Matthew Roydon

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members of the Privy Council—Sir Robert Rochester, Sir Francis Englefield and John Bourne—to request Sir Thomas Cawerden, the Master of the Revels, to lend the suits of apparel necessary to set forth a ‘learnyd Tragedye’ which the fellows and scholars of New College, Oxford, intended to perform at Christmas.

Unfortunately the letter does not give any details concerning the subject of the play; all that we learn is that the play was written ‘to the glorie of god and increase of learnyng,’ an object eminently laudable but rather vague. We know, however, that it was a historical drama, for the list of the ‘dramatis personae’ which is given at the end of the document contains three kings, two dukes, six councillors, one queen, three gentlewomen and a young prince. This list, besides, permits us to infer that the tragedy must have been of the same type as *Gorboduc* and contained allusions to the political questions of the time. Lastly, a play recommended by three of Queen Mary’s Councillors was undoubtedly of Catholic tendencies. In imitation of what was a courtly custom, the tragedy was to be preceded or followed by a ‘fayre mask’ of six masquers with four torchbearers.

The date at which the performance took place must remain uncertain, though the names of the Councillors who signed the letter on the ‘xixth of December’ enable us to fix the date between certain narrow limits; for this letter cannot have been written before Mary’s accession in 1553 or later than December 1556, for Sir Robert Rochester died on November 28, 1557. At any rate, the tragedy performed at New College must have been one of the earliest purely historical dramas on national or foreign themes represented in Tudor times.

ALBERT FEUILLERAT.

RENNES.

MATTHEW ROYDON.

Professor W. Bang of Louvain in a paper called ‘Roydoniana’ recently published under the auspices of the Académie Royale of Belgium has made a contribution to the very little that is known of Sidney’s elegist, Matthew Roydon. To this contribution I am able to make the following small addition.

In Close-Roll 1144 (24 Eliz. Part 24) a Matthew Royden, who is doubtless the same man, of ‘Davies’ or ‘Thavies’ Inn, gentleman,

M. L. R. IX.

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appears on 6th January 158 $\frac{1}{2}$ as promising to pay a London goldsmith, Henry Banyster, £40 by the Feast of the Purification (February 2) following. The document runs much as follows:

Matheus Royden de Davyes Inne in holborne in Com. Midd. generosus Jeronimus Skyers de Ciuitate London generosus & Nicholaus Skyers de furnyvalls Inne in Holborne predict. generosus...recognoverunt se debere et eorum quilibet recognovit se debere Henrico Banyster ciui & Aurifabro London Quadragint. libras legalis monete Angl. soluend. eidem Henrico Banyster aut suo cō Attorn. hered. vel executoribus suis in fest. purificacōis be. marie virginis px. futur. post dat. huius Recognicōis et nisi fecerint aut eorum vnus fecerit volunt & concedunt & eorum quilibet vult & concedit pro se hered. & executoribus suis *per* presentes quod tunc pdicte quadraginta libre leuentur de bonis cattallis terris ten. & hereditament. ipsorum Mathei Royden Jeronimi Skyers & Nichol. Skyers...ad opus et vsum eiusdem Henrici Banyster sexto die Jan. anno Eliz. vicesimo quarto.

As Roydon's name appears first, I suppose that the debt was his, and the other two men were his sureties.

A pedigree of a family named 'Skiers' which had been settled near Doncaster is given in Joseph Hunter's *South Yorkshire*, II, p. 101. Several members of the family are named Nicholas, but none Jerome. As the Skyers were apparently Roydon's nearest friends, I hoped that by identifying them I might get a clue to the particular family to which Matthew Roydon belonged. This, however, I have not done.

Davies (or Thavies) Inn and Furnival's Inn were Inns of Chancery, as distinguished from Inns of Court. They were hostels for students of law attached to Lincoln's Inn. It was not possible for their students to be called to the bar unless first admitted to one of the Inns of Court: and this step Matthew Roydon seems not to have taken.

There is apparently an allusion to someone of the name Roydon in a nameless play (it might be called 'Microcosmus'), to be dated probably after 1603, preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge (MS. R. 10. 4):

Ha ha he
Jecorino. Roidonensis pol est hæc insania : ridet strenue.

There seems to be a pun on 'ridet' and 'Roidon,' but I have no idea what Roydon is in question, nor even if Roydon was a man, or one of the places which bear the name.

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

SHEFFIELD.