

**SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY**

**NEWSLETTERS**

**1977**



110 Glen Argyle Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21212

EDITOR'S NOTE

There is a typographical correction to be made in the Winter 1976-77 issue of the Newsletter, page 5, column 2, line 20. The title of Ovid's famous work should read Metamorphoses.

Responses continue to come in to the ads that S.O.S. Trustee Russell des Cognets placed in The Shakespears Newsletter, Harvard Magazine, and Saturday Review (described in our last issue). Mr. des Cognets states that the Saturday Review ad, in his opinion, accounts for the majority of responses. The communications to the Society request the free information about our Society and the Oxfordian theory which the ad offers. (We have recently added a fifth flyer to the material described in our previous issue: a list of arguments against the Stratford man's authorial credentials. Previous respondents will receive this addition in a separate mailing.

Some of the respondents to these advertisements have already become members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, and, although space forbids a listing of them, we offer these new adherents a hearty welcome.

Gordon Cyr, Editor

"SHAKESPEARE": A MISSING AUTHOR

by J. Thomas Looney

The Newsletter is pleased to present to its readers a condensed version of this article, written by the Founding Father of the Oxfordian theory of Shakespearean authorship and first published in the Newsletter of The Shakespeare Fellowship (American Branch), Vol. II, No. 2 (February 1941). The original essay was published in two parts (the second appeared in the following April issue). Mr. Looney's arguments here deal only with the negative evidence, and his presentation should have an appeal to all doubters of the Stratford myth, especially since the author's logic is impeccable and his arguments persuasive. (We reprint here only the first of the two installments.)

Although mankind has certainly to face in these days graver and more pressing problems than that of the authorship of the Shakespeare plays, this question has a claim, if only a secondary one amongst the serious interests of life, and deals with matters that are destined to endure when the special problems of today will have passed out of mind. Centuries hence, when the entire world will have changed, social-

ly, politically and religiously, the works will be read with wonder, and the personality behind them command the admiration and even the affections of readers.

Truly great dramatic literature can only come from ... writers who are accustomed to lock closely into their own souls and make free use of their secret

experiences; and it may be doubted whether a single line of living literature ever came from pure imagination or more dramatic possibilities...

As, then, the Shakespeare plays hold first place in the world's dramatic literature, an acquaintance with the personality behind it — a prime factor in its right understanding — must be a matter of some concern to those who regard these great creations of the human spirit seriously. Works so rich in thought and knowledge, and so varied in passion, could only come from an intense and many-sided genius; and all the elaborate developments of Stratford-on-Avon are a sufficient answer to the contention that the person of the writer matters nothing...

The consciousness that there was a distinctive personal element running through the dramas, one quite out of harmony with the records and traditions of William Shakespeare of Stratford, was one of the principal results of the discriminating admiration with which, in the nineteenth century, the works came to be studied. With penetrating sagacity Emerson remarked "I cannot marry (him) to his verse." ...

However decisive such a sense of discord may be to the person who feels it instinctively, it does not supply the kind of material that can be easily pressed into service as evidence in an argument. On the other hand, experience has proved that scholars, equally equipped, can wrangle endlessly respecting the classical knowledge shown in the plays; whilst lawyers and pseudo-lawyers argue inconclusively respecting their legal contents. Something more palpable and measurable is needed to settle the issues raised by these psychological, classical and legal difficulties; and it is to evidence of this concrete practical nature, such as can be weighed without special scholastic preparation, that I shall try to confine myself.

At the outset I shall state ... what it is the special object of this essay to prove,

namely: that the William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon, who died in that town in 1616, cannot have written the poems and plays attributed to him, but was used as a cover for some great poet-dramatist who did not wish his own name to appear on the published works; and that, therefore, the author of the plays is missing.

It is generally known that there are many converging lines of evidence pointing in this direction. To rest a case, however, on the cumulative effect of separate and varied lines of proof demands a weighing of complex probabilities, and becomes, to some extent, a matter for the experts. We shall, therefore, not attempt such a task of general survey and coordination, but shall confine ourselves within very restricted limits, and shall find, I believe, a case as cogent as it is simple.

We shall, moreover, discard altogether that vast mass of Shakespeare lore which passes current as authenticated fact, but which is in reality mere inference based upon the assumption that William... of Stratford wrote the plays; and we shall narrow the argument down to the bedrock of facts, taking as a general basis the aristocratic connections of the original publications.

The name Shakespeare made its first appearance in English literature as that, not of a dramatist but of a poet, when Venus and Adonis was published in the year 1593. The titlepage gave no author's name — in itself a significant beginning — but the dedication — to Henry Wriothesley, the 3rd Earl of Southampton, was signed: "William Shakespeare." The terms of this prefatory letter prove the poet to have been already on an intimate footing with the nobleman; and the English both of the dedication and the text of the poem reveals a natural mastery of the cultured speech peculiar to the highest social circles. This, of course, clearly establishes the writer's

free association with the aristocracy some years prior to 1593.

Not till 1598 did the name "Shakespeare" become known as that of a dramatist, when it was attached to an edition of Love's Labour's Lost. Here, again, aristocratic connections are stressed. The work was published "as it was presented before her Highness"...and the drama itself is exclusively one of court life, full of interior portraiture and having as its basis the distinctive manners, etiquette and intercourse of people in familiar touch with royalty.

After this came a succession of plays with the same general stamp. 2 Henry IV: "As it hath been...acted by the right honourable the Lord Chamberlaine his servants." (That is, the Queen's special company of players.) The Merchant of Venice: "As it hath been...acted by the Lord Chamberlaine his servants." etc.... And so with other published plays from 1598 to 1609.

The year 1609 saw the publication of the ...Sonnet; and, whatever perplexing problems respecting this work may have divided scholars, upon one point all are agreed: namely, that many of the poems are addressed to a young nobleman, with whom the poet is here seen on terms of close intimacy and strong personal affection.

In the same year an unauthorized edition of Troilus and Cressida appeared, with a bold assertion that the "grand possessors" of the manuscript had been defied in the publication of the work. Who these "grand possessors" may have been we cannot tell. The terms, however, clearly point to aristocrats.

In 1623 the authentic publication of the Shakespeare plays culminated and closed with the issue of the famous First Folio.

This work is dedicated to the two brothers William and Philip Herbert, the Earls respectively of Pembroke and Montgomery,

who are there stated to have followed "the author living with much favour"; and in the introductory poem contributed by Ben Jonson special emphasis is laid upon the personal interest both of Queen Elizabeth and King James I.

From first to last, then, links of a perfectly unique kind connect these plays and the person of their author with royalty and the aristocracy; and so surely are such intimacies implied, that it is usual to speak of them as established facts... For no less than thirty years (1593 - 1623) the published works therefore declare him to have been acquainted with or honourably remembered by the greatest people in the land; and, if we take into account the necessary antecedents of the 1593 debut, the period of aristocratic connection must be considerably extended beyond the thirty years.

We must now see how these facts bear upon the person hitherto credited with the authorship.

When Venus and Adonis was published William Shakespeare of Stratford was a young man of twenty-nine. To have worked himself by that age into such a society, and to have acquired the literary and social culture shown by the poem and its dedication — much of which could not have been learned from books — to have produced so lengthy and elaborately finished a poem and carried through its publication, he must have had his feet firmly planted on the social ladder in his early twenties, at the latest. As, then, he lived to the age of fifty-two, and the chief business of his life would be to produce this literature and meet the social obligation which it would entail, we may say that the whole of that effective part of a man's lifetime which fixes permanently his place amongst his fellows would be passed in the open light of royal and aristocratic favor.

If, moreover, one with such commonplace beginnings as are shown by the early Stratford records, had, merely by his acting

and playwriting, won for himself access to the foremost company of actors, without a trace of youthful apprenticeship or experience in an inferior troupe, and used the position so rapidly gained to place himself immediately into intimate relationships with the people round the throne, he must have possessed, not only extraordinary intellectual powers, but wonderful initiative, enterprise, ambition, personal address and social tact. His aims must have been settled early, and his efforts to realize them direct and resolute. This was not the kind of man to allow himself to be pushed into the background, and, following a public vocation, he could not easily have been hidden. However rapid the ascent it could only have been accomplished by stages and through the active interest of suitable intermediaries.

The question before us, then, is whether these published pretensions and necessary implications of his connection with the literature can be subjected to an effective test...

The Shakespeare question, on the side from which we are now viewing it, is therefore one which is specially open to the test of historical research; and no workers have been more thorough in their investigations, or more unsparing to themselves, than those who, during many years, have hunted for particulars relating to William Shakespeare of Stratford. Additional details may yet come to light, but sufficient has already been made out to pronounce quite definitely upon the general result of all this research work.

The first fact which stands out boldly is the complete absence of even the slightest relevant link between William Shakespeare's sordid beginnings at Stratford, traceable right up to the time when he was a married man with three children, and the exalted social and cultural intimacies of his early twenties implied in the publication of the first Shakespeare poems. In those days even scholars from the universities could, as writers, only penetrate the outer fringes

of that uppermost circle by means of aristocratic patronage, graciously bestowed, and paid for by public literary compliments. Shakespeare reaches its centre without academic send-off and by a single stride, without leaving traces of an upward struggle or of assistance from any aristocrat or other likely helper. The supposed achievement, under any circumstances, is highly improbable; without record of stages and means it may be confidently regarded as impossible.

