

from Alington Castle, Wyatt may have been wearing (and using) another ring in 1541.

Indeed, a third ring can be identified from the seal of a letter sent from Barcelona on 7 February 1538 to Arthur Plantagenet, Lord Lisle, the Deputy of Calais.¹¹ No other seal of Wyatt's survives in the papers associated with him, but it is likely that he wore this ring throughout his first embassy to Emperor Charles V (1537–9), and perhaps for a much longer period. The design on its face is not of Caesar or the poet's arms, but of a 'V' (presumably for the Latin form of Wyatt's surname) on a leaf of English ivy.

The use of family arms may have been common on signet rings, a public way of signifying the honour and lineage of the letter's author. The well-preserved volume of letters to Lisle in which Wyatt's appears contains around a half-dozen seals of various correspondents, at least several of which bear the arms of the writer. The emblem of an ivy leaf carried more unusual and manifold connotations. In heraldic terms, ivy leaves signified 'strong and lasting friendship', a quality for which Wyatt may have been known in court.¹² Ivy was associated with Bacchus and Dionysus, and therefore with wine. Spenser would later extend the association to wanton lust in his references to curling ivy plants in *The Faerie Queene*.¹³ However, Wyatt's employment of ivy most plausibly invokes classical references by Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, all of whom associate ivy with poetry.¹⁴ When Petrarch received a garland on the Capitol in 1341, he noted that 'the poet's crown is sometimes made of myrtle and sometimes of ivy.'¹⁵ The crown of laurel—which

frequently signified poetic achievement—was also 'interchangeable' with that of ivy,¹⁶ as Leland suggests in claiming that the Muses selected Wyatt for a 'garland made of ivy' to wear 'at the poets' feast.'¹⁷

William Sessions has argued that Surrey's elegy on Wyatt was part of a systematic attempt at 'ideologizing the new poet,' and that Wyatt, unlike Surrey, 'had no such consciousness of himself as a poet, that is, as a Horace or a Vergil.'¹⁸ Wyatt was not a neoclassical stylist in the vein of Surrey, and no surviving evidence suggests that he attempted anything on the scale of the earl's *Aeneid* translation.¹⁹ Wyatt's ivy ring may nevertheless suggest that he viewed himself publicly—perhaps even primarily—as a poet in the classical tradition.

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¹⁶ Robert J. Clemens, 'Iconography on the Nature and Inspiration of Poetry in Renaissance Emblem Literature', *PMLA*, lxx, 4 (1955), 789.

¹⁷ Leland, verse xxviii, in Muir, *The Life and Letters of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, 268.

¹⁸ Sessions, 'Surrey's Wyatt', 169.

¹⁹ Wyatt's second satire, 'My Mother's Maids', imitated Horace's story of the town and country mice, though perhaps through a later source. Rather than develop the smoother neoclassical style that Surrey would later choose, Wyatt fashioned himself as a plain-spoken man. Many of the classical references in Wyatt's verse come straight from his sources, and even then, he sometimes rejects them for more contemporary examples. See, for instance, 'Myne Owne John Poyntz', in which Wyatt selects an example of 'the crow singing as the swanne' over Luigi Alamanni's discussion of Thersites and Aeneas in lines 49–51 of Alamanni's tenth satire (*Collected Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. Kenneth Muir and Patricia Thomson (Liverpool, 1969), 352).

¹¹ National Archives S.P.3.VIII, fol. 61r.

¹² W. Cecil Wade, *The Symbolisms of Heraldry* (London, 1898), 130. On Wyatt's friendships, see Susan Brigden, "'The Shadow that You Know": Sir Thomas Wyatt and Sir Francis Bryan at Court and in Embassy', *Historical Journal*, xxxix, 1 (1996), 1–31 and her forthcoming book on Wyatt.

¹³ See *The Faerie Queene*, 1.1.48.9, 1.4.22.3, 1.6.14.9, 2.5.29.3, 2.9.24.5, 2.12.61.2 and 5, 3.6.44.5, 4.7.7.1, 6.5.35.2.

