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**Autor:** Burrow, Colin  
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# Fictions of Collaboration: Authors and Editors in the Sixteenth Century

Colin Burrow

This essay tracks the changing relationship between authors and editors (or print-shop “overseers” of literary texts), in the second half of the sixteenth century. Beginning with the publication of works by Thomas More, Thomas Wyatt, and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, it shows how editorial activity helped to fashion the ways in which authors were represented. A narrative is traced through successive editions of *A Mirror for Magistrates* to explain how the names of Thomas Sackville and Thomas Churchyard came to the fore of this collaborative volume, and why poets in the 1560s and ’70s sometimes artificially foregrounded the role of the “editor” to create fictions of collaboration. It is then argued that a sequence of publications in the very early 1590s altered the customary relationship between authors and “editor” figures, with the result that Samuel Daniel and Ben Jonson felt able to absorb what I term “the editor function” into their own activities. The overall aim of the paper is to revise the traditional view that in the later sixteenth century “middle-class” laureate poets shook off the “stigma of print.” Rather, it is suggested, by the 1590s a degree of stigma had come to be attached to the figure of the press “overseer,” while poets tended silently to absorb the editor function into themselves.

Once upon a time it was relatively easy to talk about the non-dramatic “author” in late sixteenth-century England. There were effectively only three of them, all boys. One was a courtier-poet, who composed his manuscript poems for private circulation among a few friends, and who was driven by the “stigma of print” to avoid publication (Saunders; cf. May, “Mythical ‘Stigma of Print,’” Krevans, and Wall, esp. 11-22). We might call him Philippo. After his death some disloyal friend or unscrupulous stationer plundered his remains and set his works forth on a bookseller’s stall for all and sundry to buy and enjoy. Behold: Sir Philip

Sidney became, against his will, an “author.” At the other end of the social scale was a prodigal impecunious renegade (who might be called Roberto), who tried to live by the pen, sold pamphlets to a group of avaricious printers who in turn sold them to a popular readership. On the few pounds earned in this way Roberto lived the life of Riley in taverns and whorehouses. Finally his evil ways caught up with him. He succumbed to a surfeit of pickled herrings, whereupon he repented and died (Helgerson, *Elizabethan Prodigals*). His legacy was a mass of pamphlets which sported his name, and perhaps a few plays which did not, as well as a large pile of tavern bills. This was effectively the story of the “professional” writer as it was told in *Greenes Groats-worth of Witte*, which in 1592 narrated the career of the Johannes Fac-totum of the Elizabethan literary trade, Robert Greene. That narrative of a “professional” author’s life has retained much of its hold on the critical imagination (although see Wilson, *Fictions of Authorship* and Melnikoff and Gieskes).

The third man in these stories about Elizabethan authorship was the “laureate poet” (call him Colino). He was low-born but determined to emulate Virgil and Horace, and strove through print to present his poems as works which had value for the commonwealth. The aspirational “laureates” – who included among their number Edmund Spenser and Ben Jonson – shared social origins with the “professional” writers, but they sought recognition among the “amateurs” (Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates*). They aspired to royal reward and patronage, but their careers ended in disappointment as their fictions inevitably failed to change the world.

This cast-list of literary character-types substantially derives from work done in the 1970s and ’80s by the late Richard Helgerson. His literary map of England in the 1590s was explicitly influenced by structuralism (*Self-Crowned Laureates* 17-18). It was therefore on the whole synchronic, and it tended to be founded on mutually defining binary oppositions between the roles of laureate and professional, professional and amateur. The main aim of this essay is to revise Helgerson’s map of literary authorship in the late Elizabethan period in the light of more recent critical preoccupations with book history, and with diachronic narrative more generally. I shall suggest that each of these three types of author owed a great deal to the activity of a range of agents who would today be described as “editors,” people real or fictional who mediated between authors and stationers. Authorship in the sixteenth century, I shall suggest, was substantially defined by changing relationships between these figures and authors. My diachronic discussion of authorship in the second half of the sixteenth century will suggest that “coterie” poets, “professionals,” and “laureates” were in fact much less distinct in their origins than Helgerson’s map of early modern authorship allowed.

The story might begin with an early Tudor author who came to prominence in print despite the fact that he had no published *oeuvre*. On or about the 6 October 1542 Sir Thomas Wyatt died of a cold contracted while he was galloping to Dorset to meet a Spanish envoy. Shortly after this two printed volumes of elegies appeared. One was a set of Latin verses by the antiquarian John Leland, the *Naeniae in mortem Thomae Viati equitis*. The other was a small collection of vernacular poems printed under the title *An Excellent Epitaffe of Syr Thomas wyatt*, which included elegies by the Earl of Surrey. The date of this second volume is sometimes conjectured to be 1545 (Pollard and Redgrave 26054), but there are good grounds for assuming it appeared at around the same time as Leland's *Naeniae*. The publisher of the *Excellent Epitaffe*, Robert Toye, was working with its printer, John Herford, by 1542, and Surrey's elegy on Wyatt is referred to in Leland's Latin verses. Both publications used a woodcut image of Wyatt, magnificently bearded, which was based on a lost portrait by Holbein. Leland's Latin epigrams praised him as an equal of Dante and Petrarch, while Surrey presented him as a deep thinker and moralist. No English poet had been celebrated in print so soon after his death in such terms, and that in itself makes the autumn of 1542 a significant moment (Sessions).

These two celebratory volumes were not simply representations of Wyatt's achievements as an author, however. At his death he had only published his *Translatyon of Plutarckes boke, of the quyete of mynde* (1528), and his poetry remained in manuscript. Wyatt nonetheless was made into an "author" in 1542 because of several converging accidents. Leland was at the time of Wyatt's death at work on his (endless and unfinished) catalogue of British authors. As canon-maker in chief for Protestant England he needed more recruits. He had been in service to Surrey's grandfather, so was in a position to solicit an elegy for Wyatt, the new English author, from the house of Howard. He also was in close contact with the printer Reyner Wolfe, in whose house he resided for a period. That is, he was interested in English authors, knew a printer well, and knew who to ask for an elegy. Those connections were enough to make Wyatt in 1542 appear to be an "author." No collection of Wyatt's verse followed, however, despite the fact that a decade before 1542 the collected works of the most famous of all earlier English poets, Geoffrey Chaucer, had been published in a form which explicitly called them *Workes* (Gillespie 134-43). There was no market for volumes of short poems by the recently dead, and Wyatt lacked an editor or person who might prepare and convey his work to a print-shop. Leland succumbed to insanity in 1547; Surrey was executed in the same year.

