II

Lewis F. Bostelmann's "Rutland"*

The title-page of this remarkable book is worth quoting in full. Shorn of its spacing, it reads as follows: "Rutland. A chronologically arranged outline of the life of Roger Manners, Fifth Earl of Rutland, Author of the works issued in folio in 1623 under the *nom de plume* 'Shake-Speare.' Profusely illustrated. Also a drama, showing the *modus operandi* of the engagement of William Shaxper of Stratford-on-Avon (Second Edition) as dummy and strawman for the earl-author; amended and greatly augmented. And the Birth of the Folio. Showing how the great folio of 1623 came into existence."

This is the second edition of the drama part of the book; and the author has discovered so many additional facts unerringly pointing to the identity of Roger Manners with the immortal Shakespeare, that he feels himself justified in augmenting the volume to include them. No less is due to the evergrowing number of students of history and literature not yet so credulous as to accept the wilful misstatements or the unpardonable errors of the orthodox Stratfordian biographer. Common sense must, by legislation if necessary—says the author—compel ordinary decency by the suppression of that colossal fraud, the Stratford swindle.

*Rutland. By Lewis F. Bostelmann. New York: Rutland Publishing Company.

There is documentary evidence that the Shakespearian plays and poems were written by Rutland, and it will be produced when demanded by the proper authority. The drama *Rutland* is written merely to show in an impressive way how the Shake-Speare mystery was created. The author states as he makes his bow that it is his hope and wish that the book may be instrumental in setting at rest all controversy over this vexed question.

The gist of the "chronological outline of Roger Manners" is here set down. He was born in 1576. Francis Bacon was tutor to the young Earl, and became afterward his "searcher and helper." Southampton was his intimate friend at Cambridge and was to marry his sister. To Southampton he sent *Venus and Adonis* signed William Shake-Speare, a *nom de plume* derived from the definition of Pallas Athene, a shaker of spears. Bacon as Rutland's factotum engaged a man to publish this poem and in the printing establishment met a William Shaxper who had come from Warwickshire some time before. The similarity of the names struck Bacon (that Machiavellian mind!) and he proposed that Shaxper or Shaksper act as a living dummy for Rutland. This Rutland thought was a good idea, but partly at Bacon's clever instance and partly for his own not unnatural desire that some centuries hence the plays might be known as his, he filled them full of "thumbmarks" for future identification. Here is one of them. In *Much Ado*, Don Pedro says "The sixth of July your loving friend Benedict." This remark has nothing whatever to do with the play, *but is the exact date of Rutland's engagement to marry.* The italics are not Mr. Bostelmann's: they are inserted to show to the full the significance of the citation. Rutland travelled on the Continent, and in Padua met two Scandinavian gentlemen whose names were Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; he changed Montecchi, Romeo's family name, to Montague, the maiden name of the mother of his friend Southampton; he mentioned his two kinsmen, one each in a history play; and he did a great many other very significant things. Fur-

thermore, being annoyed at Shaksper for supplying pirate printers with copies of the plays (and one must own he was in an annoying predicament, for he could not open his mouth to protest the theft!) he took his revenge by painting Shaksper's true character in many places—in Falstaff, in Sir Toby, in Cristopher Sly, Parolles, Autolycus, Stephano, and (to show his garrulity and *bonhomie*) in Gratiano. Besides all this internal evidence, there is plenty of an external nature. Lords Rutland and Southampton were chided for spending all of their time at the theatre, and some one actually wrote in a letter that he heard the actor Shaksper complain to my lord Rutland of the difficulty in procuring good actors for the female parts (boys played the female parts in Shake-Speare's day!). Then, too, Lady Southampton referred to Shaksper as Falstaff in another letter. Ben Jonson—who is really made quite snoopy in the play—was confident Shaksper could never have written the plays and finally ferreted out the secret. But Bacon, a man of resource, gave him a pension of twenty pounds a year to keep his mouth shut. Rutland, although he was fearful of the consequences, so much enjoyed the little comedy of Jonson's ingenious ferreting that he clapped the whole thing into *Twelfth Night*. Therein Sir Andrew Aguecheek (Ben Jonson) wants to possess Sir Toby Belch's (Shaksper's) niece Olivia—that is, Shaksper's secret regarding his dummyship for Rutland. The earl, as everybody knows, was fined thirty thousand pounds, his estates confiscated, and he was imprisoned in the Tower for life by Elizabeth. But it was not for befriending Essex in the conspiracy, but because she had found out (through the treacherous Francis Bacon!) that it was he who had written *Richard II*, in which an English king is dethroned. Languishing in the Tower, Rutland wrote and re-wrote the sonnets, in which he apostrophised his genius as a lovely and beautiful youth. In the sonnets, too, as earlier in *Hamlet*, he keeps harping on sudden death—and sure enough! true to his premonition, he died not lingeringly, but as it turned out by suicide; and his wife also died suddenly a few days later. There is, besides this, proof that the pestilential Bacon cribbed his brightest pearls from Rutland's MSS. The following is irrefragable. In *Troilus and Cressida* in 1604 there is this speech, "Paris and Troilus, you have both said well; and on the cause and question now in hand have gloz'd—but superficially; not much unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought unfit to hear *moral* philosophy." In *The Advancement of Learning*, 1605, Bacon makes the same reflections on the benefits accruing to young men from the study of moral philosophy, accepting Rutland's purposely altered quotation from Aristotle, who had said it was *political* philosophy young men should avoid. It must be owned that both in the chronological outline of Roger Manner's life and in the drama which follows, Mr. Bostelmann is unnecessarily severe on Bacon. In the drama his cunning need not have been made quite so sinister. Thus he counsels Rutland:

