

## Robert Fland, or Elandus Dialecticus?

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Abstract: In the late 1970s, Paul Spade edited three treatises, on *Consequentes*, *Insolubles* and *Obligations*, which he attributed to an otherwise unknown fourteenth-century logician whom he named as Robert Fland. We question this reading of the name and argue that his real name was Robert Eland. Moreover, we suggest that he should be identified with Eland the dialectician, whose *Sophismata* is mentioned in an account book at Merton College in 1367, and whose renown as a logician was disdainfully recorded some two hundred years later by the bibliographer John Bale.

In 1976, Paul Vincent Spade published a treatise on *Consequentes* which he attributed to a previously unknown logician of the fourteenth century, Robert Fland.<sup>1</sup> This attribution was made on the basis of the explicits of three treatises preserved in a single manuscript, Bruges ms 497, ff. 41<sup>r</sup>-46<sup>r</sup>.<sup>2</sup> The other treatises, on *Insolubles* and on *Obligations*, were attributed in the ms to the same author, and were edited by Spade in 1978 and 1980.<sup>3</sup> Spade commented in his introduction to his edition of the *Insolubles* that “there are no external references to Fland by name”<sup>4</sup> and in his introduction to the *Consequentes* that “not even his name is certain”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> P.V. Spade, “Robert Fland’s *Consequentiae*: an edition”, *Mediaeval Studies* 38 (1976): 54–84.

<sup>2</sup> The attribution to Fland also followed that in A. de Poorter, *Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque publique de la ville de Bruges* (Bruges, 1934): 578–80. On this manuscript, see most recently M. Sirridge and S. Ebbesen (eds) *Master Richard Sophista: Abstractiones* (Oxford, 2016): 30–32.

<sup>3</sup> P.V. Spade, “Robert Fland’s *Insolubilia*: an edition, with comments on the dating of Fland’s works”, *Mediaeval Studies* 40 (1978): 56–80; “Robert Fland’s *Obligations*: an edition”, *Mediaeval Studies* 42 (1980): 46–60.

<sup>4</sup> “Robert Fland’s *Insolubilia*”, 56. De Poorter had similarly commented that “l’auteur m’est inconnu” (*Catalogue des manuscrits*, 579).

<sup>5</sup> “Robert Fland’s *Consequentiae*”, 55.

Spade included in his article containing the treatise on *Insolubles* a short extract from Ralph Strode's *Insolubles*, edited from a single ms in the Amplonian collection at the University of Erfurt.<sup>6</sup> This extract opened with the words:

“Concerning the second theory, namely, that of master Roger Swyneshed, it should be realized that the second member of the first division, sc. ‘Some proposition neither signifies principally as things are nor other than they are’, seems to be quite expressly contrary to age-old principles passed down by the most highly regarded philosophers ... So, briefly against this theory. Heytesbury adduces in his *Insolubles* some conclusions that follow from this theory but seem impossible.”<sup>7</sup>

Spade noted (p. 61) that this remark of Strode's was puzzling, in that only one of the nine conclusions that followed appears anywhere in Heytesbury's known works, and even that, the ninth, in a significantly different form. He was more interested, however, in the fact that the conclusions which Strode details appear almost word for word in Fland's treatise. They are given in Figure 1.

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<sup>6</sup> UB Erfurt, Dep. Erf. CA 4<sup>o</sup> 255. See Spade, *The Mediaeval Liar: a Catalogue of the Insolubilia-Literature* (Toronto, 1975), 87–91.

<sup>7</sup> “Robert Fland's *Insolubilia*”, 76: “<C>*irca secundam opinionem, videlicet, magistri Rogeri Swinised, est sciendum quod secundum membrum primae divisionis, ista, scilicet, ‘Aliqua propositio nec principaliter significat sicut est nec aliter quam est’, videtur satis expresse esse contra antiqua principia a philosophis maxime approbatis tradita ... Unde breviter contra istam opinionem. Adducit Heytesbury in suis insolubilibus quasdam conclusiones ut videtur impossibiles, quae ex ista opinione sequuntur*”. Spade edited Swyneshed's treatise on *Insolubles* in “Roger Swyneshed's *Insolubilia*: edition and comments”, *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 46 (1979): 177–220, where we read at the very start, on p. 180: “The first [division] is this: of propositions some signify principally as things are or principally other than they are, others neither principally as things are nor other than they are” (“*Prima est haec: Propositionum alia significat principaliter sicut est vel principaliter aliter quam est, alia nec principaliter sicut est nec aliter quam est*”).