A decade after those sad events, in April 1557, *The Workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England*, a huge volume of over 1,400 pages, was printed “At the costes and charges of Iohn Cavod, Iohn Waly, and Richarde Tottell.” This publication showed that by the mid-century printers (particularly printers associated with the legal profession, as Tottel was) had capital, and that printing large vernacular texts by a single author could be a source of profit. The other aspect of More’s *Workes* which had major historical consequences was equally humdrum: it was produced by collaboration between a group of printers including Richard Tottel, and an editor, More’s nephew William Rastell, who had direct connections both with More and with the printing press (Rastell’s own press from 1529-34 had produced a mixture of plays, legal texts, and editions of separate works by More: see Reed). Rastell boasts in his preface that he

did diligently collect and gather together, as many of his workes, bokes, letters, and other writings, printed and vnprinted in the English tonge, as I could come by, and the same (certain yeres in the euil world past, keping in my handes, very surely and safely) now lately haue caused to be imprinted.  
(More sig. ¶2r)

His publication was clearly a polemical act, in which More’s name and works were presented to the nation in order to help (as Rastell’s dedication to Queen Mary put it) “in purging this youre realme of all wicked heresies” (More sig. ¶2v).

Rastell’s role as editor sounds like an entirely marginal feature of the volume – indeed literally so, since he added a number of marginal comments to the text. But More’s *Workes* established what was to become a very influential model of authorship, in which texts from the relatively recent past were put together and arranged by an intermediary who prepared them for the press. Leland had not managed to do this for Wyatt, but Rastell did it for More. He also made More’s *Workes* suggest the outlines of a life: the volume pointedly ends with a collection of letters described by Rastell as having been written “while he was prisoner in the towre of London” (1428). In 1557 there was no clear terminology to describe the role Rastell fulfilled for More’s *Workes*, and divisions between functions we might today ascribe to publishers, scribes, editors, and authors were extremely blurry. To call him More’s “editor” is, strictly speaking, anachronistic: the *OED* does not record sense 2 (“One who prepares the literary work of another person, or number of persons for publication”) before the eighteenth century, although that sense was in fact clearly current by the mid-seventeenth century. Before that period, though, an “editor” was something very close to a pub-

lisher: the 1565 edition of Thomas Cooper's Anglo-Latin *Dictionary* defines an "editor" as "a publisher, a setter forth" (sig. Rr5r). As the century progresses the terminology becomes a little clearer, and by 1590 the person who prepared or modified a text for the press was sometimes called an "overseer." The earliest usage in this sense, which predates that given for *OED* †3, is in the 1590 edition of Sidney's *Arcadia*, a work to which I shall return. "Overseer" is probably the best word to describe Rastell's activity, partly because it could also be used in the period of a person who "oversaw" the work of the executors of a will (*OED* 1†b). The editor/overseer shapes and modifies a text, and creates a legacy.

Little more than two months after the appearance of More's *Workes*, in June 1557, one of the consortium of printers who had provided the significant investment for Rastell's edition, Richard Tottel, produced another volume which looked back to the reign of Henry VIII. This was the book now known as Tottel's *Miscellany*, or more properly and windily *Songes and Sonettes written by the right honorable Lorde Henry Haward late Earle of Surrey, and other*. The combination in that title of loose generic terms with a single authorial name had immense historical significance. The volume does not claim to be Surrey's *Workes*, and indeed omits his translation of Virgil, which must have been available to Tottel since he was to print it only a couple of weeks later. The title does not mention the fact that the miscellany also contains almost a hundred poems ascribed to Sir Thomas Wyatt, as well as (in its first edition) forty or so poems by Nicholas Grimald, and more than ninety by unidentified authors. Tottel's *Miscellany* presents a model of lyric authorship as being, if not exactly collaborative, then at least combinatory, with a range of names and occasions tumbling together. And yet a single name, that of Surrey, the poet of the highest social status in the volume, presides over the whole. This decision by Tottel meant that Surrey was to become without doubt the single most significant figure in the history of English poetic authorship up to about 1570.

Tottel's *Miscellany* is often said to have presented in print for a mass audience the manuscript poems of a generation of writers who were too courtly, too nobly born, and too embedded in the circles and secrecies of the Henrician court to wish to print their poems. This well-established narrative depends on taking more or less entirely straight Tottel's claim to have printed "those workes which the ungentle horders up of such tresure have heretofore envied thee" (Tottel 1). That phrase did more to establish the myth of the print-shy author Philipppo than any other, but it is only as trustworthy as any other piece of printer's puffery. According to the orthodox story, however, Tottel's publication of poems by the courtiers Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey encouraged "middle class" authors to emulate the *Miscellany* by producing

collections of their own: Barnabe Googe's *Eglogs Epytaphes and Sonettes* (1563), George Turberville's *Epitaphes, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets* (1567), as well as George Gascoigne's *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573) all emulated Tottel's collection, and sought by doing so (so the story continues) to bring their authors' names into print and prominence (Saunders, Heale 11-40).

The story of Tottel's influence on later poetic practice is more complex and more curious than this. Tottel's *Miscellany* was edited by someone, although we do not know the identity of its editor/overseer. Tottel himself almost certainly did not perform this role (Byrom). As a hard-working printer of legal texts it seems unlikely he could have spared the time to count and reform Wyatt's syllables, as the editor evidently did. Tottel had an anonymous middle-man, possibly Nicholas Grimald, who mediated between manuscript texts and the printer, just as he had a few months before worked with William Rastell to produce the edition of More's *Workes*. Tottel printed poems from the late Henrician period in 1557 because he had the resources to do so, because he had connections with a highly literate legal readership, and because his *Workes* of Thomas More suggested an intrinsic connection between reprinting works from an earlier age and the aims of the Marian counter-reformation. He also did it because he had a tame editor.