Now there appears to me another matter
Of grave import to safer secrecy
In future plays you now propose to write,
To better lead a prying world astray.
Endeavour to inject some silly fault,
Some rank absurdity that must not mar
The beauty and the semblance of your work.
For instance, when you write of Julius Cæsar,
Speak of a clock to strike the passing hour;
Some inland kingdom like Bohemia
Must wash its shores upon the raging sea.
Such trifling bulls will shield you better far
Than any other subterfuge can do.
Who would suppose that Roger, Earl of Rutland,
Was unaware that clocks were not invented
When Cæsar issued forth to meet his death,
Or that the rockbound kingdom of Bohemia
Could not be reached by ship from Sicily?

Nor is Bacon the only man whom Mr. Bostelmann treats unfairly. His scholarship is marred—how often in literary history has this been the case!—with bitter treatment of another scholar. Sydney Lee, in his nefarious attempt to clothe the disreputable ex-poacher with the incomparable genius of Shake-Speare, has descended to dishonest and dishonourable methods—this, says the author, might be expected of a man who repudiated an honoured father and an hon-

oured race by changing his name. This intrusion of personal bitterness is unfortunate, but Mr. Bostelmann imperils his whole argument and even throws some discredit upon his facts when he thus insinuates that Mr. Lee had so concocted the habit of juggling with people's names that he couldn't stop. And these personalities are the more uncalled for since Mr. Bostelmann assures us that he knows where documentary evidence in support of his contention is now securely resting and this will be revealed at the proper time in the presence of reliable persons. Surely in excluding Mr. Lee, he may then pointedly punish that gentleman. Until then it is fitting that the castigation of Mr. Lee's dishonest methods shall keep company with the settling of our own suspense in awaiting the proper authority. The proof-reading of the volume is inadequate.

Mr. Bostelmann generously concludes the epilogue of his drama with three lyrics. They are written in terse, homely, virile English. I give a taste by quoting a stanza from each. The first is from *Roger of Rutland:*

Rutland had good cause to shield his writing,
For he dreaded good Queen Bess and James;
As his tragedies were very biting,
And he feared the Tower on the Thames.
That is, William, where *you* came in handy—
That is why Lord Roger bought your name;
At such work, dear Will, you were a dandy;
William Shaksper, canst deny the same?

The second is from *Vale, Baconians, Vale:*

Don't Bacon in his Promus plainly show
The way he cribbed philosophy's thought
From Shake-Speare's writings from the very go,
The fox not dreaming that he would be caught?

The third is from a stirring lyric entitled *Stratford, Awake!*

Will's soul e'er now is snickering in its grave
(It had no wings to make it soar on high)
To see you simple-minded folk behave
Like blind fanatics, and not knowing why.
So *he* wrote Hamlet, Macbeth, Shylock, Lear?
Ye Gods, this callous heart knew mournful Jacques?
For shame, ye silly Stratfordites, look here,
You need some melted ice poured down your backs.

Graham Berry.