	Strode	Fland
1	Some proposition is false which precisely signifies as things are	A false proposition signifies precisely as things are
2	Two contradictories mutually contradicting each other are at the same time false	Two contradictories are at the same time false
3	In a good and formal consequence the false follows from the true	The false follows formally from the true
4	Some consequence is good whose consequent is true and antecedent neither true nor false	Some consequence is good whose consequent is true and antecedent neither signifies as things are nor other than they are
5	Some consequence is good and formal whose antecedent is true and consequent neither true nor false	Some consequence is good and formal and the antecedent is false and the consequent neither signifies as things are nor other than they are
6	There are two contradictories of which one is true and the other neither signifying as things are nor other than they are and consequently according to this theory neither true nor false	There are two contradictories of which one is true and the other neither true nor false
7	There are two propositions which are simply convertible of which one is false and the other neither true nor false, and of which one signifies other than things are and the other neither signifies other than things are nor as things are	However <i>A</i> signifies <i>B</i> signifies and <i>B</i> is not convertible with <i>A</i> , or: a proposition neither signifying as things are nor other than things are is convertible with a false proposition <sup>8</sup>
8	Some proposition is false which signifies	A false proposition neither signifies as

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<sup>8</sup> *A* and *B* here refer to two separate occurrences of 'A signifies other than things are'.

	in some way, but which neither signifies as things are nor other than they are	things are nor other than they are
9	These two propositions are consistent with each other: 'Things are wholly as Socrates says' and 'Things are not wholly as Socrates says' <sup>9</sup>	Things are wholly as Socrates says and things are not wholly as Socrates says <sup>10</sup>

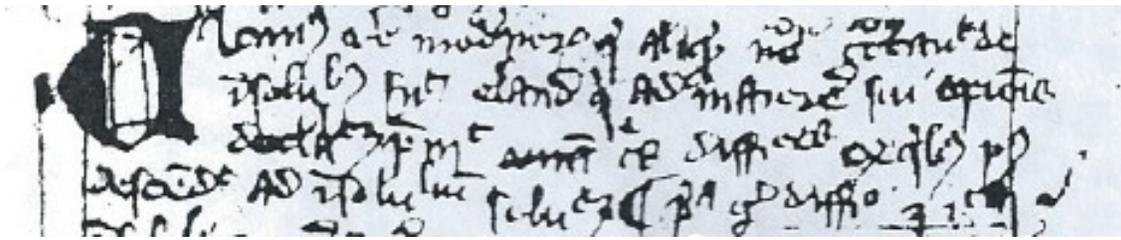
Figure 1: The Nine Impossible Conclusions of Swyneshed's Theory

Consulting the Erfurt ms, however, we find that the name that Spade has transcribed as 'Heytesbury' in the above excerpt, though hard to read, looks very different from clear references to Heytesbury elsewhere in the ms. Moreover, the author to whom Strode is

<sup>9</sup> See 'Robert Fland's *Insolubilia*', 76–80, amended against the ms: *Aliqua propositio est falsa quae praecise significat sicut est ... Duo contradictoria sibi invicem contradicentia sunt simul falsa ... In consequentia bona et formali ex vero sequitur falsum ... Aliqua est consequentia bona, cujus consequens est verum et antecedens nec verum nec falsum ... Aliqua est consequentia bona et formalis, cujus antecedens est verum et consequens nec verum nec falsum ... Aliqua sunt duo contradictoria, quorum unum est verum et reliquum nec significans sicut est nec aliter quam est et per consequens secundum istam opinionem nec verum nec falsum ... Aliquae duae propositiones convertuntur simpliciter, quarum una est falsa et reliqua nec vera nec falsa, et quarum una significat aliter quam est et reliqua nec significat aliter quam est nec sicut est ... Aliqua propositio est falsa quae aliquid significat, quae tamen nec significat sicut est nec aliter quam est ... Iste duae propositiones stant simul: 'ita est totaliter sicut Sortes dicit' et 'non est ita totaliter sicut Sortes dicit'.*