The "editor" had a notorious effect on the ways in which Tottel's texts – and, more significantly, authors – were presented to their readers. He or they gave the poems titles which turned authors into generic lovers (e.g. "The lover laments the death of his love"). In the second (and much reprinted) edition, Tottel's editor, or the "overseer," tended to arrange the poems in sequences that suggest the outlines of authorial life-stories, as well as, in the second edition, intimations of political unease (Tottel xxxix-liv). The Surrey section ends with his elegies on Wyatt, reflections on youth and age, and finally "The fansie of a weries lover," with its declaration that "alas, those daies / In vayn were spent" (34). The Wyatt section concludes with his satires and the highly philosophical "Song of Jopas unfinished." The sections devoted to each poet *begin* with more straightforwardly erotic pieces – poems on spring-time love and meditations on "The long love, that in my thought I harbor" (35). This simple arrangement of poems created not just a model of authorship, but the sense of an authorial *oeuvre* shaped in an arc of apparently increasing gravity. The poet who begins complaining of his mistress ends lamenting the slipperiness of courts or praising the happy life according to classical example. There are of course many precedents for lyric sequences which present something like a narrative of a repentant life, from Petrarch's *Canzoniere* through dozens of retractations of youthful and erotic poems in classical and medieval collections of verse.

But ahead of Tottel's editorial ordering lay dozens of vernacular imitations, which continued well into the next century: even Ben Jonson's posthumously printed collection of lyric poems *The Underwood* followed Tottel in ending with a sequence of classical translations on the good life. The repentant self-presentation of "professional" writers described by Helgerson in *The Elizabethan Prodigals* also owes something to Tottel's editor. The printing of Thomas More's *Workes* and Tottel's *Miscellany* in 1557 marked a Marian mini-renaissance. This mini-renaissance was founded on retrospect, and was driven by a desire to encourage readers and writers to follow afresh the example of poets from the 1530s. It was enabled by the only partially visible editors or overseers who revived and in part revised the texts from the previous generation. What these overseers did had a massive influence on later authorial practice.

The way these editor-figures turned authorial lives at least in part into exemplary lives also had a more immediate bearing on the mid-Tudor literary scene. The second most popular collection of verse in the latter half of the sixteenth century was *A Mirror for Magistrates* (there were eleven printings of Tottel's *Miscellany* before 1593 to six of the *Mirror*), which was in conception and execution roughly contemporary with Tottel's retrospective volume of poems and with More's *Workes*. A first edition was planned for 1554 but was suppressed. The first surviving edition is from the very early years of Elizabeth's reign, 1559. The *Mirror* began life as an attempt to continue John Lydgate's fifteenth-century collection of lives of fallen great ones, so it was itself something of an *opus posthumus*, historically arranged and explicitly didactic. The author as dead man takes on a new vitality, shall we say, in the *Mirror*, as figures from English history rise from the dead to instruct the living on how to avoid their fate.

The surviving fragments of the 1554 edition (Pollard and Redgrave 3177.5) contain a suggestive address to the reader from the Catholic printer John Wayland, which presents a mid-sixteenth-century printer's eye view of how books are written. While waiting for copy for a Catholic primer for which he had been granted a patent, Wayland started to produce an edition of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* along with a proposed continuation. He apologizes that "Yet it is not so throughly well corrected as I would have wyshed it, by meanes of lacke of certayne copies and authours which I could not get by any meane" (Baldwin 5). That is a striking sentence. This mid-sixteenth-century printer thought of an "author" in the same mental category as a copy-provider-cum-reviser. This is exactly the world of More's *Workes* and Tottel's *Miscellany*, in which the construction of a book requires effectively two different kinds of "author": one a dead *exemplum*, the other a living overseer who corrects, orders, and perhaps augments the text.

When the first surviving edition of *The Mirror* appeared in 1559, a preface by its chief compiler William Baldwin offered further insights into this kind of “author.” Baldwin claimed that the printer gathered together a group of seven writers who could complete the task, of whom only Baldwin himself, George Ferrers, and Thomas Chaloner are identified by name. These writers agreed “that I [that is Baldwin] shoulde usurpe Bochas rowme [take Boccaccio’s place in the original *De Casibus*], and the wretched princes complayne unto me” (Baldwin 69). Baldwin’s prose links create the fiction that each author performs his tragic complaint before the group, members of which sometimes comment on moral meaning or style. This fiction is clearly based on medieval story-collections such as Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, but the reality was probably that Baldwin served as an overseer who collated tales from a number of authors, and edited them into a collection. Baldwin the editor is therefore an “author” in the sense in which the word was used by Wayland the printer: he wrote several of the individual complaints, but he was also a corrector and collator of materials. Baldwin’s background (like Rastell’s, and of course like Caxton’s before him) lay in print-shops. In 1549 his translation of *The Canticles or Balades of Salomon* appeared with his own emblem and motto in the colophon at the end of the book, declaring the book was “Imprinted at London by William Baldwin, servaunt to Edwarde Whitchurche.” Baldwin seems to have thought of himself as not just an author, but as an editor-printer-author similar to his near contemporary Protestant printer-author-editor Robert Crowley – famous as the first editor of *Piers Plowman* (King 319-406).

The early editions of *The Mirror for Magistrates* therefore embody a distinctly mid-Tudor model of collaborative authorship: a print shop brings together the works of individual authors who have a roughly common brief, who attempt to make their work into a single “Mirror” for all “magistrates,” or officers in the commonwealth. Early editions of the work argue that political and moral authority should be distributed among several agents in the commonwealth, and in parallel to that political ideal the collection implies a model of what might be called distributed authorship. Each person has his office in the commonwealth; each author presents a slightly different perspective on a slightly different historical scenario. In this respect *The Mirror for Magistrates* builds on Tottel’s *Miscellany* to establish a central assumption of the mid-sixteenth century literary scene, and one which persisted until the final decade of the century: that major poetic works are generally retrospective, and are more likely to be the products of corporate activity than of single authors.

