care of his children. (1)</p> <p>John Farmer's book on <i>Playn Song</i> is dedicated to him.</p>	

	In a reply to the attacks of the Jesuit Robert Parsons against Lord Burghley, Francis Bacon, Burghley's nephew, calls him <i>pater patriae</i> (father of the fatherland). But both Francis and his brother Anthony are soon to become followers of the Earl of Essex, the political antagonist of Burghley and his son Robert Cecil.	Toward the end of the year he marries Elizabeth Trentham.	
1592	<p>September 2/3: Death of Robert Greene. Gabriel Harvey writes his <i>Four Letters</i>, invectives against Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe.</p> <p>November 20: Death of Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor (since 1587).</p> <p>December 3: Death of Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma.</p>	In the third of his four letters Gabriel Harvey admits that his satire "Speculum Tuscanismi" of 1580 was about the Earl of Oxford but denies it was meant to offend him.	
1593	<p>April 18: <i>Venus and Adonis</i> is entered in the Stationers' Register.</p> <p>May 30: Christopher Marlowe murdered in a brawl in Deptford.</p> <p>July 25: Henry IV of France converts to the Catholic faith. He has still not conquered Paris.</p> <p>March 22: Entrance of Henry IV in Paris.</p> <p>May 9: The Rape of Lucrece is entered in the Stationers' Register.</p> <p>May-June: A new playing company is</p>	<p>January-March: Thomas Nashe publishes <i>Strange News</i>, a rejoinder to Harvey's <i>Four Letters</i>. The book is dedicated to Apis lapis, alias William Beeston, alias Master William. (2)</p> <p>October 25: Oxford asks Burghley to support his claim to the forest of Waltham which had belonged for a long time to the Earls of Oxford until Henry VIII decided otherwise.</p> <p>July 7: Letter to Burghley: "that whereas I found sundry abuses, whereby both her majesty, & myself, were in mine office greatly hindred, that it would please your Lordship, that I might find suche favour from</p>	

	<p>formed under the patronage of Henry Carey, 1st Baron Hunsdon, Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household. (4)</p> <p>June : Dr Roderigo Lopez, the queen's physician, is hanged, allegedly for attempting to poison the queen, possibly as a pawn in the battle for power between the Cecil faction (Lopez was a client of Burghley) and the Earl of Essex, who was the driving force behind the execution of Lopez.</p>	<p>you, that I might have the same redressed." (3)</p> <p>November 9: Another letter referring to the same case.</p>	
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1. He proposes to bestow on them some of his lands in the county of Essex, among them the ancestral castle of Hedingham. “So shall my children be provided for, myself at length settled in quiet, and I hope your lordship contented, remaining no cause for you to think me an evil father, nor any doubt in me, but that I may enjoy that friendship from your Lordship... For to tell truth I am weary, of an unsettled life, which is the very pestilence that happens unto courtiers.
2. (2) The Harvey-Nashe quarrel is probably the richest source for literary history between 1580 and 1596. The source has been widely neglected by orthodox scholars, most likely because it contains no information on William Shakespeare — which is paradoxical. A host of contemporary authors is referred to by both Nashe and Harvey. William Shakespeare, though already a famous name since 1593 (*Venus and Adonis*) and 1594 (*The Rape of Lucrece*) and despite the fact that Shakespeare was privy to this quarrel (the subplot of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* is informed by it), he is not once named. In 1596 Thomas Nashe, in *Have With You to Saffron Walden*, will praise another unnamed author who obviously does not publish under his own name as England’s greatest poet .
3. For a long time Oxfordians have thought (or hoped) this to relate to Oxford’s “secret theater activities”. However, in an unpublished paper Christopher Paul has set the record straight: his complaint has to do with the fees he earned from his office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England.
4. The majority of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men came from the Lord Strange’s Men, Subsequently and for a brief period, the Earl of Derby’s Men. Until December 1594 there is no trace of an actor William Shakespeare. On when and how he became a member of the Chamberlain’s Men nothing is known.

APPENDIX

(Based on Peter Moore’s article “The Earl of Oxford and the Order of the Garter” in *The Lame Storyteller, Poor and Despised*, Buchholz in der Nordheide, 2009, pp. 263-274).

The votes a nobleman received reflects his standing among his peers. Oxford’s record of votes shows he had lost status after his affair with Anne Vavasour in 1580, followed by the street battles with Sir Thomas Knyvet and for some reason since 1589 until his death.

It should be noted that the ultimate decision on admission lay with the queen, who was not bound by the votes casted.

Year	Number of votes	Of:
1569	1	Lord Howard of Effingham
1570	1	Lord Howard of Effingham
1571	10	
1572-1580	average of 8	
1581-1584	0	
1585	5	
1587	4	
1588	5	
1590-1603	0	
1604	1	Thomas Cecil, 2 nd Lord Burghley

Negative events between 1581 and 1584: his affair with the queen’s lady-in-waiting Anne Vavasour, the subsequent brawls with Anne Vavasour’s kinsmen, charges and countercharges in the affair Arundel/Howard.

In 1589 or 1590 something must have happened that led to his “disgrace with men’s eyes”.

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