<sup>10</sup> See 'Robert Fland's *Insolubilia*', 65: *Propositio falsa significat praecise sicut est ... Duo contradictoria sunt simul falsa ... Ex vero sequitur falsum formaliter ... Aliqua consequentia est bona cujus consequens est verum et antecedens nec significat sicut est nec aliter quam est ... Aliqua consequentia est bona et formalis et antecedens est falsum et consequens neque significat sicut est nec aliter quam est ... Sunt duo contradictoria quorum unum est verum et reliquum neque verum neque falsum ... Qualitercumque significat a significat b et b non convertitur cum a. Vel propositio nec significans sicut est nec aliter quam est convertitur cum propositione falsa ... Propositio falsa nec significat sicut est nec aliter quam est ... Ita est totaliter sicut Sortes dicit et non est ita totaliter sicut Sortes dicit.*

referring at this point is clearly the same one that Strode introduced on the previous folio (f. 9<sup>ra</sup>):<sup>11</sup>



*“Ultimus vero modernorum qui aliquid notabiliter tractavit de insolubilibus fuit eland, qui ad maiorem sui opinionis declarationem praemittit tres diffinitiones, ex quibus post descendit ad insolubilium solutionem ...”*<sup>12</sup>

As one can see, the name occurring here is fairly unambiguously ‘Eland’. This is indeed how it is transcribed by Alfonso Maierù in his unpublished edition of Strode’s treatise.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, the later occurrence (on f. 9<sup>vb</sup>: *elan*), though less clear and which Spade had transcribed as ‘Heytesbury’, is rendered as ‘Elan<d>’ by Maierù.

In his treatise, Strode discusses fourteen different theories of insolubles, four of which are attributed by name, *viz.* to Bradwardine (f. 3<sup>vb</sup>), Swyneshed (f. 6<sup>ra</sup>), Heytesbury (f. 8<sup>ra</sup>) and Eland (f. 9<sup>ra</sup>). In the case of the first three, Strode’s exposition is taken almost verbatim from the authors themselves.<sup>14</sup> The passage on f. 9<sup>ra</sup> of Strode’s treatise describing Eland’s view continues:

*Prima ergo diffinitio est ista. Insolubile est propositio significans primo et principaliter sicut est, et ex consequenti aliter quam est deducta nova impositione.*

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<sup>11</sup> Reproduced with permission of the University of Erfurt, together with that below from f. 9<sup>vb</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> “Indeed, the last of the moderns who somewhat notably treated of insolubles was Eland, who begins with three definitions in order to make his theory clearer, from which he later gets down to a solution of the insolubles ...”.

<sup>13</sup> Maierù intended to publish an edition of the whole of Strode’s *Logica*, but it was still incomplete at the time of his death in 2011. This passage also shows that Spade was mistaken when he said that Strode “does not ascribe [the theory] to anyone by name”: *The Mediaeval Liar*, 89.

<sup>14</sup> For the case of Bradwardine, see Thomas Bradwardine, *Insolubilia*, ed. and tr. S. Read (New York, 2010), 37 and Appendix B.

*Istam diffinitionem declarat sic. Dicat Sortes talem propositionem 'Sortes dicit falsum' et nullam aliam, et significet ista quod Sortes dicit falsum, et sit unus Sortes omnis Sortes, et vocetur propositio dicta a Sorte a. Tunc a significat primo et principaliter quod Sortes dicit falsum, et ita est quod Sortes dicit falsum, ergo a significat primo et principaliter sicut est, et ex consequenti aliter quam est, quia non stat cum casu quod a significet praecise sicut est, sicut postmodum patebit; et non primo et principaliter significat aliter quam est, ergo ex consequenti significat aliter quam est. Patet igitur diffinitio insolubilis, que est: insolubile est propositio primo et principaliter significans sicut est etc., et additur in fine: deducta nova impositione, idest deposita nova impositione, idest sine nova impositione. Secunda diffinitio est ista; propositio vera est propositio significans praecise sicut est. Tertia diffinitio est ista: propositio falsa est propositio significans aliter quam est.*