Since the *Mirror* remained in print throughout the sixteenth century it provides a particularly good means of observing changes in the ways authorship was represented through the later decades of the century. There are also good grounds for regarding it as the driver of at least some of those changes. The “second part,” which appeared in 1563, marks a significant departure. This volume has often been regarded as something of a botch up (e.g. Lucas 202), as Baldwin, shortly before his death, put together a set of complaints which he had “procured and prepared” (243) earlier in the project. The second part is much more explicit than its predecessor about who wrote individual tragedies. Baldwin records that the printer “delyvered unto me” the tragedy of Hastings “penned by maister Dolman, & kyng Rychard the third compiled by Francis Segars,” while the tragedy of the Blacksmith is ascribed to one “Cavyl” (244). The 1563 version develops the collaborative model of the earlier versions. An authorial group under the control of the print-shop co-ordinator author Baldwin becomes something more like a chorus within which individual voices can be heard and within which distinctive authorial styles can be assessed and appreciated: “diuersity of deuce is alway most plesante” (243).

The most significant novelty in the 1563 edition of the *Mirror* was of course the inclusion of Thomas Sackville’s “Induction” to his tragedy of the Duke of Buckingham. “Sackville’s Induction” (as it came to be known) was designed as a general prologue to an alternative collection of poems on the falls of great men, in which the ghosts of the dead would address Sackville rather than Baldwin. We do not know why or when this alternative *Mirror* was begun or why it was never completed. It may derive from attempts around 1557 to make a new start after the suppression of the original edition of 1554 (Lucas 244-47). “Sackville’s Induction,” though, along with the tragedy of Buckingham, became one of the most influential poems in the sixteenth century. This was partly because of the way in which Sackville carefully constructed his poetic persona as the clear and unmistakeable heir of the Earl of Surrey. The Induction’s narrator is introduced lamenting the loss of “lively green” as the year fades to winter, in a direct recall of the opening poem by Surrey in Tottel’s *Miscellany*, “The sunne hath twice brought furth his tender grene” (2). He then encounters “A piteous wight, whom woe had al forwaste” (l. 74) in a way that recalls the Chaucerian narrator of *The Boke of the Duchess*. This figure, who turns out to be Sorrow herself, takes him to hell to see the souls of the fallen, as Virgil’s Aeneas had done in Book VI of the *Aeneid*. Sackville’s fusion of Chaucerian language and elegiac setting with the most influential classical description of the underworld was a major statement: it suggested that the English tradition of complaint also had epic overtones and potential. Combined with his archais-

ing vocabulary, his “wights” and his “weens,” Sackville provided the central enabling conditions for Edmund Spenser to produce his simultaneously classicizing and Chaucerian *Shepheardes Calender* and *The Faerie Queene*.

The tale of Buckingham itself takes Sackville’s authorial project a step further. He adapts the wounded and solitary lyric voice to suit a political tragedy. In his final expression of rage at his betrayal by one of his servants Buckingham all but ventriloquizes Surrey at his most relentlessly lonely:

Mydnyght was cum, and every vitall thyng  
 With swete sound slepe theyr weary lymys did rest,  
 The beastes were still, the lytle byrdes that syng,  
 Nowe sweetely slept besides theyr mothers brest:  
 The olde and all were shrowded in theyr nest.  
 The waters calme, the cruel seas did ceas,  
 The wuds, the fyeldes, & all thinges held theyr peece. (ll. 547-53)

This is a direct – and for most readers in the 1560s a completely unmistakable – allusion to Surrey’s sonnet which was called “A complaint by night of the louer not beloued” in Tottel’s *Miscellany*:

Alas so all things now do hold their peace.  
 Heaven and earth disturbed in nothing:  
 The beasts, the ayre, the birdes their song do cease:  
 The nightes chare the starres aboute dothe bring:  
 Calme is the Sea, the waves worke lesse and lesse:  
 So am not I, whom love alas doth wring. (Tottel 9)

There is a complex chain of allusions here. Surrey himself was imitating the description of Queen Dido’s solitary passion in Book IV of Virgil’s *Aeneid* via Petrarch’s imitation of that passage in *Canzoniere* 164. Sackville then reworks Surrey’s erotic solitude into a political solitude, smoothing his language and meter in a manner that goes even beyond the activities of Tottel’s editor. A solitary aristocratic author becomes not just an *exemplum* of Petrarchan frustration, but a figure of political despair. Most people would say that Sackville is “imitating” rather than “editing” Surrey here, of course, but nonetheless Sackville clearly thought of himself as *both* a Surrey-style and a Baldwin-style “author.” The fact that he wrote an “Induction” at all suggests that he aimed to usurp not only Boccaccio’s room, but Baldwin’s as well. He seems, that is, to be fusing together the Surrey persona of isolated elegist with the role of editor-cum-overseer.

In later editions of the *Mirror* Sackville's authorial voice came increasingly to the fore. This was largely the result of decisions taken by the printer Thomas Marsh rather than Sackville himself. The 1571 reprint (eight years after the death of the author-editor Baldwin) gave the "Induction" the title which has stuck to it: "Maister Sackuils Induction." That title appears on the running-titles of the induction, making Sackville the only author in the *Mirror* to have his name elevated in this way. It is tempting to see this as a tribute to Sackville's distinctive authorial presence, to his hijacking of Surrey's poetic voice, or perhaps to the appearance in print of his name as one of the authors of *Gorboduc* in 1565. The presence of Sackville's name in the running-titles is actually more likely to be the result of a series of decisions by the printer. The 1563 *Mirror* tended to begin new tragedies on rectos. This often left a blank verso facing the new tragedy, which, being blank, had no running-title. As a result the facing recto on which a new tragedy began would often display the partial running-title "For Magistrates." This was ugly and asymmetrical: in short, a printer's nightmare. In the 1571 edition Marsh tidied this up by using the name of each complainant as a running-title (so a verso might have "Thomas Mowbray" as its running title while the facing recto would have the honorific "Duke of Northfolke"). This new style in turn created a practical problem when it came to setting the "Induction." For the purposes of symmetry the printer decided it should have running-titles that included a name. Whose name should that be but that of the author? There is no doubt that Sackville was the most influential poet from the mid-sixteenth century. But curiously enough it was his editorial aspirations – to be an "author" in Wayland's or Baldwin's sense, the overseer of the volume, author of an Induction – that meant he came to be singled out as the most visibly prominent author in editions of the *Mirror* after 1571.