What is true of his reaching these heights is even more emphatically true of his keeping them. The records for all the years which lie between Venus and Adonis (1593) and the latest date ever suggested for his final retirement to Stratford (1612) — the most eventful years in the history of the English drama — have been ruthlessly searched in the one supreme quest: to find out more about William Shakespeare. With what result?

We now know that he sold some malt to one Philip Rogers, lent his customer two shillings, and afterwards prosecuted him for repayment; that when he died he left only his "second best bed" ... to the woman whom he married under unsavoury compulsion; and that, through years of affluence, he neglected to pay a shepherd a debt of two pounds incurred by his wife in days of poverty...

These, and other irrelevancies relating to houses, lands, tithes and false claims respecting his coat-of-arms, have, with infinite pains, been dug up, to teach the humblest of us how unfortunate it may prove to excite the curiosity of posterity; but in no single instance during the many years of his supposed fame do we find in his private records traces of a personal friendship with an aristocrat.

This is extraordinary from every point of view; for, even in the capacity of mask for another man, marks of such contacts might be looked for, since the person snatched for one purpose might very well have

been employed on other business. This is not an unlikely explanation of the fact that after the time of his final retirement to Stratford the Earl of Rutland's secretary coupled the name of "Shakespeare" with that of Burbage in respect to a quite irrelevant cash payment ... but not even a trifle like this has, directly or indirectly, connected him with an aristocrat during all the years of his reputed immersion in literature and high class friendships. If ever he lived in touch with such people the meetings must have been jealously guarded and their traces carefully covered.

During these years he was evidently kept generally out of sight, in as yet undiscovered quarters. Brief glimpses of semi-clandestine lodgment is all that we can catch of him in London; for there, even the tax gatherers, who wanted him, went wrong by a matter of years as to where he could be found — the very years during which, on orthodox assumptions, he was living in a blaze of royal favor. On the other hand, Thomas Greene, a lawyer, resided in his Stratford house, and along with Shakspeare's brother Gilbert, seems to have attended to any important business there; so that no one, either in Stratford or elsewhere, ever received a note from his hand, and no business of his in town has left a specimen of his signature. Even his Stratford domiciliation, so much more traceable than anything found in London, is not without its strangely elusive phases.

As might have been foreseen, the lesson of the special researches directed towards him personally has been amply borne out by more recent enquiries directed from the other side: that is into the lives and correspondence of the aristocrats themselves, particularly those who, by name, were implicated in Shakespeare publications. Up to the present none of these labours has yielded the slightest fruit. Not a single document has shown any aristocrat at all interested in the person of William Shakspeare. None wrote to him, received a letter from him, or so much as

mentioned him in private correspondence. It is blank negation everywhere.

The distinctive way in which "Shakespeare" has selected the third Earl of Southampton for immortality, in connection with his great poems — and also, it is believed, in the Sonnets — has naturally focussed attention upon that nobleman; and what is probably an exhaustive investigation has been made into his life and correspondence. In Mrs. Stopes biography of him the materials collected fill two very substantial volumes; but, at the close of a long task ... the biographer has to admit failure so far as her main object was concerned. She has not discovered those traces of Shakspeare that she hoped to find: which she undoubtedly would have found had Shakspeare been the writer of all the "Shakespeare" poetry dedicated and addressed to Southampton.

A similar unrelieved failure has attended such enquiries as have been made into the affairs of the brother Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery ... Indications of a warm practical interest in other men of letters, like Ben Jonson, exist; but not a trace of lifetime contact with Shakspeare has been found.

It cannot, of course, be claimed that all possible sources of information have now been exhausted; but the presumption against anything turning up to show us William Shakspeare in the presence of an aristocrat amounts to a practical certainty. One delusion that modern research has positively shattered for all time is that he enjoyed frequent and easy access to the nobility and the undisguised favour of royalty, whilst living, as a popular journalist has claimed, "as well known in London as the Globe Theatre." Such a life and such publicity are however the necessary implications of the literature.

We have therefore an irreconcilable conflict between the authorship pretensions and the findings of modern research: a proof that this man was the personal centre of a cunning scheme for deceiving peo-

ple respecting the source of these great works. We speak of deception, of course, without implication of censure; for one way of concealing authorship seems as legitimate as another. The method in this case has proved more affective than an avowed anonymity would have been; and, if the writer had decided definitely upon his own self-effacement, it is certainly preferable that the works should have been preserved in this way than lost to mankind forever. As, however, Shakespeare was not the author he must have been used as a cover for someone else; and until that man is discovered and acknowledged, the works are anonymous, and the writer of them is still missing.

#### THE SHAKESPEAREAN AUTHORSHIP SOCIETY

Many S.O.S. members have directed inquiries to us concerning their inability to get a response from the English Shakespearean Authorship Society. There has been apparently a considerable change of offices in that organization (as well as a change in both name and style of their house organ — now called The Bard), and our attempts to establish rapport last summer during our trip to England yielded the name of one officer whose address we published in our Fall 1976 Newsletter.

It seems that some members of our Society have even sent money (in the form of checks) to that address, and that evidence of receipt has appeared in the form of cancellations, but neither correspondence nor any issue of The Bard has been forthcoming.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society regrets the inconvenience its members have suffered due to this problem. The Newsletter editor is making every effort to follow through and to try to get to the bottom of the difficulty. Any progress (or lack thereof) will be reported in future issues.

C.C.C.

#### WAS "SHAK-SPEARE" A TYPO?

Our series of Rhoda Meesner's rebuttal to Dr. Louie Marder has drawn the greatest amount of comment from members to date, most of it favorable. The individualism of Oxfordians is, in our opinion, one of the Society's and the Oxfordian cause's greatest strengths, and the purpose of the Newsletter is to air a variety of approaches to the authorship problem — a variety which exists even within the unity and scientific simplicity of the Oxfordian authorship theory. So, there are bound to be disagreements with this or that argument or with its particular importance, and the Newsletter staff in publishing the views of any member implies nothing beyond a broad general agreement. In other words, we have our own opinions as well, as readers of our Fall 1976 issue can gauge by the copious footnotes we appended to the first installment of the Meesner-Marder exchange.

Due to the deadline pressure in getting out the Winter 1976-77 Newsletter (many members will remember it arrived just in time for the Vernal Equinox), we dispensed with the footnotes and decided to catch up on any further comment in this issue, so here goes!

We cannot concur with Mrs. Meesner's concession on page 4 that "the hyphen argument for the pseudonym Shake-speare is... suggestive but not very important." Indeed, we feel that Dr. Marder's answer on this point is not only weak, but inaccurate and misleading as well. He correctly states that the hyphen is not constant in the published use of the name "Shakespeare" on title pages of the plays and poems, but he neglects to inform the reader that a hyphen was then as now only used in a person's name to combine two or more proper names, each of which was capitalized. The fact that "speare" is never capitalized in the printed form of "Shakespeare" constitutes a prima facie argument for a pseudonymous connotation. Marder's citation — in support of his argument —

of the various spellings of Elizabethan surnames is monumentally beside the point, unless he can produce some examples of "Ben Jon-son" or "John-son" or "Mar-low" or "Hey-wood," etc., etc. in use at that period.

But it is when Marder states categorically that "the intermixture of all spellings, including the Shak (short a) and Shaks (long a) forms, with hyphenated and unhyphenated forms for the same works, completely disproves any theory based on it," that our breath is simply taken away!

It has long struck many anti-Stratfordians as extremely curious that Shakspeare's six paralytic signatures without exception omit the "s" after the "k," and that the published plays and poems with only one exception — to be discussed below — show "Shake" as the first syllable, whether the name is hyphenated or not. If the Stratford citizen were really the author of "Shakespeare's" works, wouldn't the form he consistently signs himself make at least some appearance in the publications?

As a matter of fact, the spelling "Shak-" does make one published appearance on a play during Shakspeare's lifetime: on the First (or "Pied Bull") Quarto of King Lear, 1608. J.T. Looney was the first to note the irregularities of publication attendant upon the four "new" Shakespearean publications of 1608-1609 after a peculiar hiatus of three years following the death of Edward de Vere ("Shakespeare" Identified, pp. 351-357). But the one aspect under discussion seems generally to have escaped notice, or at least extended comment.

The title page of Lear's First Quarto reads: "M. William Shak-speare: HIS True Chronicle Mistorie of the life and death of King Lear and his three Daughters. With the unfortunate life of Edgar, sonne and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his sullen and assumed humor of Tom of Bedlam: As it was played

vsually at the Gloabe on the Bancks-side." Under a printer's insignia is the further information that the edition has been printed for Nathaniel Butter, to be sold at his shop in Paul's Church-ysrd at the sign of the "Pide Bull," etc.

This solitary appearance of the name "Shak-speare" (which bears no resemblance to either the other published forms of the author's name or to Shakspeare's own signed form) appears to have been "corrected" by the Second Quarto title page, backdated to 1608 in an apparent effort to circumvent an order of around 1615 forbidding the publication of any of the plays of the King's Men "without their consent." This Second Quarto, actually printed in 1619 by one of the Jaggards, resets the type on all of the information quoted above, but, unlike other similarly backdated quartos of Shakspeare plays printed in that year, preserves the information intact, even unto the spelling — except for the author's name, which has been altered to "M. William Shake-speare." This suggests that in the publishing world, at least, the "Pied Bull" spelling of "Shakspeare" was regarded as an aberration.

On this interpretation, Louis Marder's fancied "intermixture" of the spellings on Shakspeare's published works disappears altogether.

#### ANY VOLUNTEERS?

The Shakespeare Oxford Society needs you. Are you willing to help in the work of the organization? Would you perhaps stand as candidate for office in the coming year?