*Post istas diffinitiones descendit ad solvendum insolubilia tam secundum positionem magistri Thome Bravardijn quam secundum positionem Haelisberi, nihil ex capite suo de novo adiciendo, quorum opiniones quia superius sunt recitate, ulterius de dictis istius nichil dicam.<sup>15</sup>*

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<sup>15</sup> “Now the first definition is this: an insoluble is a proposition signifying first and principally as things are, and consequently other than they are, excepting a new imposition. He elucidates this definition like this: suppose Socrates utters this proposition: ‘Socrates utters a falsehood’ and no other, and suppose it signifies that Socrates utters a falsehood, where there is just one Socrates, and call the proposition uttered by Socrates, A. Then A signifies first and principally that Socrates utters a falsehood, and things are such that Socrates utters a falsehood, so A signifies first and principally as things are, and consequently other than things are, because it is inconsistent with the hypothesis that A signifies only as things are, as will be clear later; and it does not first and principally signify other than things are, so it consequently signifies other than things are. So the definition of insoluble is clear, namely, an insoluble is a proposition first and principally signifying as things are etc., and it is added at the end: excepting a new imposition, that is, setting aside a new imposition, that is, without a new imposition. The second definition is this: a true proposition is a proposition signifying only as things are. The third definition is this: a false proposition is a proposition signifying other than things are.

These definitions of insoluble and of true and false propositions are precisely those we find in the treatise edited by Spade, including the description of the example of an insoluble almost verbatim.<sup>16</sup> The final paragraph in Strode's account, commenting that Eland's solution is a choice between Bradwardine's and Heytesbury's, is again what we find in that treatise: "*Ideo duae responsiones sunt meliores aliis ad insolubilia solvenda. Eligat ergo respondens unam istarum pro sua solutione ad insolubilia*".<sup>17</sup>

That paragraph completes Part I of Strode's treatise, expounding the fourteen theories. Strode then turns in Part II, starting on f. 9<sup>ra</sup>, to decide which of Bradwardine's, Swyneshed's and Heytesbury's is the most acceptable. After discussing Bradwardine's solution at some length, he turns, on f. 9<sup>vb</sup>, as we have seen, to the criticism of Swyneshed, invoking the impossible conclusions he takes from Eland (not, *pace* Spade, Heytesbury). He writes (correcting the text cited earlier from Spade):

*Unde breviter contra istam opinionem adducit Eland in suis insolubilibus quasdam conclusiones ut videtur impossibiles, quae ex ista opinione sequuntur.*<sup>18</sup>

The clear identity of the theory of insolubles attributed by Strode to Eland with that in the treatise edited by Spade, and the strong similarity between the two lists of nine unacceptable conclusions shown in Figure 1, lead to the unavoidable conclusion that Strode was indeed referring to the treatise on *Insolubles* edited by Spade and attributed by him to the unknown Robert Fland. This in itself is ironic, since it follows that Spade had overlooked an external reference to the author in the very article in which he claimed that there were no such references.

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"After these definitions he gets down to the solution of insolubles both according to master Thomas Bradwardine's position and according to Heytesbury's position, adding nothing new on his own initiative. Because these theories were described above, I will say no more about what he says".

<sup>16</sup> Spade, "Robert Fland's *Insolubilia*", 62.

<sup>17</sup> Spade, "Robert Fland's *Insolubilia*", 65: "So <these> two responses [sc. Bradwardine's and Heytesbury's] are better than the others for solving insolubles. So the respondent should choose one of them for his solution to the insolubles".

<sup>18</sup> "So Eland in his *Insolubles* briefly adduces against this theory some conclusions that follow from this theory but seem impossible".