It was not only Sackville's name that was foregrounded in 1571. The printer also supplied names or initials at the end of several tragedies in order to identify their authors. This brought another name to particular prominence: that of Thomas Churchyard. Although Churchyard was to become extremely keen to get his name onto title-pages (*Churchyardes Chippes* [1578], *Churchyardes Challenge* [1593], and so on), his emergence as a central author of the *Mirror* was again more or less a printer's device. From 1571 onwards his complaint of "Shore's Wife" was printed as the final monologue in the volume, partly because Shore's wife explicitly describes herself in the final stanza of the complaint as a "mirror," and so makes a good ending for the whole. As a result, the words "Tho. Churcheyarde" were proudly emblazoned across the final page of later editions below the word "Finis," almost as though Churchyard were signing the whole work. An Elizabethan annotator of Malone's copy of

the 1575 edition (Bodleian Library, Mal. 270 (3) sig. Xiiiiv) scribbled enthusiastic verses next to Churchyard's name at this point: "Of all the works that Churchyard yet hath pend / Which none may mend, this story I commend." The annotator was clearly not a great lost Tudor poet, but his interest in Churchyard's name is historically significant. By the early to mid-1570s readers and printers alike were determined to find individual authors within collaborative fictions.

Churchyard seems to have taken some flak for the prominence of his name in the *Mirror*. Was he the "author" or just a collaborator? He had a simple response, which was to threaten to fight anyone who denied that he wrote "Shore's Wife" unaided. Introducing a revised version of "Shore's Wife" in *Churchyards Challenge* (1593) he declared that

some doubting the shallownesse of my heade (or of meere mallice disdaineth my doeings) denies mee the fathering of such a worke, that hath won so much credit, but as sure as god liues, they that so defames me or doth disable me in this cause, doth me such an open wrong as I would be glad to right with the best blood in my body, so he be mine equall that moued such a quarrell, but mine old yeares doth vtterly forbid me such a combat, and to contend with the malicious I think it a madnesse, yet I protest before God and the world the penning of Shores wife was mine, desiring in my hart that all the plagues in the worlde maie possesse me, if anie holpe me either with scrowle or counsell, to the publishing of the inuencioun of the same Shores wife. (Churchyard sig. K8v)

It is all too easy to see this passage as representing the rise of a new class of "professional" author, perhaps, or a burgeoning awareness of literary property. We should, however, pause before doing so. The issue in this passage is less literary proprietorship than honour. Churchyard offers to fight those who have dishonoured him by claiming he has lied about what he has authored. In the same volume Churchyard prints a list of all his works, or "The bookes that I can call to memorie alreadie Printed," along with a record of "An infinite number of other Songes and Sonets, given where they cannot be recovered, nor purchase any favour when they are craved" (sigs. A4v-\*2v). Churchyard is thus at once the named author and the nonchalant heir to the Earl of Surrey, who spills songs and sonnets recklessly from his pen. He is also keen to transpose the notorious honour-consciousness of Surrey, his former master, into his conception of authorship. The self-canonizing of a print author is cloaked in an aristocratic gown of honour, rather as the fictional page of the Earl of Surrey, Jack Wilton, disguises himself in his master's clothes in Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller* (Nashe 2: 267). Churchyard was

clearly made anxious by his earlier appearance in a collaborative volume. It prompts him to edit, augment and defend his own works.

It was not Sackville or the *Mirror* alone that brought about these shifts of emphasis. The period between 1563 and 1575 was an absolutely crucial one in the history of Tudor authorship. In this period the dominant fashion was for what might be called single-authored fictions of collaboration. Publishers and individual authors recognized the enormous influence of the Marian collaborations, Tottel's *Miscellany* and *The Mirror for Magistrates*, but they also knew that readers increasingly wanted works that could be ascribed to a single author, whose writings would have characteristics which they recognized and admired. The problem was how to reconcile the single-author model of authorship with the collaborative. Through the 1570s this particular squaring of the circle was done by foregrounding in various ways what might be called the "editor function" – the Baldwin role, the overseer, the person who puts a body of works together – and at the same time foregrounding authorial names. Collections of verse by a single author printed in the 1560s and '70s often mention the authors' friends in the prefatory material. Barnabe Googe claims he was urged by his friends "dayly & hourelly" (sig. a5r) to publish, and that "A verye frende of myne, bearynge as it semed better wyll to my doynge than respectyng the hazarde of my name, commytted them all togyther vnpolished to the handes of the Prynter" (sig. a6r). The modest author who leaves the country while his "friend" decides to nip down to the nearest print-shop and have his poems printed is one of the clichés of the age, which is of course duly echoed and elaborated by George Gascoigne in his fictionally collaborative volume of *Hundreth Sundrie Flowres*, with its "Devises of Sundrie Gentlemen," and its "familiar friend Master G.T.," the procurer of the manuscript of *The Adventures of Master F.J.* (Gascoigne 141). Traditionally these "friends" have been regarded as a strategy to avoid the "stigma of print" by suggesting that the author is innocent of a vulgar desire to publish (Saunders 145). Rather these "friends," real or imagined, are a fiction of collaboration. And that fiction does two not entirely compatible kinds of work. The primary aim is simply to establish a community of value. It enables the author to say that his friends thought his poems good enough to print. The second function of the author's fictional light-fingered friends is to suggest that the author's work and the "editor function" are separate. Someone else is copying and overseeing the text; that means not only that the work is good, but that the author is, as it were, more of a Sackville or a Churchyard than a Baldwin, more a maker than a copyist or overseer. The phenomenon also perhaps carries a residuum of a Baldwin-style commonwealth model of authorship: a volume which appeared to represent the output of many men

might be regarded as more “authoritative” in 1573 than one which was produced by a single person. It implied that a lyric voice existed not in splendid isolation, but as part of a more or less fictional frame of group activity – a voice, as it were, in a choir of more or less identifiable individuals.