As usual with a volunteer organization such as ours, the same few must bear the burden of work. That is why we are making this appeal for new faces to share the responsibility. Let us hear from you soon.



RHODA MESSNER ANSWERS DR. MARDER

(Part III)

In April 1963, Louis Marder, editor of The Shakespeare Newsletter, published in his journal a partial list of his answers to a challenge he had issued the previous November to anti-Stratfordians. Various doubters of the orthodox mythos answered, and Dr. Marder ultimately responded to seventeen questions put forward by G.M. Pares and Francis Carr of the Francis Bacon Society in England. Rhoda Messner, author of Absent Thee from Felicity, had corresponded with Dr. Marder, asking his permission to publish in our Newsletter his own responses along with her rebuttal. In the Fall 1976 and Winter 1976-77 issues of the Newsletter, Dr. Marder's answers and Mrs. Messner's comments for Questions #1 - 12 have been published. The series concludes in this issue with Questions #13, 16, and 17 (#14 and 15 are omitted because they apply only to the Baconian candidacy). As in Questions #1 - 8, the Newsletter editor's comments are given in footnotes. The Shakespeare Oxford Society wishes to thank Dr. Louis Marder for his consent to republish his material.

13. Q. How do you account for the fact that we have not a single line of praise written by Shakespeare's contemporaries as an obituary notice? There is no evidence that anyone thought that his death was worth commenting on.

L.H. That there is no eulogy may be accounted for by the fact that Shakespeare died suddenly — the stats of his will indicates this — and was buried before any "literary" ceremonies could be arranged. When news reached London nothing more was done for him than for any other poet except Jonson. John Taylor mentioned Shakespeare among other poets as dead in 1620. Hugh Holland's lines prefixed to F1 with their talk of tears, coffin and grave may have been composed closer to 1616 than to 1623.<sup>1</sup> As with Jonson and Bacon, a book of eulogies is

frequently organized by one minor figure. Would that Shakespeare had had such a friend!<sup>2</sup>

R.M. Even if he died suddenly and was buried in Stratford, why would that prevent eulogies being written when the news reached London that the famous and beloved writer had died (assuming that Shakespeare was that writer)? And when he left London to retire to Stratford, why were there no regrets voiced then? Mrs. Charlotte Stopes, the Shakespearean scholar and biographer of Southampton, blames this neglect of his death on his retirement, which brings us to the puzzling question of why he retired, a fact never satisfactorily answered. There is much evidence of his business energy and activity during his last years, but none of any dramatic or bookish interests. Why? People do act in inexplicable ways, I grant you, but surely someone would have some clue to his strange behavior. I can only add that which J.T. Looney has remarked: that Spenser, a lesser poet, was still writing to the bitter end, and Jonson, a lesser playwright, was writing and publishing until his death. Or, it is conjectured that he was bitter and disillusioned with the city and the life around him. Again, why? From a poor, obscure provincial he had become unbelievably successful, famous and affluent, according to the orthodox assumptions. If he indeed did have private reasons for

<sup>1</sup>"May have been..." therefore, it "was"? Besides, Holland's only significance in Jacobean letters seems to derive from this effusion. John Taylor could well speak of "Shakespeare" as dead in 1620, since the Earl of Oxford had died in 1604.

<sup>2</sup>It is curious that William Camden, the foremost chronicler of Elizabethan and Jacobean times, in describing important events of the year 1616 (in Annals), does not see fit to mention the passing of one he had previously praised as one of many "pregnant witts" (Remains of a Greater Worke Concerning Brittain, 1605).

disillusionment with London, would he not have continued his writing (if he was the poet Shakespeare) in peaceful little Stratford and have strived to make a cultural haven there?

16. Q. With regard to the Stratfordian's claim that the Dugdale sketch of the Shakespearean monument is inaccurate, we find that in 1730 Dr. Thomas, a Warwickshire man residing near Stratford, brought out a second edition of Dugdale's work which was revised, corrected and expanded. Yet we find that the representation of the original monument is from the same unaltered block which Dugdale himself used. The plate in Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire (1656) is the first illustration we have of the original monument. The next is the one that appears in Rowe's biography of Shakespeare (1709) and this engraving very closely resembles Dugdale's. Both artists portray the figure as clasping a sack or bag. Observing that Sir William Dugdale was a noted antiquary and Carter-King-at-Arms, and that his own careful sketch (from which the engraving was made) is still extant, how do you account for this?

L.M. This argument too ought to be smothered as a curiosity of criticism. There is superabundant evidence that Dugdale worked too quickly, misrepresented grossly, and accepted shoddy work from his engravers constantly. The Clopton monument and the Carew monument, both in Holy Trinity at Stratford, are hopelessly misrepresented and out of proportion. ...The only conclusion is

3Dr. Marder's citation of the Clopton-Carew monuments is not analogous, since the drawings were submitted by the families, thus the "misrepresentations" are not Dugdale's. To compare the differences in "many details and entire configuration" (M. Spielmann, letter published in The Pall Mall Gazette, Feb. 21, 1912) of the Clopton-Carew monuments

that for the engravings — to say nothing of the numerous errors pointed out by Thomas and other writers — Dugdale is in this case no reliable authority whatever!<sup>4</sup>

R.M. Dugdale may have been quite careless and unreliable in his drawing of the Shakespeare monument and bust in 1656 (although the Thomas you cite does not seem to have caught this particular "error," inasmuch as he did not revise Dugdale's representation in his own edition!) but what possessed the man to portray the famous poet-playwright as a seedy-looking individual reaching out to clutch a well-filled grain-sack, if the bust really then showed him, smug and chubby, with his arms relaxed on a smooth cushion and holding a pen poised in his right hand? Was it malice, or a perverted sense of humor, or for some good reason of his own?

17. Q. Since the Shakespeare controversy began to receive a considerable airing in the press, not one person has come forward to demonstrate that the anti-Stratfordians are wrong. The attitude of complete silence from the authorities at Stratford-on-Avon is now making people in England think that the skeptics may be right after all. Mr. Fox, the Director of the

with the truly substantial differences in the Shakespeare monument as it appears today with Dugdale's sketch is surely the language of exaggeration. The reader should go to Stratford and judge for himself.

<sup>4</sup>A Dr. Whitaker, cited by Sir George Greenwood (Is There a Shakespeare Problem? London, 1916, pp. 488-9), is one antiquarian who states that Dugdale's "scrupulous accuracy, united with stubborn integrity," has elevated his Antiquities of Warwickshire "to the rank of legal evidence." Greenwood in a footnote (loc. cit.) also quotes Anthony Wood: "What Dugdale hath done is prodigious. His memory ought to be venerated and had in everlasting remembrance."

Birthplace Trust, has refused to see interviewers from the BBC and the press. Is this, in your opinion, the conduct of a man who is confident in the claims made by his own organization?

L.M. My opinion of Mr. Fox is that he is sure of his position and knows so well that proper evidence is available that he does not trouble himself to answer. It is to teachers like myself to whom is relegated the task of enlightening the uninformed and making the known truth more widely available.

R.M. I don't blame Mr. Fox for refusing to see the interviewers from the BBC and the press. I am sure that he has confidence and is secure in his position. He would not want to get involved in the fray. It would be troublesome, undignified and unprofitable. I do detect in Mr. Fox, as well as in a great many other learned gentlemen a faint resemblance to the ostrich. (Query: When does a fox resemble an ostrich?)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>"Hide fox, and all after." Hamlet, Act IV, Scene ii, line 30.

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

A report on the Cyr's trip to England in June, 1976, including a visit to Tilbury Manor, ancestral home of Sir Horace Vere.

Sir Morace Vere's will, procured for us by Mr. Harold Patience, Secretary of the S.O.S. English Branch.

Presentation by Peter Michaels, Conservator for the Maryland Historical Society and the Capitol of the U.S., at the Shakespeare Oxford Society national conference in Baltimore September 25, 1976.

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## S.O.S. SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1977

The Second National Conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society will be held October 14 - 16 at the Ramada Inn, Rosslyn, Virginia (suburban Washington, D.C.). A separate mailing will include further details as to location, travel directions, room rates, and agenda. For those who plan to arrive earlier (or to stay beyond the Sunday adjournment), the new D.C. Metro subway line has recently opened its route to Rosslyn, which operates on weekdays and is a great convenience for tourists to the capital. Rosslyn is also only ten minutes from the National Airport.

## A POST MORTEM ON THE MESSNER-MARDER EXCHANGE

Our publication in the last three issues of Rhoda Henry Messner's rebuttal to Louis Marder's answers to anti-Stratfordian questions has revived interest among our members in the quality of argument displayed by the orthodox when facing skeptics. Dr. Marder shows himself to be one of our more courteous adversaries, in that he solicited the questions himself, made a game try at answering them, and refrained from the usual ad hominem attacks on his opponents. Dr. Marder deserves the gratitude of all anti-Stratfordians for his serious and dignified approach to an issue which ought to be, after all, one in which reasonable men can "disagree without becoming disagreeable."

Also, in fairness to Dr. Marder, we should inform our readers that there were two points which Mrs. Messner had truncated, as her reply did not depend on Marder's complete statement: Question 10 (the hyphenation of "Shakspeare") and Question 16 (the Dugdale drawing of the Stratford Shakespeare Monument). Dr. Marder documents his answers more fully in each case, but with one exception (which will form a separate article in a future Newsletter), the omissions do not materially affect the gist, nor Mrs. Messner's and our own rebuttal. (Dr. Marder's complete answers, plus the rebuttal of Mr. Francis Carr of

the Francis Bacon Society of England, appear in the Shakespearean Authorship Review #10, Autumn 1963, pp. 2 - 9.)