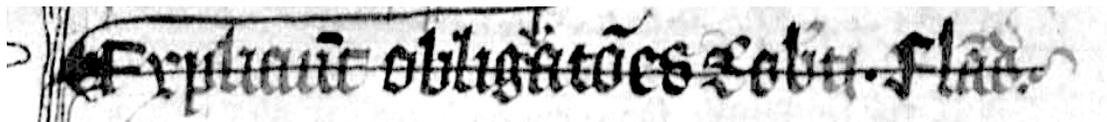
So, what was de Poorter's and Spade's evidence for 'Fland'? It consists only in the explicits of the three treatises in the Bruges ms. Whereas the text itself is written in a Gothic cursive hand, the explicits are calligraphically distinguished by a Gothic textualis. The explicit which concludes the *Insolubilia* (f. 44<sup>v</sup>) seems at first glance to read 'Fland' with no possibility of confusion:<sup>19</sup>



However, compare the first letter of the name here with the first letter of 'Expliciunt'. The similarity should make us wary of potential confusion between 'E' and 'F'. And indeed, consider the explicit of the *Consequentiae* on the previous folio (f. 43<sup>r</sup>):



Close attention to the capitals here shows that when the scribe wrote the name for the first time, he wrote 'Eland'. Perhaps it was through a misreading of his own handwriting or that of his exemplar that 'Eland' became 'Fland', as in the explicit of the *Obligaciones* (f. 46<sup>r</sup>):



Spade noted the full stops (or puncta) following the name, suggesting they might indicate an abbreviation (for 'Flandrensis' perhaps).<sup>20</sup> However, firstly, in the explicit to the *Consequentiae* the two puncta are rubricated and have counterparts before 'Expliciunt', and so form part of the decoration, not of the text; likewise, the punctum after the name in the *Insolubilia* is paired with one before 'Expliciunt', so again presumably forming part of the decoration. Secondly, even if there is a terminal abbreviation here, its expansion needn't be more elaborate than (say) 'Elandi'.

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<sup>19</sup> This and the following explicits are reproduced with permission from Bruges Public Library.

<sup>20</sup> "Robert Fland's *Consequentiae*", 55.

On balance, therefore, with the Bruges explicit's wavering between 'Fland' and 'Eland' and with the external evidence from the Erfurt manuscript telling in favour of 'Eland', we conclude that there is sufficient reason to reject the identification of the author by de Poorter and Spade as Robert Fland. His real name is Robert Eland. But that raises the further question as to the real identity of that author: if his name was Eland, who was he?

The *Insolubles* give us a clue: the author is clearly aware of the account of insolubles written by Heytesbury in 1335, and his text is in turn cited by Strode in a treatise whose standard dating (due to Maierù) is not much later than 1359–60.<sup>21</sup> We are therefore looking for a Robert Eland who was active at some point during this interval. Moreover, as Ashworth and Spade have observed, he “is probably to be associated with Oxford”.<sup>22</sup>

Emden's *Biographical Register* lists three Oxonian Elands.<sup>23</sup> John and Thomas, fellows of Merton in the 1410s and 1420s respectively, can be ruled out on chronological grounds. That leaves Peter Whyte, attested as a fellow of Oriel in 1372 and 1374, who comes from Eland in Co. Durham (apparently what is now Ponteland in Northumberland, just north of the Tyne).<sup>24</sup> Peter is not an ideal candidate, partly because he is not a Robert and partly because Strode's wording (“the last of the moderns who somewhat notably treated of insolubles was Eland”) sounds off-key as a reference to a still-active colleague. Outside the pages of Emden, but still in the vicinity of Ponteland, we find at least one

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<sup>21</sup> A. Maierù, “Le ms. Oxford, canonici misc. 219 et la ‘Logica’ de Strode”, in A. Maierù, editor, *English Logic in Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries* (Naples, 1982), 87–110: 89. 1359 and 1360 are the years in which Strode is attested as a fellow of Merton.

<sup>22</sup> E.J. Ashworth and P.V. Spade, “Logic in Late Medieval Oxford”, in J.I. Catto and T.A.R. Evans, (Oxford, 1992), 35–64: 48.

<sup>23</sup> A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1957–59), vol. 1, 633.