¹⁴ For a lengthy statement on the symbolism of ivy in the ancient world and English literature, see J.B. Trapp, 'The Owl's Ivy and the Poet's Bays: An Enquiry into Poetic Garlands', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xxi, 3/4 (1958), 227–55.

¹⁵ Ernest H. Wilkins, 'Petrarch's Coronation Oration', *PMLA*, lxviii, 5 (1953), 1248.

THOMAS NORTH WAS THE 'T.N.' WHO PREFACED BELLEFOREST'S 'TRAGICALL HYSTORIES'

'T.N. to the curteous, friendlye, and indifferent Reader' titled the preface to the 1577 English translation of Belleforest's, 'Straunge, Lamentable, and Tragical Hystories'. This preface has minor significance to Shakespearean scholarship because it may be the first widely-read piece in the Elizabethan era that

invokes the classical, pseudo-Aesopian association of the feather-stealing crow with literary theft,¹ an association that would later appear in the notorious ‘Shake-scene’ reference in ‘Greene’s Groatworth of Witte’. Also like ‘Groatworth’, T.N.’s preface attributes the translation of Belleforest’s ‘Tragical Histories’ to someone who has recently died—an ‘R.S.’ that the Stationer’s Register lists as R. Smythe.²

For reasons that will be discussed later, many scholars have assumed that the ‘T.N.’ who wrote the preface was the translator, Thomas Newton,³ but a careful analysis of its language, subject, and style identifies the author as Thomas North. Compare, for example, the following excerpts from T.N.’s preface for *Tragical Histories* with excerpts from North’s translation of Jacques Amyot’s introduction to *Plutarch’s Lives* (1579), both of which praise history as the highest form of art, expressing precisely the same ideas and often using identical phrases. Emphasis is added with each quote.

T.N.:

(T)he penner hereof, thought himself to have taken a good and direct course, by interlacing *pleasure with profit* . . .⁴

Thomas North:

‘This commendation (in my opinion) is most proper to the reading of stories, to have *pleasure and profit* matched together . . .’

¹ T.N. mistakenly attributes the crow-plagiarism analogy to Aesop. In Aesop’s fable, the moral of the tale speaks to false posturing in general—not to plagiarism. Horace was actually the one who originally associated the crow with literary theft.

² P. Berek, ‘The “Upstart Crow,” Aesop’s Crow, and Shakespeare as a Reviser’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, xxxv (1984), 205–7.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ All quotes of T.N.’s preface from Mateo Bandello, *Strange, lamentable, and tragicall histories translated out of French into English by R.S.* (London, 1577) A3–B2, EEBO, internet, 5 November 2006.

⁵ All quotes of Thomas North’s translation of Amyot’s ‘Epistle to the Readers’ from Plutarch, *The lives of the noble Grecians and Romanes* (London, 1579), EEBO, internet, 5 November 2006.

‘But such bookes as yeeld *pleasure and profit*, and doe both delight and teache . . .’⁵

T.N.:

Methodically couched in playne *histories*: wherein be lively patternes *set downe* and expressed . . .: *wherein as in a Table*, is forcibly delineated . . .

Thomas North:

[History] is a picture, which (*as it were in a table*) *setteth* before our eyes the things worthy of remembrance . . .

T.N.:

‘. . .some conduce to the advancement of *vertue & commendation* of the *wel-deserving*; some to the suppressing . . ., beating downe, and subduing of *vice*, with a *detestation* of the loathsome lyfe of the *wicked* . . .’

Thomas North:

‘. . . with so effectually *commendation* of *vertue*, and *detestation* of *vice* . . .’

T.N.:

‘. . .[Histories show] how some for *virtue*, have risen to honour, fame, dignitie, and renowne, and some for *vice* have been throwne downe, are buryed in dishonour, shame, *reproach*, and *eternall infamy*. So that the worthy advancement of the one, maye be a *sharp spurre* to styrre up to goodness . . .’