But with all due deference to Louis Marder's position in Shakespearean studies, and allowing that certain of the questions are loaded ones, we find that the level of debate in which he engages, aside from his greater courtesy, does not rise above that of his professional colleagues on any of the issues raised. Dr. Marder had the enormous advantage of having chosen his own ground and thus had every opportunity to make the strongest case possible. That he has not done so is presumptive evidence that the cause is a weak one. It is revealing that in his introduction in the original article (The Shakespear News-  
letter, April 1963), Dr. Marder, like many other Shakespearean scholars, cannot resist referring to his opponents as "heretics," conceding to the world that the "orthodoxy" of Stratfordianism is a revealed religion, impervious to reasoned dissent!

Oxfordians and other disbelievers in the Stratford dogma may adopt Dr. Marder's final statement in this introduction as their own. One of the purposes of his answers, he says, is to "provide the teacher with some evidence to warn others of specious arguments."

Below we propose to list some of the common logical fallacies and dubious debating techniques that Mardar seems to share with many Stratfordians, over and above those addressed by Mrs. Messner or ourselves in the footnotes. Our concern here is not to answer the points Dr. Mardar raises in his replies, since Mrs. Messner has performed a very able demolition job on these herself, but to criticize his argumentative methods and a frequent failure to observe a modicum of scholarly rigor. Nor do we intend to single out Mardar in this connection and thus give the impression that we are repaying his courtesy with ingratitude. He has, after all, only adopted Academe's standard tactics, and Oxfordians have already seen most of these used — though less civilly to be sure, and with many more factual errors to their debit — in the various screeds of Evans, Levin, and Schoenbaum.

Our presentation does not necessarily follow the order in the exchange, but rather attempts to classify the various logical lacunae by type. Since the exchange was serialized over three consecutive issues, all citations will appear with the number of the question first, followed by a letter indicating the Newsletter issue (F = Fall 1976; W = Winter 1976/77; S = Spring 1977), and finally the page number in that issue (e.g. 1F6 = Question 1, Fall 1976 Newsletter, page 6).

The non sequitur. This is a frequent lapse in many of the exchange's answers, one of which we've already pointed out (4F7). Some others: "If the civic-minded John Shakespeare [sic] had no education, it would be all the more reason to think that he would have assured one to his son (2F6)."<sup>4</sup> This might be true in our own age of compulsory universal education, but John Shakespeare, by Mardar's own admission (3F7) was illiterate, and one of the preconditions of admittance to school in those days was the learning of one's "accidence" — i.e., the ability to read and write. Dr. Mardar does not answer the implied question of how William's father could have imparted

such a skill.

"If the butcher tradition must be accepted, so must the schoolmaster [i.e., Aubrey's statement that young Shakespeare had been a 'Schoolmaster in the Country'] (5 F7)." As Sir George Greenwood truly said, "This schoolmaster story is caught at by the Stratfordians as drowning men catch at a straw." (The Shakespeare Problem Restated, London, 1908, p. 105n.) We are more interested in this type of thinking which tries to assert the mutual dependence and equal veracity (or falsity) of such and every item in a demonstrably unreliable source. A good historian is always faced with decisions in the sifting out of improbabilities within any source. In this instance, in addition to our original arguments for believing the butcher portion of Aubrey's biography (with its independent confirmation), we can only repeat our reply to Evans and Levin on this same subject (Newsletter, Summer 1975, p. 15), "...the schoolmaster story must be dismissed as improbable — especially in the face of the deadly fact that no school has come forward to boast of Stratford Will's tenure as 'country pedagogue'."

"This and similar documents showing Shakespeare's share in the Globe theatre prove that Shakespeare was a so-fully integrated member of the company that it is utterly fantastic to think that he could have been at the same time an unknown or permanently concealed front for some other author (9W3)." The dearth of evidence for Shakespeare's acting "career" belies the assertion that Shakespeare was a "fully integrated member" of the King's Men. On the contrary, this lack of evidence is not at all inconsistent with the hypothesis that Shakespeare's theatrical connections provided a perfect "cover" as front man for a concealed author.

Abuse of hyperbole. "Utterly fantastic (see above)," "analysis of this problem gives absolute and irrevocable avoidance... (10W4)," "superabundant evidence that Dugdale worked too quickly, misrepresented

grossely, and accepted shoddy work from his engravers constantly (16S9)." Noteworthy in all these examples is the degree of adjectival overkill, as if the respondent wanted to shore up a weak case with heavy words.

The ignoratio elenchi, or the fallacy of irrelevance, consists of drawing a conclusion which does not contradict the proposition the debater seeks to refute. In an attempt to deny that the author of Shakespeare's works needed the specialized knowledge so many commentators have attributed to him, Dr. Marder concludes, "If we remember that Shakespeare did not live in a vacuum, that the plays reveal evidence of acute powers of observation and understanding, then all things are possible and probable — and so, as the plays reveal (12W5)." Powers of observation and understanding are not inconsistent with learning, and in fact are more often found among the educated than otherwise. The educated Renaissance man trained his ability to observe with his wide reading in the ancient philosophers, many of whose treatises had not been translated into English. The argument here is also a form of

The vicious circle, in which a premise assumes the point at issue. Many Stratfordians boil down the proposition stated above to this syllogism: "Shakespeare did not need to be educated, because to a genius all things are possible. And the proof that all things are possible to an uneducated genius is to be found in the plays of Shakespeare."

Another example of this type of fallacy can be found in Dr. Marder's attempt to explain away the interlined bequests to "fellow actors" in Shaksper's will (11W4). The question in effect asked whether the occasional references to a "Shakespeare" (however spelled) as a "shareholder" or a "partner" in various theatrical enterprises could have referred to someone other than the Stratford man. One does not have to defend an affirmative answer to see that the negative one Marder employs rests on

very shaky ground. The first step in the argument is to cite the bequests to Heminges, Condell, and Burbage in Shaksper's will. But considerable suspicion attaches to these because they are interlined, suggesting that they could have been added any time after the drafting of the will—could even be forges. Dr. Marder tacitly concedes this weakness, but then says that the entries are "borne out ... by their reference to him, and similar bequests to him by other actors." But this last instance, referring presumably to Augustine Phillips's 1605 will (which should make Marder's reference read "another actor") does not clearly indicate that William of Stratford is meant. As for Heminges's and Condell's remarks, along with "other references to Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon in the First Folio," the First Folio's evidentiary value has been in question by the skeptics for more than a century! And one of the more questionable aspects lies in the so-called "testimony of Heminges and Condell." George Steevens, the well-known 18th Century Shakespearean commentator, proved that Ben Jonson composed the prefaces to which these two gentlemen signed their names, and the sincerity (not to mention the reliability) of Jonson's First Folio utterances is suspect on a number of points. Two types of contradictory evidence are here juxtaposed: 1) where the reference to William of Stratford is not in doubt, but its reliability is, and 2) where the evidence (or witness, such as Augustine Phillips) is reliable, but the reference to Stratford is in doubt. The disingenuous statement that the "relationship" between all these dubious propositions is "mutual and reciprocal" cannot conceal the argument's circularity.

The self-contradiction. "Moreover analysis of this problem [the hyphenated form of Shake-speare] gives absolute and irrevocable evidence that Shaksper was Shakespeare (10W4)." In almost the next breath we find "the intermixture of all spellings, including the Shak (short a) and Shake (long a) forms, with hyphenated and unhyphenated forms for the same works

[An inaccurate statement as it turns out] completely disproves any theory based on it." "Any theory" must include the one previously put forward: that "Shakespeare was Shakespeare."

The non-response. In answer to the question whether pseudonyms have ever become an open secret or a convention, readers are left hanging with the brief sentence "... this is not analagous to the Shakespeare's situation (SPS)." How is it not analagous? Why not? Details, please!

The ex cathedra pronouncement. "It is to teachers like myself to whom is relegated the task of enlightening the uninformed and making the known truth more widely available (IOSIO)." At the very least, this conveys the perhaps unintended tone of the priesthood concept surrounding the Stratfordian commentators, who generally (as we've seen above) adopt theological terms of debate in the authorship issue.

In the introduction to The Shakespeare Newsletter's original exchanges, Dr. Marder states, "I do not see how exception can be taken to the answers unless opinion be offered by the heretics instead of facts..." The same facts (or rather paucity of facts) are available to both the believer and the doubter. What is at issue is the interpretation of those facts. For this, reason not opinion is needed, and the Stratfordians have shown that they enjoy no monopoly on such a desirable commodity.

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NOTED STRATFORDIAN OBJECTS TO  
SHAKESPEARE'S "IMAGINARY LIFE "

Louis Marder, in The Shakespeare Newsletter of May 1977, is rightly critical of those responsible for the six-part "life of Shakespeare" soon to be visited on British and American television audiences. Dr. Marder, whose refreshingly untypical good will toward anti-Stratfordiana we have had

occasion to praise in the preceding articles, complains with considerable justification of the Associated TV (of London) script that "facts are changed," relationships are "invented" and "conceived," and he demurs from scriptwriter John Mortimer's statement in the Sunday Times last year: "You can write the life of Shakespeare on a post card and have room for the stamp." Marder concludes "...from what I have read of this series, the audience can only come away with a distorted view of Shakespeare's life. In his writing about the series Mortimer makes it clear that his plays are almost pure fiction rather than documentary. I hope it will be made as sufficiently clear before each segment is presented to the public."