<sup>24</sup> A. Mawer, *The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge, 1920): 159.

Robert de Eland born in around 1325 and based in the area around Newcastle, but with no obvious connection to Oxford or indeed any university.<sup>25</sup>

Unfortunately, it is not even certain that the author of the Bruges texts has a connection with Ponteland. The place name ‘Eland’ (from OE *éa-land*, water-land) is more or less shared with Elland in Yorkshire and Ealand in Lincolnshire,<sup>26</sup> so that the Robertus de Eland listed as a hosteler in a Yorkshire tax register for 1379<sup>27</sup> and the Robert de Eland of Yorkshire who witnessed a charter in Bawtry in 1384<sup>28</sup> presumably both hail from Elland, and the Robert de Eland who witnessed a charter in Doncaster in 1374<sup>29</sup> may have come from Ealand.

A more promising find is the following entry in Thomas Tanner’s *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica* of 1748:

“ELANDUS, Dialecticus cognominatus ab argutiis suis logicis, in quibus peritissimus habetur. In academia Oxoniensi educatus fuit, et scripsit *Conclusiones dialecticas*, lib. i. ‘Omnia quae sunt in mundo.’ Hunc librum aliquando Londini ferunt typis mandatum. Pits. *App.* p. 837. In vicecustodis

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<sup>25</sup> Circumstantial evidence suggests that at least most of the following are the same Robert de Eland: the one attested in 1355 as holding some land in Killingworth; the one attested in 1364, along with his wife Alice, as quitclaiming some land in Killingworth; the one attested in 1366 (aged 41) as having held land in Middleton in 1344; the one attested in 1367 (aged 42) as having produced a daughter in 1345; the one attested in 1370 (aged 40) as having been near Lamesley in 1348; the one attested in 1374 (aged over 50) as having been on his way to Ponteland in 1353; the one accused in 1375 (along with many others) by Richard Scotte of Newcastle of numerous offences in Benwell. See respectively *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem* vol. X (London, 1921): 222; *Feet of Fines*, National Archives CP 25/1/181/13 no. 128; *Cal. IPM* vol. XI (London, 1935): 474; *Cal. IPM* vol. XII (London, 1938): 161; *Cal. IPM* vol. XIII (London, 1954): 46; *Cal. IPM* vol. XIV (London, 1952): 62; *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, Edward III vol. XVI (London, 1916): 140.

<sup>26</sup> Mawer, *Place-Names*: 159.

<sup>27</sup> *Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal* V (1879): 47b.

<sup>28</sup> *Calendar of the Close Rolls*, Richard II vol. II (London, 1920): 440.

<sup>29</sup> T.W. Hall and A.H. Thomas, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Jackson Collection* (Sheffield, 1914): 15–16.

collegii Mertonensis Oxon. *Computo* A.D. MCCCLXVII. 41 Edw. iii mentio fit trium librorum in quarto, continentium *Sophismata Hamptoni et Elandi*, cum aliis sophismatibus annexis in manibus Thomae Dollyng, socii. Nullum tamen nomen baptismale additur Hamptono et Elando, id quod auctores illos communiter cognitos fuisse monstrat. Tempus quo claruit, ignoratur. Bal. xii. 38.”<sup>30</sup>

Tanner’s references are to the bibliographical works of John Bale (1557–59) and John Pits (1619) and to the Merton College subwarden’s account book for 1367–68. Bale writes:

“Elandus Dialecticus, Oxoniensis academiae sophista, tantum in litigandi acumine ualebat, ut uafum ac uersutum eius ingenium plures admirarentur. Poterat enim uanis & confictis uocabulis, quaecunque re ipsa falsissima sunt, ac rectae hominum rationi impossibilia, mira calliditate uera esse conuincere. Concinnauitque pro sua arte confirmanda, fallacias quasdam, quas tamen uocabat

*Conclusiones Dialecticas, Lib.1. Omnia quae sunt in mundo, conce<duuntur a tempore>.*