Thomas North:

‘an historie also hath his maner of punishing the *wicked*, by the *reproch* of *everlasting infamies* wherewith it defaceth their remembrance, which is a great meane to withdraw them from *vice*, who otherwise would be lewd & *wickedly* disposed. Likewise on the contrarie parte, the immortal praise and glorie wherewith it rewardeth *welldoers*, is a very lively and *sharpe spurre* for men of noble corage and gentlemanlike nature,

Both passages note that histories benefit the reader because they highlight the honor bestowed upon the virtuous and the infamy that punishes the wicked. But it is in the language that T.N.’s debt to Thomas North’s translation is most conspicuous. Both passages

praise histories as a mixture of *pleasure* with *profit*, note history *sets* forth these lessons as if in a *table*, and pair the words *commendation* with *virtue* and *detestation* with *vice*. T.N.'s passage highlights history's warning that *vice* leads to *reproach* and *eternal infamy*. Thomas North's translation highlights history's warning that *vice* leads to the *reproach of everlasting infamies*. Both passages agree that the praise and renown that history grants the virtuous is a *sharp spur* to goodness and noble acts.

Later in the preface when T.N. discusses errors in printing, he chooses the phrase, 'faults and escapes', as synonyms for mistakes. Although *escapes* or *scapes* would become common Elizabethan terms for printing errors, a search of the Chadwyck-Healey Literature Online database, which includes the Early English Books Online (EEBO) database, yields only five instances of the use of the specific phrase 'fault(e)s and (e)scapes' or 'fault(e)s & (e)scapes' in all works of poetry, dramas, and prose. One of those examples is *The Life of Paulus AEmilius* (p. 264 E) from North's *Plutarch* (emphasis added).

'And that they readily pardone all *faultes & scapes* committed by negligence.'

The words also appear in close conjunction in North's translation of Amyot's preface (emphasis added):

'Seneca is railed upon by slaunderous tonges, for the *faultes* of his scholler Nero: the *scapes* of Quintillians young schollers are imputed to Quintilian him selfe.'

It seems difficult to doubt that the T.N. of the preface was intimately familiar with Amyot's preface to *Plutarch's Lives*. But obtaining Amyot's *Plutarch* in 1577 would not have been a simple matter for an Englishman. In 1573, Philip Sidney wrote to Hubert Languet that he would be willing to purchase Plutarch's works in French 'for five times their value', and Languet responded that he would 'spare no money' in trying to procure a copy for him.⁶ While it is unclear whether Languet ever

succeeded, the exchange reveals how difficult Amyot's work was to secure—even for a motivated and high born Englishman with many French and noble connections. Thomas North acquired his copy when he accompanied his brother, Lord North, on a diplomatic mission to the French court of Henry III in 1574.⁷ Jacques Amyot had once tutored Henry III, and Lady Bushby, North's biographer, suggested that the two great translators may have met.⁸

Moreover, T.N. appears to have encountered Amyot's work specifically through Thomas North's translation, which would not be published until 1579, two years after T.N.'s preface. North likely spent a number of years working on the colossal, 1200+ leaf translation between 1574 and 1579—and it seems unlikely that a great number of other people would have access to his translation of Amyot's preface so long before its publication. Even without the 'T.N.' initials, this alone would seem to preclude essentially all candidates other than Thomas North.

Other evidence also strongly points to North, particularly the fact that T.N. appears inexplicably defensive about the charge of plagiarism. As T.N. wrote:

[I] have restored to him his due, and set forth his travayle even as he lefte it, without any injury eyther to his person, or any jot gelding his honest and painful endeavours; for I account it no good dealing, that any man should thrust his syeth into an others harvest, or like Esopes Crow to usurpe and jette abroade, deckte with the feathers of other bewtifuller byrds; or to have such a tyckling ytche, or rather scabbe of vayneglorious fame, to arrogate that to himselfe, which an other mans toyle hath enterprysed and brought to passe.

This peculiar and self-serving comment does not correspond with the rest of the preface, which otherwise focuses on the virtues of Bandello's tales and R.S.'s translation. T.N.'s first line that he 'set forth his travayle even as he lefte it' would certainly seem to have sufficed.

⁶ 'Correspondence of Sidney and Languet', ed. by Stuart Pears (London, 1843), 9, 24. Also quoted by Constance Miriam Syford, 'The Direct Source of the Pamela-Cecropia Episode in the Arcadia', *PMLA*, xlix (1934), 472–89.