While we have no hesitation in associating ourselves with Louis Marder's views in this instance and deplore along with him such a cavalier treatment of facts — especially when it is considered that this topsy-turvy show job will be disseminated before a large public — a part of our sympathies must go to the perpetrator of this outrage. The biographical evidence for Shakespeare of Stratford is, as Mortimer points out, pretty meagre. Although the metaphorical post card may be an exaggeration, if we are to speak of those few references that point clearly to the Stratford man, rather than of that cornucopia of two centuries' worth of constructions that currently passes for "Shakespearean scholarship," these could certainly be contained on a single side of one 8½ X 11" sheet of paper.

More to the point is the quality of these references. Stratfordians of every shape, size and gender have come to grief trying to bring the personality revealed in the plays and sonnets and this paltry Stratfordian curriculum vitae, in the words of W.H. Furness, "within planetary space of each other." In this vain attempt, many scholars have made themselves ridiculous by misreading of evidence and unwarranted inferences, which are then elevated to the rank of premisses, which form the basis for ever further unwarranted inference, and

so on, in exponential fashion. Why should not a scriptwriter for TV — charged with the job of coming up with a show that will not turn viewers off — be allowed to have a crack at it, especially after five minutes' acquaintance with such a mare's nest? It is merely one step further from the Stratfordian loose interpretation of facts to the attitude that if these facta don't square with the popular notion of what is appropriate to a writer's life, well then, a fig for the facts!

Dr. Marder mentions that one of the "concoived" relationships in the series is that of the Dark Lady, who is made into the "wife of a judge, too busy to note the liaisons with Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton." Marder compares this with William Gibson's similarly fictionalized drama, A Cry of Players, in which Anne Shakspeare is imagined as the Dark Lady, "who has an affair with Hamnet Sadler" — the latter being a real-life fellow townsman of Shaksper.

But are these fancies any more absurd than the numerous other Dark Ladies put forth, perfectly seriously, by many Stratfordian scholars, with no more evidence in their favor? Who can possibly justify the ahopworn candidacy of Mary Fitton, for whom any data supporting a connection with Shaksper of Stratford (or even a cosmetological basis for the nickname) are conspicuously lacking? Or A.L. Rowse's even more far-fetched Emilla Lanier, whose sole qualifications for the "honor" seem to lie in a monumental misreading of the adjective "brave" for "braun" (i.e., "brown")? The Associated TV series, atrocious as it no doubt will be (both in Dr. Marder's view and our own), is but a foreseeable consequence of the frustration the average person feels when he or she confronts the dismal facts of "Shakespeare's biography": the bequest of the "second-best bed," the bookless last testament, the petty maltster who sued his fellow townspeople for small sums, hoarded corn in times of famine, and moved to have the common lands enclosed.

Could this, by any stretch of the imagination, be the same man who gave us Hamlet, The Tempest, and the Sonnets? Small wonder, then, that John Mortimer (and before him, Frank Harris in The Man Shakespeare) would wish to change these facta — feeling, perhaps, that fiction in this case is more in accord with reality (at least psychological reality) than the "truth" as Stratford sees it.

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#### IN MEMORIAM

It is with great regret that we announce the death of RALPH TWEEDALE, author of Wasn't Shakespeare Someone Else?, in an automobile accident on July 13 (Detroit Free Press). Tweedale, 73, was an Oxfordian of long standing, having been one of the Shakespeare Oxford Society's many distinguished lawyer-members. In addition to a law degree from George Washington University, he held an engineering degree from Cornell. These two areas of expertise converged in his book (published by Verity Press in 1971), in which he put forward an ingenious but controversial cryptogram theory for the 1609 edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets. The Shakespeare Oxford Society extends its profound sympathy to Mr. Tweedale's family.

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#### OVERPAINTING ON THE "ASHBOURNE" PORTRAIT: A CONSERVATOR'S VIEW

Advice as to what researchers could or could not do to detect evidence of overpainting and discover details of the original painted surfaces underneath was given at the Shakespeare Oxford Society's annual meeting in Baltimore, Maryland on September 25 last year. Peter Michaels, Department of Fine Arts atoucher College, Maryland, who is also conservator for the Maryland Historical Society, The Capitol of the U.S., the Cummer Gallery



of Art, Florida, and other institutions, as well as Conservator Emerita of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, was the expert on hand — to talk about current techniques and answer questions from members.

Mr. Michaels opened his remarks with a summary of Charles Wisner Barrell's work in the 1930's — work which, incidentally led to a court suit involving a staff member of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. We were reminded of Mr. Barrell's photographs, x-rays, and infrared photography of the much-disputed "Ashbourne" portrait, now hanging in the Folger Library, which was once reputed to be an authentic representation of "Shakespeare." Barrell, as many will recall, was a photographic expert who worked for Western Electric and who was invited by the "Ashbourne" portrait's owner — at that time (1929) Eustace Conway — to study and appraise the painting. Of course, Barrell's later photographic findings are generally well-known to Oxfordians, for he established that there was indeed overpainting on certain areas of the portrait, that the forehead and ruff had been changed, that the data had been altered — the original having been scraped or gouged out of the canvas surface—and that in various parts of the original painting, there were obscured figures, one at least suggesting the alliance of the de Vere and Trentham families (Oxford's second wife was Elizabeth Trentham). By the way, Barrell had also made photographic examinations of the Hampton Court and the "Janssen" portraits with similar provocative findings.

Before proceeding with his remarks, Peter Michaels reviewed the definitions of techniques, such as x-ray photography (photo made on a photosensitive negative by transmission of x-ray radiation through an object) and infrared photography (employing longer wave lengths of the spectrum that can penetrate dark varnish and certain colors effectively).

From a conservator's viewpoint, Michaels

felt that if the most significant changes on the painting, such as the forehead and ruff, could easily be seen on x-ray, then one could proceed with other examination tools that could be used to study the original paint underneath the surface. As far as establishing the data of overpainting is concerned, the only way is to find a pigment which was not known at the time the original work was done. For example, if any of the following paints showed up on the portrait's overpainted areas, estimates of dates could be made: artificial ultramarine (not invented until 1826), cobalt blue (also 1826), cobalt blue with alumina (1802), or Prussian blue (1704), and so on. There are numerous methods to determine what the pigments are within a layer of a paint structure.

Michaela then outlined the investigative methods available today which fall into two major categories — non-destructive testing and "destructive" testing. The former includes x-ray, ultraviolet illumination, infrared photography, x-ray fluorescent spectroscopy, neutron activation, and electron microprobe. Ultraviolet rays are at the other end of the spectrum (short wave) from infrared, and like infrared are not visible to the naked eye. Ultraviolet shows which area of a painting is not part of the original paint surface because the media which bind the pigments together are not identical and do not age in the same way and therefore fluoresce differently when viewed under ultraviolet light. An experienced eye can easily see the differences. Michaels was frankly surprised that this technique had not been used by Barrell. Its only disadvantage is that it doesn't penetrate old, dark resin varnish well. But this problem, of course, does not apply to the "Ashbourne" portrait because it was newly cleaned and varnished in 1936 after purchase, and Barrell's study was made in 1937 and thereafter.

Infrared, on the other hand, cuts through varnish. Probably the most vital and sophisticated method for the Shakespeare Oxford Society's researchers would be x-ray fluorescent spectroscopy. The object to

be studied is placed in a stream of x-rays and a spectrographic plate is made from the rays emitted from the x-radiographed, excited surface. Using this method, an expert can determine through his or her knowledge of the structure of certain pigments what is on the portrait's surface. Neutron activation, on the other hand, is not applicable to our case because the painting would be radioactive for several months, and most museum directors or curators would be nervous about letting such a method be applied to an important work, even though it is not a destructive procedure. The last technique named, electron microprobe, is so complicated and availability of equipment so unlikely, that we should not seriously consider it.

The so-called "destructive" methods are not really damaging to the objects studied but are given this name because minuscule samples of the painted surface, sometimes the size of a grain of salt, are involved. These include the setting-resin/cross-section method, the laser beam microprobe, and microchemical analysis. In the first-mentioned procedure, the tiny sample of paint (from the forehead or ruff area of the "Ashbourne" portrait, for example) would be embedded in a setting of resin. When the resin becomes hard with the paint fragment deeply embedded within, the hard resin can be shaved down until a cross section is visible. The different strata of paints can easily be seen — where one bagin and another ends, where varnish was applied, where grime accumulated, and so on. This method also permits possible microscopic x-ray fluorescent spectrographic analysis.

In the laser beam microprobe (only Boston might have the needed equipment), a laser is focused through a microscope on a painted surface and the energy projected through the microscope to a particular depth. This procedure is highly specialized and may not even be available at this time. The third method of "destructive" testing is most readily available — microchemical analysis of the paint itself. A little scraping is put under an ordinary microscope,

and a skilled chemist, using acids and alkalies, i.e., wet chemical means, can determine what chemicals were actually involved in the painting.

Michaels summed up with the thought that in our case it is highly unlikely that we would run into any pigments that were not known from antiquity. Consequently, it is unlikely that we will be able to date the overpainting with any degree of accuracy unless it were done after 1911, which is, of course, not the case with the "Ashbourne" portrait. There is an orange-colored inscription in the upper left, however, and these reddish pigments might provide some information. The cross-section technique would be important in any investigation of this type.