Temporis, in quo Elandus hic noster uixit, nullus historicorum mentionem facit: nec multum refert.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> T. Tanner, *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica: sive, de scriptoribus, qui in Anglia, Scotia, et Hibernia ad saeculi XVII initium floruerunt ... commentarius*, ed. D. Wilkins (London, 1748), 257: “Eland the Dialectician takes his epithet from his acuity in logical matters, in which he was held to be a great expert. He was educated at the University of Oxford, and wrote *Dialectical Conclusions*, in one book, [beginning] ‘All things which are in the world’. They say that this book was at some time committed to print in London. Pits *Appendix* p. 837. In the subwarden’s account book at Merton College Oxford AD 1367 in the 41st year of [the reign of] Edward III mention is made of three books in quarto containing the *Sophisms* of Hampton and Eland, with other sophisms added, in the possession of Thomas Dollyng, fellow. But no Christian name is given for Hampton or for Eland, which shows that these authors were well known. The date at which he was writing is unknown. Bale xii 38.”

<sup>31</sup> J. Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Catalogus*, 2 vols. (Basel, 1557–59), vol. 2, p. 86 (XII 38): “Eland the Dialectician, logician at the University of Oxford, had such strong acuteness in disputation that many were astonished at his crafty and cunning intellect. For by

Pits's entry on Elandus Dialecticus is entirely derived from Bale, and so gives us no new information.<sup>32</sup> It is, however, the source of Tanner's claim that the otherwise unknown *Dialectical Conclusions* were said to have been printed in London, which Pits presumably inferred from the note at the top of Bale's entry: '*Ex officinis Lond.*' (from the [book]shops of London). Bale's working notebook, mostly compiled between 1548 and 1552 and now known as the *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, is more forthcoming about his source: '*Ex officina Roberti Stoughton*'.<sup>33</sup> Robert Stoughton was a London bookseller who had a brief career as a printer (1548–52) before his death in 1553.<sup>34</sup> The thirteen publications under his name in the Universal Short Title Catalogue were all written in English, but it appears from Bale's *Index* that Stoughton's shop was also home to several manuscripts of 14<sup>th</sup>-century Oxonian logical works that never made it into print. One of these was Heytesbury's *Sophismata asinina*, which Bale simply calls *Conclusiones (sophisticae)*.<sup>35</sup> And if Heytesbury's *Asinine Sophisms* could appear in this

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empty and confected words he could with amazing cleverness show to be true all things that are in reality most false and by the right reason of men impossible. And to confirm his art he composed certain fallacies which, however, he called *Dialectical Conclusions*, in one book: 'All things which are in the world, are conceded <from the time>'. None of the historians makes mention of the date when this Eland lived, nor does it much matter." The expanded incipit is taken from Bale's *Index* (cit. n. 33 below).

<sup>32</sup> J. Pitseus, *Relationum Historicarum de Rebus Anglicis tomus primus* (Paris, 1619): 837: "Elandus Dialecticus Anglus, alumnus Oxoniensis Academiae. Vir qui in suis ita sibi complacuit argutiis, ut omne aliud studium Logicis contemplationibus postposuerit. Nec aliud, quod sciam, scripsit, praeter *Conclusiones Dialecticas, Librum unum*. Omnia quae sunt in mundo. Hunc librum aliquando Londini ferunt typis mandatum. Sed quando hic auctor vixerit, nescio..."

<sup>33</sup> *Index Britanniae scriptorum quos ex variis bibliothecis non parvo labore collegit Ioannes Baleus, cum aliis: John Bale's Index of British and other writers*, ed. R.L. Poole and M. Bateson, with an introduction by C. Brett and J.P. Carley (Cambridge, 1990), 69.

<sup>34</sup> P.W.M. Blayney, *The Stationers' Company and the Printers of London, 1501–1557*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 2013): 619–20.

<sup>35</sup> "Conclusiones": Bale, *Index*: 127. "Conclusiones sophisticae": *Catalogus*: vol. 1 p. 497 (VI 84). The bilious entry in the *Catalogus* is once again given a more positive spin by Pits (*Relationum*: 527), but Tanner does not list the *Conclusiones sophisticae* in his entry on Heytesbury (*Bibliotheca*: 400–01). It is only the incipit provided by Bale ("Tu es asinus, probatio istius") that allows us to identify the work as the *Sophismata asinina* edited by F. Pironet (Paris, 1994).

bibliographical context under the guise of (*Sophistical*) *Conclusions*, it is possible that Eland's *Dialectical Conclusions* and his *Sophisms* were one and the same work.

