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Was the Earl of Oxford the illegitimate son of Queen Elizabeth I?

Could Elizabeth have had an illegitimate child in the summer of 1548 and was this child raised as Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, better known to the world as the author 'William Shakespeare?'

This is the claim of a sensational new book, **Oxford, Son of Queen Elizabeth I** by Paul Streitz. Mr. Streitz is a member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship in the United States. He is the author of two musicals, *OH, JOHNNY* and *Madison Avenue, the subliminal musical*.

There are two enduring mysteries from Elizabethan history—those surrounding the romantic life of Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen, and those concerning the true identity of Shakespeare, the Bard of Stratford upon Avon.

Streitz, like many scholars, maintains that 'William Shakespeare' was in fact a pen name of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, whose education, achievements and knowledge of court etiquette more closely match the life of the author of the greatest plays in the English language.

Oxford, Son of Queen Elizabeth I is the result of seven years of painstaking, meticulous historical research. Mr. Streitz reveals that historians have omitted or ignored historical documents that throw doubt on the myth of the Virgin Queen. He further uses new historical documents that show John de Vere, 16th Earl of Oxford, was forced into marriage to provide a foster home for the newborn. The result of this research is a remarkable story of royal scandal, sex, murder, betrayal and incest with all the hallmarks of a gripping Elizabethan drama.

The book reveals:

- How Elizabeth gave birth to the first of several illegitimate children and how that first child came to be known as 'William Shakespeare.'
- How '*Shake-speare's Sonnets*' reveals the relationship between Oxford, the Queen and the Earl of Southampton.
- How Oxford's story is found in the character of Hamlet and in '*Shake-speare's Sonnets*.'
- How there is line of descendants from Queen Elizabeth and the rightful King of England should be a descendant of the Tudor line of monarchs and of 'William Shakespeare'.

Elizabeth and Thomas Seymour – a Royal Scandal

At the time of Henry VIII's death the twelve-year-old Elizabeth was living with Queen Katherine Parr as part of the Queen's household at Chelsea and it was through Katherine that she met the ambitious and unscrupulous Thomas Seymour. Seymour proposed marriage to the young princess, but after she rejected him, he married Katherine.

In the summer of 1548, Seymour accompanied Katherine, now six months pregnant, from Howarth to Sudeley Castle, but, extraordinarily, Elizabeth did not accompany the Queen. Elizabeth never again saw her beloved stepmother, who died shortly afterwards in childbirth. Instead, Elizabeth was kept in seclusion at Cheshunt, under the care of Sir Anthony Denny. She remained there until autumn 1548. Historians of the period say that Elizabeth was 'sick' during the summer of 1548, yet there are no records of any physician seeing her until the autumn of 1548.

“There was a bruit of a child born and miserably destroyed, but could not be discovered whose it was; only the report of the mid-wife, who was brought from her house blindfold thither, and so returned, saw nothing in the house while she was there, but candle light; only, she said, it was the child of a very fair young lady. There was muttering of the Admiral and this lady, who was then between fifteen and sixteen years of age.”

Mr. Streitz claims that in the spring of 1548, the fourteen-year-old Princess Elizabeth Tudor was pregnant by her stepfather, Thomas Seymour. Elizabeth's servants both testified that he had taken gross improprieties with the young Princess. Mr. Streitz asserts that Elizabeth was sent to Cheshunt because she was pregnant and there she gave birth to a boy in July 1548. To cover up the scandal, the child was raised as the son of John de Vere, ultimately inheriting de Vere's title as Earl of Oxford.

In 1571, William Cecil, the Queen's counsellor, changed the law of succession making Edward de Vere the legitimate heir to the throne. In the same year, he married Cecil's daughter. But as with a Shakespearean character, Prince Bertram, 'he wed her, but he did not bed her.' The autobiographical *Hamlet* accurately portrays Oxford as 'The Prince' denied his right to the throne.

Mr. Streitz shows that Oxford was an acknowledged playwright, poet, theatrical producer, musician, dancer, and literary figure. He claims that Oxford wrote under several pen names, the most famous of which was "William Shakespeare."

About the author:

Paul Streitz is the director of the Oxford Institute, which sponsors symposiums and events to promote the awareness of the Earl of Oxford. Streitz is a member of the Shakespeare-Oxford Society and the Shakespeare Fellowship. He frequently lectures on the Earl of Oxford. Mr. Streitz has with an AB in English literature from Hamilton College and an MBA in marketing and finance from the University of Chicago.

Notes to editors:

Paul Streitz will be giving a lecture based on his book, **Oxford, Son of Queen Elizabeth I** on Tuesday 25 April, 6.30pm at the Wolfson Institute, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1 (admission free).

The lecture is sponsored by the generosity of Russell Des Cognets of Lexington, Kentucky.

For further information, contact Margot Weale or Steven Williams

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