Michael concluded with some specific recommendations for the Shakespeare Oxford Society. 1) He felt that all x-rays, infrared photos and panchromatic photos that have been made should be gotten together in the presence of the painting and with the aid of a trained conservator should be examined in good illumination side by side with the painting to see what correspondences there are. A small reproduction is not adequate for this purpose. 2) The report probably made by the Fogg Museum when that institution studied, cleaned, and restored the portrait for the Folger Library should be available and should be considered along with the other evidence. The Fogg Museum would be likely to have a copy, and certainly the Folger Library would have received one along with the newly restored painting. 3) Because new, improved x-ray film and x-ray techniques have been developed, it may be desirable to redo the x-ray and infrared photographs, particularly if the old ones have not been stored properly over the years or prove not to have sufficiently high contrast for study. 4) Once it is established that changes have been made, it would be desirable to use x-ray fluorescent spectroscopy to determine the nature of the pigments in those sections and through cross-section analysis exactly what they are. 5) Another report exists — that which took place under the auspices of the Folger Library in the 1940's — and should be studied at one time along with any

of the other photographic or written documents available, as indicated above.

After Mr. Michaels's address, members asked numerous questions which elicited additional information. It is difficult at this time to give a cost estimate of the various methods described. However, it can be said that x-ray photography is very reasonable. Probably \$25 per plate would be a good estimate. Of course, one must add the time of the technician, and of the conservator who would study the completed work. The standard techniques are generally available at several good laboratories in the Eastern United States. Michaela highly recommended the Smithsonian Conservation Technical Analytical Department as having the most sophisticated analytical equipment in the country. The new conservation department at the Winterthur Museum in Delaware has good equipment and outstanding scientists on the staff. Dr. Robert Feller at the Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh has just established his own private lab at the Institute. The National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. would be the most desirable agency for our work, but might not want to become involved in an historical controversy such as this. The Institute of Fine Arts Conservation Center (Professor Lawrence Majecki) at New York University, on the other hand, has a fine technical set-up and is interested in controversial problems. Of course, costs would be higher with this lab because of the distance involved.

Peter Michaels himself admitted he would be happy to serve in his capacity as conservator to help in the analysis of the laboratory work performed by one of the institutions cited above. He also answered an inquiry concerning a method for determination whether a portrait was cut or torn (evidence shows that the "Ashbourne" portrait was torn or cut at the bottom). Such evidence would be easy to obtain. When a canvas painting has been pulled over the original stretcher and tacks hammered in, there will be pull marks in the fibers of the canvas (scallops). An x-ray would easily show such evidence.

In a subsequent session at the Shakespeare Oxford Society's 1976 Conference, members agreed that the Society should pursue a cooperative project with the Folger Library of the sort described by Peter Michaels in the next year or two.

#### S.O.S. CHAPTERS TAKE HOLD

For many years Los Angeles, California has been one region of the U.S. where Shakespeare Oxford Society members get together regularly to share views and enjoy programs. Now there are stirrings elsewhere.

On Saturday August 20 in San Francisco, a few members of the northern California region met under the leadership of Society trustee Michael Steinbach at the instigation of officers Helsn and Gordon Cyr who were on vacation in that area. This first session was devoted to getting acquainted, considering what was feasible for a chapter to do, discussing matters that the group felt should receive further research effort and listening to a report on computer techniques for determining authorship as presented by the Cyrs.

Discussion was enhanced by the thoughtful contributions made by the highly qualified group present, which included a psychiatrist, a retired librarian from Stanford University, and two staff members from the Physics Department at the University of California, Berkeley. The Society was urged to investigate the new collocation approach to statistical analysis of authorship. Apparently, it is less time-consuming than other methods, but is remarkably effective for the study of authorship. The group was adamant in its concern that the Shakespeare Oxford Society move faster and devote much more time to research than in the past, particularly along lines that can be supported with scientific means.

On the other side of the continent, trustee E. Jimma Stein of New York City reports that Ruth Loyd Millar, Shakespeare Oxford Society

trustee and author/editor of various reissues in the Shakespearean authorship field, will be guest speaker at the Sept. 15 meeting of MENSIA INTERNATIONAL in New York City at the Williams Club on E. 39th St. Our Society's office has furnished Me. Stain with appropriate literature for distribution, and it is hoped that some prospective members may be found in the audience. There are now enough members in the New York area and adjacent New Jersey to form a working chapter.

Meanwhile, plans are going ahead for the first get-together of those members who reside in Maryland, Washington, D.C. or northern Virginia. The meeting place will be the Chevy Chase Public Library; the date and time: Saturday, Sept. 17, 10 A.M. to 12 noon. President Charlton Ogburn, noted author, will be on hand to discuss a recent controversy over the Washington Post's article concerning a local social event given by an official of the Folger Shakespeare Library at which Samuel Schoenbaum made some derogatory remarks about anti-Stretfordians. Also, Ruth Loyd Miller, fresh from her New York lecture promises to make an appearance to discuss her latest research.

And now full circle back to Los Angeles and the news that the lively southern California members had another dinner meeting on last April 19 at the U.C.L.A. Faculty Club at which the ubiquitous Ruth Miller and her husband Judge Minoe Miller met with members and Ruth gave a slide lecture on her researches in England. The Los Angeles group is inspired to action by S.O.S. Vice-President S. Colum Gilfillan.

Interested in a chapter in your area? Write the Shakespeare Oxford Society office so that the Society trustee closest to you can be alerted into action on your behalf.

#### ACTIVITIES IN ENGLAND

England seems to be bristling with activities that relate to our cause these days. For example, the eminent British politician, Enoch Powell, M.P., a long-time student of

the Oxfordian theory, not only appeared on a television broadcast (fall 1976) about the tombs of the de Vere family at Earls Colne, but gave the case for Edward de Vere a boost when he concluded his remarks by saying, "There are those who believe — and there are grounds for their belief — impressive grounds — that Edward, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, was the man behind the works of William Shakespeare. Perhaps I shouldn't have said that."

In May of this year, a play about Edward de Vere, Nothing Truer than Truth, opened at the Overground Theatre, Kingston-upon-Thames. Author Darrol Blake assembled the evidence about Edward's life to support his thesis that the Earl was the man behind the Shakespeare authorship. The opening received good publicity in London papers, including The Times.

Then our English chapter's secretary, Harold Patience, reports about his own recent appearance on BBC Television. "I managed to get myself on television recently (BBC East Norwich). I was interviewed at Castle Hedingham. The whole thing lasted only about four minutes, but was good publicity. They showed old houses in the village and asked only three questions. Then we saw the portrait of Lord Oxford at age 25 and (with appropriate comments from the interviewer) the 'Ashbourne'! (They borrowed my copies of the Looney re-issued books.) Three further questions were asked (tape-recorded) for BBC Radio, but I didn't hear this myself. Am famous locally!"

Mr. Patience also describes his entertaining of American visitors to England this year: Dr. and Mrs. Bronson Feldman of Pennsylvania (American members) and Mr. and Mrs. Leland Cooper of North Carolina, new members as of this week. It appears that Patience has taken so many people over to Castle Hedingham and environs by now that he ought to be in the tour business. After all, if Stratford can do it, Castle Hedingham can too!

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## SIR HORACE VERE'S WILL

While on the subject of our English chapter's secretary, Harold Patience also has forwarded to our office a copy of the will of Sir Horace Vere, cousin to the 17th Earl of Oxford, obtained from the will collection of Essex Testatore 1558 - 1603 now maintained by the Friends of Historic Essex. Because of delays in transcribing this document, the article about it promised in the Spring 1977 Newsletter will be postponed to a future issue.

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 SHAKESPEARE COUNTRY:  
 REAL AND IMAGINED

by

Gordon C. Cyr

Our trip to England last summer formed principally a Shakespeare odyssey — a visit to the sites frequented either by the true Shakspeare, in our view, the 17th Earl of Oxford, or by his more famous front, William of Stratford.

Mrs. Cyr and I began in London (which all agreed was Shakespeare's primary locus), where we had tea with Gwynneth Bowen and Ruth Wainwright (the two mainstays of the Shakespearean Authorship Society up through the earlier years of this decade). We hoped to re-cement relations with our parent organization and to catch up on the news of what had been happening in our respective societies since we had lost contact with each other about three years ago. (For recent news about membership in the English society, see the article immediately following.)

Two days later we were off to the "book-leea neighborhood" of Stratford (to borrow Halliwell-Phillippe's term) to visit the bogus monument and "Birthplace." In the house adjoining the site of New Place — Shakspeare's fine residence of his later years — we found many artifacts exhib-

ited which had nothing to do with "Shakespeare," and, of course, no books — the only samples of this latter "luxury" that we ran across were some of the medical journals of Dr. Hall at his house, Hall's Croft. (Dr. Hall, you will remember, treated Michael Drayton — whom he describes as an "excellent poet," but could only say of the "immortal Bard," "My father-in-law died last Thursday"!)

Aside from the rampant commercialism in Stratford (as exemplified not only in the misrepresentation of "The Birthplace," but in the vending of post cards with a photo of "The Birth Room"!), we were struck by the physical placement of the "Shakespeare" monument in Holy Trinity Church in relation to Shakspeare's grave. Commentators often describe the monument as being placed above the graves. It is only "above" in the sense of being at a higher level. The grave is removed from the wall by several feet, another grave lying to the left of Shakspeare's and adjoining the wall, and other of Shakspeare's family interred to the right. The inference we drew from all this was that the monument was an afterthought, and that the wall some distance away was the closest the monument could be placed to the remains. Commercialism was rife in this hallowed place as well, alas. However, the fine performance of Romeo and Juliet by the Royal Shakespeare Company that we saw that evening helped to dispel these initial negative impressions.