Whereas all three bibliographers disclaim knowledge of Eland's dates, the entry in the subwarden's book from Merton College, seen by Tanner and mentioning Eland's *Sophismata*, is dated 1367–68 (the 41st year of the reign of Edward III). The book has been damaged by damp and mould, but fortunately it is still possible to make out most of the relevant entry: "In tribus quaternis sophismatum hampton' et e [*the rest of this line is missing*] dolling' xl d." (in respect of three quires of the sophisms of Hampton and E [...] Dolling, 40 pence).<sup>36</sup> The first letter of the name after Hampton is unambiguously an E, and Tanner's transcriptions are (according to Richard Sharpe in personal correspondence) generally reliable, so we may reasonably take this as confirmation of Tanner's entry. Notice, though, that what he described as "three *books in quarto* containing the *Sophismata* of Hampton and Eland" was actually much more modest. Small wonder if what Richard de Bury famously called "the quires of yesterday's sophisms" have not survived to the present day.<sup>37</sup>

Emden (*op.cit.*, vol. 3, p. xxii) suggests identifying this Elandus Dialecticus with Peter Whyte of Eland, mentioned above as being at Oriel College in the early 1370s.<sup>38</sup> But we must take seriously the possibility that Elandus Dialecticus is also the author of the three

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<sup>36</sup> Our thanks are due to Julian Reid, the Merton College archivist, for locating and supplying an image of the entry in the subwarden's account (ref. MCR 3972). Incomplete as it is, the extant text does not confirm Tanner's description of Thomas Dollyng as being a fellow of Merton at this stage. Emden (*Biographical Register*, vol. 1, 584) has him as a scholar in 1364 and a fellow from 1371 to 1401. He is also attested as a scholar of the founder's kin in the Merton subwarden's account for 1366–67, which records payments made on his behalf to have Heytesbury's sophisms transcribed onto parchment: R.M. Thomson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval Manuscripts of Merton College, Oxford* (Cambridge, 2009): 273.

<sup>37</sup> N.W. Gilbert, "Richard de Bury and the 'Quires of Yesterday's Sophisms'", in E.P. Mahoney (ed.) *Philosophy and Humanism: Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller* (Leiden, 1976): 229–57, esp. 234. There is no trace of the sophisms of Hampton or Eland in Thomson, *Descriptive Catalogue* or in the medieval booklists in Thomson, *The University and College Libraries of Oxford*, 2 vols (London, 2015).

<sup>38</sup> See also R. Sharpe, *A handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Turnhout, 1997), 828.

Bruges texts ascribed to Robert Eland and datable to 1335–c1360, texts that could (like other fourteenth-century collections of logical treatises, including Strode’s) make up a *Logica* or *Dialectica*.<sup>39</sup> In that case, the fact that Peter Whyte is a weak candidate for authorship of these three texts would make him equally unlikely to have written the lost *Dialectical Conclusions* and/or the *Sophisms* that were available in Oxford in 1367. Indeed, the obvious candidate would be the mysterious Robert Eland.

Of course, all of this raises more questions than it settles. Who was Robert Eland, did he write the *Dialectical Conclusions* and/or *Sophisms*, and do the treatises edited by Spade overlap with these works or are they additional texts? Who was Hampton, and what was his baptismal name? Can his *Sophisms* be identified? These and other questions call for further research. For the time being, we conclude only that Spade’s “Robert Fland” was in fact Robert Eland, author of the three treatises from Bruges 497, critic of Roger Swyneshed’s proposed solution to the insolubles, and the last of those before Ralph Strode to defend Bradwardine’s and Heytesbury’s not dissimilar solutions to the sophistical puzzles.

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<sup>39</sup> See, e.g., Maierù, ““Le ms. Oxford, canonici misc. 219”, §1.