By the last quarter of the century the light-fingered “friend” as editor becomes more of a heavy-weight. He became a *glossator*, and indeed something of a bore. Thomas Watson’s *Hekatompathia* of 1582, which claims in its dedication that “many haue oftentimes and earnestly called vpon mee, to put it to the presse” (sig. A3r), has an editor-figure, who annotates and explains each poem. This learned figure draws attention to the author’s imitations of Serafino or Petrarch or Sophocles, and also explains the occasions which gave rise to many of the poems. Most of these notes refer not to the author as a generic type of the lover (as Tottel’s editorial titles had done, and as Googe’s pseudo-editorial titles also did), but to “the Author.” That is indeed the main function of Watson’s “editor” figure: he exists to foreground “the Author.” Watson (who adopted this fictional editor/author hybrid in his autograph manuscript of the poems, British Library Harley MS 3277, as well as in print; see Watson, *Complete Works* 140-41) may well have got the idea from annotated editions of Petrarch which he could have seen during his Italian travels in the early 1570s. He may even have known the 1576 edition of Dante’s *Vita Nuova*, in which of course Dante combines the roles of *auctor* and *glossator*. But wherever he learned his tricks the result is a perfect fiction of collaboration, visible on nearly every page: the Sackville/Surrey style lovelorn voice of “the Author” is framed by a busy analytical friend, and the activities of “the Author” as scholar and lover are highlighted by the collaborative labours of the annotator.

This use of the editor figure to highlight the author brings us back to my initial cast-list of characters, and in particular to Colino, the would-be laureate pastoral poet. *The Shepheardes Calender* of 1579, billed as the work of the humble “Immerito,” is often seen as the work of a new poet, who uses the mechanics of print to advance his own status (e.g. North 99-104). Edmund Spenser’s (and Colin Clout’s) first appearance in print coincided with the high-water mark of fictions of collaboration. *The Shepheardes Calender* is deeply rooted in the hybrid models of authorship established by later editions of the *Mirror*, which combined the individualized voices of Sackville and Churchyard with a framing fiction of collaborative and editorial activity. The *Calender’s* text is surrounded by the commentary of the anxiously pedantic editor E. K. Its language, full of Chaucerisms, Surreyisms and Sackvillisms, deliberately positions the work in the stylistically and historically nostalgic milieu of the *Mirror*. Its representation of the poet is rooted in the conventions that had

grown up through the printed volumes of verse in the 1560s and '70s, too. Colin Clout is an elegiac figure, whose work is repeatedly remembered and retrieved from the past by a community of friends and acquaintances who also repeatedly praise his poetic achievements. Colin even, of course, in "November" laments the death of Dido – which is a piquant detail in view of Sackville's reworking of Surrey's imitation of Dido's solitary vigil in the *Mirror*. Colin Clout, absent and mourning loss, is set within a larger community of shepherds, friends and memorializers. His "editor" presents him to us as something special. The "author" in the late 1570s and early '80s seems to *need* an editor and a set of framing social fictions.

This leads on to a major question. What happened to these conventions at the end of the century? How did they influence the dominant models of poetic authorship in the 1590s and beyond? Richard C. Newton suggested that when Ben Jonson compiled his verse collection *The Forest*, which appeared in the 1616 volume of his *Workes*, he was doing something new. In that collection, Newton argued, the poet became an editor, who arranged and revised his verse to form a book ("[Re-]Invention of the Book"; "Poets Become Editors"). This claim is both significant and in need of significant modification. Viewed from the wider sixteenth-century perspective Jonson is actually *not* unusual in performing the "editor" function and gathering his poems into a volume. What *would* have made the collections of verse which appeared in the 1616 Folio look odd, however, was the absence of fictions of collaboration. Jonson does not invent an editor or a set of fictional friends in order to foreground the agency of the author in creating his volumes of verse. He does the editorial work himself – *and does not say that he is doing so*. That indicates a big change in ways of representing poetic authorship between about 1580 and 1616. Fictions of collaboration fall out of favour in the late century.

Why did this happen? It is tempting simply to line up the usual suspects and shine inquisitorial lights into their eyes until they provide the answers. Through the 1580s John Lyly, and in a rather different way Martin Marprelate, had established that an instantly identifiable style could be associated with a particular name in print. Writers we anachronistically call "professional," such as Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe, were quick to learn from them that associating an authorial name to a strongly individualized style was the best way to stand out on the crowded bookstalls at St Paul's. As a result by the early 1590s authorial names were much more regularly displayed on the title-pages of literary works than they had been fifty years before. Authors and printers in the late 1580s and early 1590s definitely had a more secure sense of a market and a receptive critical environment for their works than their

equivalents in the 1570s. As a result, perhaps, they had less need to create fictive communities, groups of shepherds, unnamed friends, or enthusiastic editors as support systems for their labours. Large-scale narratives about the rise of middle-class authorship or the birth of the professional author might also be woken from their slumbers and pumped for an explanation. But even the most zealous literary critical Gauleiter is unlikely to be able to persuade these tired old phonies to reveal the whole story. As we shall see, a number of very specific knotty episodes in the printing of literary works in the very early 1590s put particular pressure on the role of editors and overseers. That pressure had a major influence on the practice of authors who lived through the 1590s. Indeed I shall suggest that what we see in the 1590s is less the birth of the author, or the emergence of the laureate poet, than the absorption of many of the editor functions into that of the author. This happened not as a simple consequence of large-scale historical changes, but partly because of a sequence of accidents from which quite a narrow group of poets learnt very rapidly that it could be in their interests to collapse together author and editor-functions.