⁷ Lady Frances Bushby, *Three Men of Tudor Time*, (London, 1911), 183.

⁸ *Ibid.*

But the author interrupts his praising to pen a long clarification that he is crediting the rightful author because he is not a plagiarist and considers plagiary unethical. This is a curiously inappropriate and self-protective comment unless the author is Thomas North, who had been previously accused of plagiary, and whose 1568 epistle to his additions of *The Dial of Princes* was similarly defensive about literary pilfering. North's 1568 epistle that introduces the 'Fourth Book' of *The Dial* begins thus:

What detracting tongues report of me and my first travel in the translation of this Dyall, enlarging them at pleasure to worke my defame, disabling my doing herein, by brute it was no worke of mine, but the fruit of others labor. . . . For my object, & reprove of this ther sclauderous and malignant speech, I can alleage (curteous reader) ii. Principle causes, which thou reading & judging with indifferency, mayst easely approve. . . .⁹

North's plea to the 'curteous reader' to judge with 'indifferency' his denials that he is a plagiarist certainly seems to recall the preface, 'T.N. to the curteous, friendlye, and indifferent reader,' in which T.N. also clarifies he is not a plagiarist. While it is true that both 'curteous' and 'indifferent' became commonplace descriptions of readers in Elizabethan epistles, 'curteous' did not become common until after North's preface. According to the EEBO database, no work prior to 1568, the year of North's preface, and only three works prior to 1577, the year of T.N.'s epistle, use 'curteous' or 'courteous' to describe the 'reader'. This contrasts with fifty-eight works that specifically use the phrase 'curteous reader' or 'courteous reader' between 1578 and 1603. Thomas North may have been the author responsible for the 'curteous reader' trend or, at the very least, appears to have been one of the earliest users of the phrase.

T.N. also ended the epistle with 'farewell', a not uncommon Elizabethan practice. Still, 'farewell' was one of Thomas North's favorite

conclusions to his missives to readers. He ended his epistle 'To the Reader' of his translation of *The Moral Philosophy of Doni* with 'farewell' and ended the epistle 'To the Reader' of his translation of *Plutarch's Lives* with 'fare ye well'.

Only three known translations of Thomas North exist, so the great number of commonalities between his introductions and that of T.N.'s preface come from a limited amount of material. Yet, despite the few epistles available for comparison, T.N.'s preface reads as if it were a patchwork of Northisms, from the title to the valediction, from the paraphrasing of Amyot's ode to history to the defensive denial of plagiarism.

But one problem remains: 'Tragicall Hystories' boasted two prefatory epistles from a 'T.N.' The other missive, a dedication to Henry Vernon of Stoke and John Vernon of Sudbury, concluded thusly: 'At Butley this.xxx. of October. 1577. Yours most bounden, T.N.'¹⁰ The translator Thomas Newton was writing at Butley during this time, so this provides strong evidence that Newton was the T.N. who wrote the dedication. Since it would, at first, seem unlikely that two different 'T.N.'s would pen prefatory material to the same work, this has led to the understandable belief that Newton also wrote the later preface.¹¹

However, *The Moral Philosophy of Doni* (1570) not only contains introductory material from Thomas North but three laudatory poems commending North, one of which is signed by a 'T.N.'¹² Thomas Newton is the most obvious candidate for this other 'T.N.' who praised North, establishing a likely connection between these two translators. Thomas Newton went to Queen's College in Cambridge in 1562,¹³ the town of North's residence throughout most of his life. By 1570, the year of the printing of *Doni*, Newton was in Butley.

Newton's likely writing of a prefatory comment on behalf of North in 1570 has two

¹⁰ Berek, 'The "Upstart Crow"'.
¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Antonio Francesco Doni, *The Morall Philosophie of Doni* (London, 1570), EEBO, internet, 5 November 2006.

¹³ Gordon Braden, 'Newton, Thomas (1544/5–1607)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/view/article/20069, accessed 14 October 2006].