The next day we were off to Braintree to meet with English S.O.S. members. That evening we were introduced by our British chapter's secretary, Mr. Harold W. Patience, to two members of the local press, Stanley Hayes, now retired from the Braintree and Witham Times and a great friend of the Oxfordian cause, and a Mr. Edge, a young reporter for the East Anglia Times (daily), to whom Mr. Hayes had introduced the subject. An interview of Mrs. Cyr and myself took place in which our views were cited in each of the two papers the following week.

The next morning Mr. Patience was to introduce us to a new S.O.S. member, Mrs. Paget,

who had a car to take us on a tour of the Essex countryside. We were at Mr. Patience's house on what must have been the hottest day of the year, when the ebullient Mrs. Peget arrived, full of good spirits and enthusiasm for the day's agenda! We took off first for Castle Hedingham (the town that is, not the castle itself, which was closed on Friday), where we were all snapped by a newspaper photographer for the East Anglia Times (like typical Americans we were dressed for the heat, whereas our English friends were more formal). During lunch we discovered that "Mrs. Peget" was, in reality, the author Verily Anderson, one of whose many books had been made into a movie for British television. After lunch, she had arranged for us to visit Tilbury Manor, the ancestral home of Sir Horace Vere, cousin to the 17th Earl of Oxford. Tilbury Manor is now occupied by Ms. Anderson's cousin, Mrs. Weller. The two ladies' hospitality included a tour of the manor and of the library. (No, we did not find there the manuscript of Hamlet in cousin Edward's holograph!)

After dinner, Mrs. Cyr and I were invited to the home of Col. Ian Keelan, the Vice-President of the English chapter. He and his fine family live in a handsome 17th Century house in Little Dunmow — about twenty-five miles outside of Braintree.

Back to London the next day where we met Louis E.M. Alexis, a member best known to our readers for his brilliant and scholarly solution of the "dram of eale" problem in Hamlet (Newsletter, Summer, 1975). Mr. Alexis met us at our hotel (appropriately, the De Vere) and we went to dinner, escaping the blistering heat in an air-conditioned restaurant. Alexis is soon to retire from his teaching position at the Sevenoake School in Kent and will devote his time to Oxfordian research. Judging by the quality of his work on Nero which he had recently published, the Society may expect great things on its behalf from Mr. Alexis.

A whirlwind week of meetings with our Brit-

ish friends had to come to an end with our return home the next day. But it was all very stimulating, and, despite our travel-weariness, we were sorry to leave the Sceptered Isle!

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MEMBERSHIP IN  
THE SHAKESPEAREAN AUTHORSHIP SOCIETY

Dr. D.W.T. Vessey, Hon. Secretary of the Shakespearean Authorship Society, has written to our own Shakespeare Oxford Society's Secretary, English chapter, Harold Petience, concerning problems with new memberships from the U.S. Apparently American members will pay the "current equivalent to the subscription" (to The Bard) "in sterling (at present £3) plus a surcharge of 10% to cover bank charges if U.S. currency cheques are used. This worked out at approximately \$8.50."

If any S.O.S. members are among those who sent checks to England without ever receiving The Bard subscription, please communicate with John Silbered, 11 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2, ENGLAND.

Be sure to pay the difference if your check was below the amount indicated by Dr. Vessey. Also, notify Helen Cyr, Secretary-Treasurer, at our Baltimore, Maryland address so that she may send to Dr. Vessey a list of names of those who have thus far had difficulties with memberships.

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MORE ON RUTH MILLER

An interview with Edward H. Clark (son of Eve Turner Clark) in the June 29 San Francisco Examiner gives good publicity to the Oxfordian theory and to Ruth Miller's editions of Mr. Clark's mother's books. Mrs. Miller also appeared July 10 on a Louisiana television program, "Conversations," in which she discussed her Oxfordian work.

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110 Glen Argyle Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21212

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The delay in getting out this issue of the Newsletter was caused by preparations for our October national conference (see story on page 2), end-of-semester duties, a virulent flu, and negotiations for performance of new musical works in 1978. The Winter 1977/78 issue will follow shortly.

Gordon C. Cyr, Editor

## DETENTE WITH THE ORTHODOX STRATFORDIANS; POSSIBILITY OR IMPOSSIBILITY?

by Helen Cyr

Since the Newsletter will be mailed from now on to a selected list of college professors of English literature with a specialization in the writing of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the front page seems a fitting place to extend greetings, avow the Society's good will and best intentions for detente with Academe, as well as discuss the problems of working in harmony with established scholars, also the subject of a scheduled session with the same title as this article at the recent annual conference in Rosslyn, Virginia.

Of course, gloom settles over our members whenever Shakespearean scholars' lack of intellectual interest in reexamining the "facts" of Shakespeare's life and work comes up for discussion. However, that dark mood can be dispelled somewhat with a closer-than-usual look at the realities of the situation. What many of us do not recognize is that few professors presently teaching Shakespeare courses in colleges are Shakespearean scholars in the strict sense. More likely their expertise is in related subjects of the same period, e.g., Marlowe, Jonson, Greene, et al. It is possible, then, that our complaints about the "Shakespeare industry"

--the fiscal and career investments that block the academic community involved in Shakespearean studies from the kind of open-mindedness and scientific zeal so common to other disciplines -- might be more justifiably directed to the few over-committed Shakespearean specialists and to the Stratford tourist business in general. Perhaps the remainder of English literature pedagogues are more amenable to a fresh look at the authorship case than we actually give them credit for. Recent experiences of the Shakespeare Oxford Society staff with a few professors during the Rosslyn conference attest at least to the outwardly friendly attitudes of those who apparently have no "ax to grind." (Perhaps they even have doubts about A.L. Rowse and Leslie Hotson!)

Lately, the Folger Library has also provided welcome surprises. For example, the Exhibition Hall, the one that displays a number of "Shakespeare" portraits of extremely dubious pedigree -- one of which having been shown by our own late Charles Wisner Barrell to be probably an overpainting of the 17th Earl of Oxford -- now contains a small printed sign acknowledging his work. Also, in the same hall are displayed the heraldic banners



of several prominent Elizabethans, including those of the Earl of Oxford and Sir Francis Bacon.

What all this means for us is that the future efforts of the Shakespeare Oxford Society should be based on a realistic appraisal of the true nature of Stratfordianism, that we ought to engage in dialogue with those scholars who are willing to talk to us, and that we must demand high standards of scholarship from the other side as well as from ourselves. Accordingly, we should attempt to involve scholars connected with major seats of learning in some of our activities. The planned distribution of the Society's Newsletter is a worthwhile experiment along that line. Even the proposed computer-assisted study of Shakespeare's and Oxford's lexical patterns, described in an account of the conference proceedings elsewhere, will need to have an advisory panel of experts representing both sides if it is to have any significance for the academic world and the general public.

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SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY  
SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Shakespeare Oxford Society Second National Conference was held October 14-16 at the Ramada Inn in Rosslyn, Virginia—a suburb of Washington, D.C. Presiding over the conference were Gordon Cyr, editor of the Newsletter and acting president at the request last May of President Charlton Ogburn, Jr., and Helen Cyr, Secretary and Treasurer. Also attending the conference were President Ogburn, Craig Huston, Warren Hope, Dr. A. Bronson Feldman (the last three from the Philadelphia area), Dr. Michael Steinbach, Palo Alto, California; Russell de Cognets, Lexington, Kentucky; Morse Johnson, Cincinnati; Rhoda Henry Messner, Cleveland; John Kloepfer, Buffalo; Betty Taylor, District of Columbia; new members: Morris Kaplan, New York

City; and Mrs. Leland Cooper, Boone, No. Carolina. In addition, the conference was visited by husbands and wives of Dr. Feldman, Mrs. Meeener, Mrs. Cooper, and President Ogburn. Other visitors included Mr. Carl Pfuntner and a Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Ryan of the Rosslyn Advertiser, a local weekly. Unfortunately, some of those who attended the First National Conference in Baltimore last year were unable to attend this year: Judge Minoa and Ruth Miller of Jennings, Louisiana, who had reservations for a carrel at the Huntington Library in California, where they planned to do extensive research; E. Jimmie Stein, a recent Ph.D. in English literature who is currently revising for future publication his doctoral dissertation on Shakespearean connections in the New World; Walter Grotyohan of New York City; W.P. Fowler of North Hampton, New Hampshire who graced our last conference with a sonnet he had composed to Edward de Vere.

The Second National Conference began Friday evening, but was delayed in coming to order by very bad rains, which slowed down the normally precarious-at-best traffic conditions of the District. A brief progress report and agenda announcements were made by Gordon Cyr, who also read portions of a statement of greetings by Dr. O.B. Hardison, Jr., Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library (the complete statement was read Sunday morning).