One benign impulse towards combining editor and author functions came from Sir John Harington's translation of *Orlando furioso* of 1591. This exceptionally lavish folio had a portrait of Harington himself, not to mention his dog Bungay, on the title-page. Harington was translating "il divino Ariosto," the classic whose works were regularly ornamented with portraits of the author, and whose texts were given extensive commentary (Javitch). This meant that Harington the translator could do the full works on his own authorial image. He could exploit for himself while he was still alive the continental fashion for making a cult of recently dead authors. Because Harington was translating not just Ariosto but also a whole range of Italian commentators, he could represent himself as not just an author but as a reader and editor too, whose omnivorous, garrulous, and voluble "I" is everywhere present in the margins and notes to the text. "I have in the marginall notes quoted the apt similitudes and pithie sentences or adages with the best descriptions and the excellent imitations and the places and authors from whence they are taken" (Ariosto 16). Harington refers to himself as "I," not "the author," and he does so throughout the commentary. He represents himself as behind every aspect of the book: notes, illustrations, glosses. Although Harington had a well-documented host of professional scribes on whose services he could draw, he presents himself as the author, editor, compiler, literary theorist and all.

Another high-end production from the very early 1590s certainly encouraged authors to stand on their own without relying on friends fictional or real: Spenser's *Faerie Queene* of 1590. This volume, published by

the stationer William Ponsonby, set a new chaste style in authorship: it has a title-page, then (in most copies) a short dedication to the Queen signed by the author, and then the poem. There are no friends, no editors, no overseers of the press, no fanfare of collaborative activity. The poet just stands forth. The “preliminary” poems, commendations from friends and commendations of patrons were, curiously, printed at the back of the book. This resulted in a strikingly solitary presentation of the author. The relegation of the preliminaries to the rear of the 1590 *Faerie Queene* was odd enough for Spenser’s contemporaries to have noticed it, and for Thomas Nashe to have mocked it in *Pierce Penniless* (Nashe 1: 150, 240-41; Zurcher). It is impossible to be certain why the book was arranged this way. It could have been a manifestation of Spenser’s laureate ambition, but the most likely explanation is some kind of accident, which delayed the arrival of the dedicatory and commendatory sonnets, or some problem in printing the dedication to the Queen (various opinions are expressed by Loewenstein, Brink, and Zurcher). The final effect – willed or accidental – is to suggest that an author who dedicates a work to the Queen needs no “friends,” no overseers, no editor. He simply enters with “Lo I the man.”

While “the author” grew, by accident or design, in visible independence in the early 1590s, the figure of the “overseer” or editor was taking a pounding. The publication of *Greenes Groats-worth of Witte* in 1592 played a crucial part in inventing Roberto, the professional writer, whose career as a repentant scallywag was finally displayed to the world (so it seemed) in his own authorial voice. *Greenes Groats-worth of Witte* stemmed, of course, from a particularly zealous act of “editing.” There is still argument as to whether Henry Chettle wrote the pamphlet under the name of Robert Greene or compiled it from a ragbag of Greene-ish leavings (see Chettle and Greene; Jowett). But Chettle’s defence against the charge that he or Thomas Nashe actually *wrote* the work is worth quoting as a sign of the times:

I had onely in the copy this share, it was il written, as sometimes Greenes hand was none of the best, licensd it must be, ere it could bee printed which could never be if it might not be read. To be breife I writ it over, and as neare as I could, followed the copy, onely in that letter I put something out, but in the whole booke not a worde in, for I protest it was all Greenes, not mine nor Maister Nashes, as some unjustly have affirmed.

(Chettle sig. A4r)

Given the mass of material which Chettle appears to have written (according to Henslowe’s diary he had a hand in nearly fifty plays) he is astonishingly invisible as an author. That is because he was among other

things the clearest late Elizabethan example of the Wayland conception of an “author” – an augments, a corrector, a conveyor of texts, a print over-seer, who worked closely with the printer John Danter for much of his career (see Jenkins). Chettle only is prepared to reveal his invisible function as “editor” in the preface to *Kind-Harts Dreame* because of allegations that he had abused identifiable and nameable authors in *Greenes Groats-worth of Witte*. His defence is to deny authorship and to hide behind the role of scribe, or humble overseer of Greene’s literary testament.

The publication and subsequent arguments about the *Groats-worth* had a big effect, and not just in extending the posthumous reputation of Robert Greene. The argument about Chettle’s part in the publication contributed to a wider tendency in the mid-1590s not to treat *authorship* as the guilty secret to which stigma attaches but *editorship*, overseeing, presenting texts to printers. Being a Wayland-style “author” is not something to which people tend to confess after 1590 unless, like Chettle, they were accused of theft, libel, or a similar offence against the literary person, and wanted to deny responsibility. The *Groats-worth* sent a strong signal to overseers or editors to keep themselves invisible.

The posthumous publication of Sir Philip Sidney’s works in the early 1590s is often rightly said to have provided a model of authorship which others could emulate, a model which was at once aristocratic and uneasy about print (Wall 13). The publication of Sidney’s works also did serious and serial damage to the role of overseers and editors. The 1590 edition of the *Arcadia* implicitly criticizes the “overseer of the press” for having inserted chapter breaks (Sidney, 1590 *Arcadia* sig. A4v). The 1593 edition mentions the “spottes” on the “disfigured face” of the earlier text, which the Countess of Pembroke herself had undertaken to wipe away (Sidney, 1593 *Arcadia* sig. ¶4r). Even more significant though, was the pirated edition of *Astrophil and Stella* of 1591. This did more to establish the mythology of the print-shy courtier-poet than any other volume since Tottel. But it also had a massive negative effect on fictions of collaboration. Thomas Nashe – who was in a way the visible named double of the invisible unnamed Chettle, working, like Chettle, closely with print-shops, but unlike Chettle establishing his own name as he did so – wrote a preface for this unauthorized volume. The identity of the person who obtained the manuscript is unknown, as is that of the person who prepared it for the press. Steven May has plausibly suggested that Abraham Fraunce may have played a part in obtaining or preparing the manuscript, while Henry Woudhuysen accuses Samuel Daniel of having at least some involvement in the publication (Woudhuysen 371-84; May, “Fraunce”; and Wilson, “*Astrophil and Stella*”). Twenty-eight of Daniel’s sonnets appeared as part of the collection of “Poems and Sonets of

Sundrie other Noble men and Gentlemen” (a title that by 1590 would have sounded decidedly old-fashioned) printed at the end of the first Quarto of *Astrophil and Stella*, and Daniel’s name is the only one provided in that section of the volume.