⁹ Thomas North's 'Epistle to the Reader', introducing 'The Fourth Book' of *The Dial of Princes*. From Antonio de Guevera, *The Dial of Princes* (London, 1579), EEBO, internet, 5 November 2006.

relevant implications: (1) North was familiar enough with Thomas Newton to send him material at Butley and request a prefatory comment. (2) Thomas Newton would use his initials to sign epistles to material sent to him by Thomas North, apparently unconcerned about the confusion this would cause between the two T.N.'s. This North–Newton connection helps account for any concern over the supposition that both North and Newton penned introductory material for the same work.

In summary, the most likely scenario for the writing of the preface is as follows: Thomas North had begun translating Plutarch's magnum opus from the French by 1577. During that year, he also wrote the preface to a translation of Belleforest's 'Tragical Histories', which he models after his own not-yet-published translation of Amyot's preface, mirroring its meaning and echoing its phrases. Since he claims he was helping to publish the work of a Robert Smythe, recently deceased, North once again takes the opportunity to squelch past accusations and clarify that he is not a plagiarist. As he did with *Doni* (1570), North then sends *Tragical Histories* to Newton to add prefatory material. Newton writes the dedication and again signs with his initials. This seems the only reasonable explanation for how T.N.'s preface could contain so many similarities, both substantially and verbally, with a work that Thomas North would not publish for another two years. It also explains the curiously defensive comment about plagiarism, and other similarities it shares with other writings of North.

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WISE BLOOD: AENEID 3. 22–57 AND MARLOWE'S DOCTOR FAUSTUS

SIGNING the fateful contract by Faustus would be a straightforward, formal procedure, were it not for indications of resistance from his blood. First it congeals and refuses to flow: 'What might the staying of my bloud

portend? / Is it unwilling I should write this bill? / Why streames it not, that I may write afresh?'¹ After Mephistophilis brings a 'chafer of coles', it 'begins to cleare againe' so that Faustus can seal the document. However, the blood is not done yet:

But what is this inscription on mine arme?
Homo fuge, whither should I flie?
 If unto God hee'le throwe thee down to hell,
 My sences are deceiv'd, here's nothing writ,
 I see it plaine, here in this place is writ,
Homo fuge, yet shall not *Faustus* flye. (76–81)

Commentators have detected allusions to Scripture in the injunction '*Homo fuge*', notably to Psalms 139:7–8 and I Timothy 6:11.² In a subtle reading of the scene Lowell Gallagher proposes connections to the Pauline hermeneutics of Christ's wounds, referring to Romans 2:29 and Galatians 6:15–17.³

There is every reason to expect that Marlowe's contemporaries, solid in their knowledge of Scripture, would have resonated to one or another of the Biblical correspondences. At the same time, they were thoroughly schooled in the Latin classics and knew their Virgil as well as they knew the Bible.⁴ Such readers would recall, as Marlowe must have when he read the conclusion of Chapter 5 in the *English Faustbook*,⁵ Aeneas's account at Dido's court of an eerie, indeed terrifying, encounter with blood. The Trojans have landed in Thrace and Aeneas prepares to make a sacrifice. As he attempts to uproot

¹ Christopher Marlowe, *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, II: *Dr Faustus*, ed. Roma Gill (Oxford, 1990), Scene 5, lines 64–66.

² Sara Munson Deats, 'Ironic Allusion in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, NS x (1981): 203–16, here 206–7; Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus: A 1604-Version Edition*, ed. Michael Keefer (Peterborough, Ontario, 1991), 33, ad 77. Leo Kirschbaum simply identifies *Homo fuge* as 'God's warning' ('Marlowe's *Faustus: A Reconsideration*', *RES*, xix (1943), 225–41, here 235.

³ Lowell Gallagher, 'Faustus' Blood and the (Messianic) Question of Ethics', *ELH*, lxxiii (2006), 1–29, here 8–9.

⁴ See Andrew Wallace, 'Virgil and Bacon in the Schoolroom', *ELH*, lxxiii (2006), 1616–85, here 164.

⁵ 'he tooke a small penknife, and prickt a vaine in his left hand, for certaintie thereupon, were scene on his hand these words written, as fi they had ben written with blood, O HOMO FUGE; whereat the Spirit vanished, but Faustus continued in his damnable minde, and made his writing as followeth'. *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, Appendix A, 93.