Even if Daniel was not directly involved as overseer or editor, the suppression of the 1591 *Astrophil* would have had a dramatic effect on him, and, in turn, on his attitudes to both editorship and authorship. The next year he dedicated the “corrected” text of *Delia* to the Countess of Pembroke in what may have been an act of reparation for his earlier work as a “friend” of Sidney who conveyed a manuscript to the press. Daniel protests his reluctance to publish “seeing I was betraide by the indiscretion of a greedie Printer, and had some of my secrets bewraied to the world, vncorrected: doubting the like of the rest, I am forced to publish that which I neuer meant” (*Delia* sig. A2r). This is, like Churchyard’s declaration of ownership over his “Shore’s Wife,” a historically layered utterance. The more or less token claim that Daniel wished to keep his poems private is a throwback to the prefatory manoeuvres of the 1570s and ’80s in which poems are secrets betrayed into print. More “modern,” though, and perhaps more revealing about how Daniel actually conceives of poetic labour, is that arresting fear of corruption, of wanting to present a text that is “corrected.” Daniel wishes to be thought of as a Philippo, a man who jealously keeps his sonnets among his private friends; but he is also an author in a slightly new version of Wayland’s sense of the word, a person concerned to correct texts: his own texts in particular.

In 1601 that same Samuel Daniel published a volume containing poems and plays which he called his *Workes*. This was a big event. Before Daniel the only living author to have used that title for a collection of poems was John Heywood in 1565, whose title (given that he was an heir to More and friend to William Rastell) was probably more of a tribute to More’s *Workes* than a sign of his own authorial ambition. Daniel’s volume presents the author as unmediated by overseers or editors or even friends. It represents the author in this way because Daniel had learnt all the lessons of those high-profile publications from the early ’90 that I have suggested influenced attitudes to the relationship between authors and editors. He clearly took the absence of allusions to friends or editorial mediators from the front of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* as a mark of authorial strength. He follows Spenser in plunging straight in to a dedication to the Queen. He also, though, has absorbed the editor function into himself. The only sign Daniel’s *Workes* give of the author’s own editorial activity are the chaste words “Newly augmented” on the title-page. The bibliographical nightmare of the *Workes* volume and of Daniel’s *oeuvre* more widely is a testament to the

massive activity of Daniel the editor, who obsessively supplemented, augmented, reshaped his works (Pitcher). But although Daniel performed this labour, he rarely *refers* to it: the author, and especially the author of his own *Workes*, appears to operate independently of clerky labour, independently of friends, editors, overseers. Indeed Daniel worked hard to create metaphors which would imply that the tedious labour of copying and revising poems was not only an intrinsic part of authorship, but a high status activity. In “To The Reader” prefixed to his *Certain Small Workes* of 1607, he declares that like an architect he had refashioned and rebuilt his verse:

Behold once more with serious labor here  
 Haue I refurnisht out this little frame,  
 Repaired some parts defectiue here and there,  
 And passages new added to the same,  
 Some rooms inlargd, made some les then they were  
 Like to the curious builder who this yeare  
 Puls downe, and alters what he did the last. . .

(Daniel, *Certaine Small Workes* sig. ¶3r)

Daniel’s metaphor of *Workes* as building-works without doubt deliberately echoes the description of the Countess of Pembroke’s editorial labours over the 1593 *Arcadia* as described by Hugh Sanford in his preface to that volume: “often in repairing a ruinous house, the mending of some olde part occasioneth the making of some new” (Sidney, 1593 *Arcadia* sig. ¶4r). Daniel adopted that metaphor of editing as “repairing” in order to combine the architectonic with the artisanal, to collapse together the “editorial” and the authorial. Daniel is at once a humble labourer, correcting his verses, and the noble architect engaged in a labour of abstract reinvention, and perhaps even his own noble patron who decides to put up a new wing to his grand edifice. William Baldwin suddenly seems worlds away: the author is not a printer and collector of copy, but architect, builder, and overseer of the works all at once.

The author-editor-builder-renovator-architect Daniel takes us back to the monumental volume of Ben Jonson’s *Workes* of 1616. As we have already noted, when viewed alongside its sixteenth-century predecessors this volume is remarkably free from fictions of collaboration, as well as from explicit allusions to the significant revisions and corrections which Jonson had made to many of its constituent elements. These features of Jonson’s *Workes* illustrate a strange but fundamental law in the history of print authorship: the accidents which create books are forgotten, but the results of those accidents remain. The final material forms which books take on establish conventions from which later printers and authors

learn, while the tortuous or accidental processes which may have led to their production are forgotten. Jonson and Daniel came to be regarded as “laureate” authors. They were able to create books which made claims for their singular authorship. This was the result of a wide range of factors, which certainly include the events described here. This generation of authors had seen Sackville’s and Churchyard’s names emerge from the chorus of the *Mirror*, they had seen Harington combine the role of editor and author; they had witnessed close at hand the growing stigma attached to overseers in the 1590s, and they had been shocked and excited by Spenser’s accidentally or deliberately bald preliminaries to *The Faerie Queene*. Certainly Jonson and Daniel were by training and education prepared to copy, revise, order and prepare texts for the press, as Wyatt and Surrey were not. But in order to become producers of *Works*, they did not have to be middle-class or “professional”: they had to absorb the role of the overseer into their own authorial identities. The emergence of what has come to be called the “laureate poet” was, I would suggest, substantially the result of this gradual absorption of the editor and overseer functions into the figure of the author.

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