Saturday morning, Helen Cyr presided over the beginning of the business meeting, which dealt mostly with the election of officers and ratification of the draft of By-laws proposed by John Kloepfer (appointed chairman of a committee for that purpose at the First National Conference). Some amendments to Mr. Kloepfer's draft were proposed and adopted: the creation of an Honorary President and an Executive Vice-President, the latter to have the management of the Society's business; the creation of local chapters to be formed in consultation with and the approval of the Board of Trustees. (The ceremonial officer

of First and Second Vice-Presidents were retained.) After approval of the By-laws were amended, Charlton Ogburn was elected Honorary President; Gordon Cyr, Executive Vice-President (also retaining the chair of the Publications Committee and continuing as Editor of the S.O.S. Newsletter); and Helen Cyr was retained as Secretary/Treasurer. First and Second Vice-Presidencies were retained by Dr. S. Colum Gillilan of Los Angeles, California and Dr. Francis G. Horne of Hempton, Virginia respectively. There were two offers of resignation: Dr. Michael Steinbach from the Research Committee and Warren Hope from the Public Relations Committee. Dr. Cyr accepted these resignations and, in his newly empowered office, appointed Dr. A. Bronson Feldman and Morse Johnson respectively as replacements. The By-law Committee was dissolved automatically with the Board's ratification of the amended draft.

At 11 A.M., Society members were treated to a report by our guest speaker, Joseph English, head of the Forensic Science Laboratory of Washington, D.C. and lecturer in law at Georgetown University. Mr. English is one of the top forensic specialists in the Baltimore-Washington area and is often used as an expert witness in court cases. He was commissioned by the Shakespeare Oxford Society in September to analyze the five most legible of the six canonical signatures of William Shakespeare and to report on these at our conference. Although restricted to half-tone reproductions of these handwriting specimens (all that is available on this side of the Atlantic) and told nothing of the authorship controversy beforehand, Mr. English's conclusions were so startling as to obligate us to delay a detailed announcement of them until a future Newsletter. Honorary President Ogburn thanked Mr. English for his report and filled him in on some of the important implications of his findings. Adjournment for luncheon followed.

At the afternoon session, Helen Cyr made

two presentations, the first of which was a "collocation study" of prose samples of the writings of Edward de Vere and of Shakespeare (several letters of the former and the dedications of Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece, plus speeches in As You Like It and Hamlet). This was primarily a demonstration of Andrew Morton's method of "word collocation" — i.e., conjunctions of two-or-more word patterns, as opposed to the more familiar (but considerably less reliable) method of studying single word usage between two authors — which he had recently applied to the works of Bacon and Marlowe, thereby eliminating these two writers as candidates for Shakespearean authorship honors. Mrs. Cyr stressed the fact that her study was for demonstration purposes only, and that with such a small sampling no significant conclusions could be drawn. But she did say that her limited examination was encouraging to Oxfordians. For example, as a "control" Mrs. Cyr used also a short dedication by Thomas Nash. A comparison of collocation patterns of the three authors showed a greater resemblance, superficially at least, between the styles of de Vere and Shakespeare than between the style of either and that of Nash. Because the process is so laborious and time-consuming, a much larger sampling from both principal authors being needed, time on a computer will be necessary in order to apply the collocation method effectively. Dr. Cyr then interjected with the good news that as a faculty member in a Maryland state university (Towson State) he could get access to a computer with no charge (unless the project were funded from outside and with the proviso that all published research results give credit to the Maryland Center for Institutional Research). Since the conference, Dr. Cyr's application has been approved, and he plans to enlist the aid of Dr. James Hill of the English Department at Towson State University to assist in the input to the computer.

The second of Mrs. Cyr's reports was en-

titled "The Status of the 'Ashbourne' Project: The Fogg Museum Report and the Latest Findings Re the 'Ashbourne' Pedigree." Readers will recall that Mr. Peter Michaels, the expert curator who was guest speaker at last year's conference and reported on the latest techniques of investigating overpainting, had mentioned a statement of C. W. Barrell's that the "Ashbourne" had gone to the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts to be cleaned and restored when the Folger Library had acquired it. Mr. Michaels had noted that no mention was made in the Miller edition of Looney's "Shakespeare" Identified--where Barrell's statement appears--of a Treatment Report the Fogg Museum must have made of the painting and of their work on it. Mr. Michaels said that this report would be of inestimable value should any new investigative work be done on this painting. When Dr. Cyr contacted Dr. O. B. Herdison, Jr. of the Folger Library to request a copy of this report, the latter could find no record of it. A voluminous triangular correspondence between Mrs. Cyr, Dr. Herdison, and the Fogg Museum could locate no such report, nor evidence that the "Ashbourne" portrait had even been to the Fogg Museum! It is a pity that Mr. Barrell didn't live to tie up this end a few other loose ends surrounding his valuable x-ray and infrared examinations of the "Ashbourne" and other "Shakespeare" portraits. Mrs. Cyr suggested that for these reasons and because of the newer techniques of overpainting analysis described by Mr. Michaels, a fresh investigation of these portraits was justified, under modern controlled conditions.

The remainder of Mrs. Cyr's report dealt with the work Gwynneth M. Bowen of the Shakespearean Authorship Society in England had been doing constructing a "conjectural pedigree" for the "Ashbourne" and "Janssen" portraits. Mrs. Cyr was restricted to synthesizing the already published views of Miss Bowen in various issues of the Shakespearean Authorship Pe-

view (#7 Spring 1962 and #17 Spring 1967) Miss Bowen's "conjectural pedigree" poses the interesting coincidence that associations of these two portraits with two large estates in England is paralleled by the early possession of these two estates by the Cockayne family, related to the Earl of Oxford through his second marriage to Elizabeth Trentham. Mrs. Cyr said that Miss Bowen's case for the association of the "Janssen" portrait with Pooley Hall was a very good one, since the reproduction of this painting made its first public appearance as an illustration in an edition of King Lear by Charles Jennens (the well-known librettist of Handel's The Messiah and other of that composer's works). Sir Aston Cockayne had sold Pooley Hall to Sir Humphrey Jennens, and Miss Bowen opined that the "Janseen" portrait may have gone along with the sale of the property. This same Cockayne also sold Ashbourne Hall to the Boothby family at about the same time (late 17th century) as the Pooley Hall transfer. However, Mrs. Cyr pointed out that the "Ashbourne" portrait cannot be traced to Ashbourne Grammar School (part of the Ashbourne property) before its sale to the Rev. C. U. Kingston--who was Second Master at that school--in 1847. According to Kingston, he had acquired the painting "in a London shop," had it appraised and restored, after which he hung it at the Ashbourne Grammar School, whence the painting derives its name. Mrs. Cyr noted that C. W. Barrell in his January 1940 Scientific American article had stated a rumor that the painting had once belonged to an old "country" family. Miss Bowen had said that the last of the Boothby family (certainly a "country" family) had died out with the 8th Baronet's passing in 1846, the year before Kingston's alleged London purchase! Unfortunately, the source for Barrell's statement cannot be traced (except possibly in James Friswell's hopelessly unreliable 1864 book), despite Mrs. Cyr's combing through all available published material on the por-

traits of "Shakespeare." Therefore, if Miss Bowen's hypothesis is correct, either Kingston was not quite truthful about his so-called London purchase, or we are presented with a puzzling coincidence: that Kingston found "in a London shop" a portrait of Shakespeare that had formerly been in the possession of the owners of the very school where he happened to work! Mrs. Cyr left the matter at hand there as an intriguing sidelight on the whole vexed question of "Shakespearean" portraiture.

After a dinner adjournment, the conference resumed with a presentation by Dr. A. Bronson Feldman on the Induction to The Taming of the Shrew, in which he amplified on his essay "Kit Sly and the Unknown Lord" in Secrets of Shakespeare (see review in Winter 1976-77 Newsletter, pp. 7-8). Dr. Feldman in his conference talk argued that various characters and place names in the Induction did indeed refer, as Stratfordians have maintained, to persons and places familiar to the Warwickshire citizen, William Shaksper. But far from arguing this as evidence of Shaksper's authorship of The Taming of the Shrew (to which, Feldman ably demonstrates, this Induction was later added), Feldman infers that the mocking references to Mary Arden as "the fat all-wife of Wincot," as he supposes the "Marian Hackett" character to be (Shaksper's mother was from Wilmechote), could never have been composed by a son, unless he were an undutiful monster of some kind.

Sunday morning brought the final report of the conference by Gordon Cyr, which concerned the possibility of "distention" with the orthodox Stratfordians (see lead article on page 1). Dr. Cyr began by reading the complete statement of O.B. Hardison, Jr., Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, in which the latter "laid out the welcome mat," so to speak, to members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, offering to meet with small groups of us in the Founders' Room at Folger-

sponsored "teas" or "coffee breaks." Dr. Hardison regretted his inability to attend our conference, but said he would welcome invitations to future chapter meetings or conferences in the area. Even better news in Dr. Hardison's statement were his announcements of the updating the portrait descriptions in the Exhibition Hall and the display of Oxford's heraldic banner described on page 1 of this issue. Dr. Hardison's statement also reiterated a point that just causes some confusion to skeptics of the Stratfordian faith: the Folger Library reading facilities are indeed open to all serious students of Shakespeare, upon a minimal showing of eligibility, and that the library has many holdings of anti-Stratfordian materials.

After some further business items were discussed and a unanimous decision to send a Resolution of Appreciation to Sol Feinstein of Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania for his recent generosity to the Society (see following two articles), Honorary President Ogburn delivered some closing remarks and the Shakespeare Oxford Society Second National Conference concluded.

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#### A SEPTEMBER "MINI-CONFERENCE" OF S.O.S. MEMBERS AT CHEVY CHASE LIBRARY

An attempt to form a chapter of S.O.S. members in the Baltimore-Washington area on September 17 turned out to be something quite different, but equally rewarding. An announcement of the meeting was sent to area members in August, to be held on the date mentioned at the Chevy Chase Public Library in southern Maryland. Meanwhile a phone conversation with Judge Minos Miller and his wife Ruth (editor of several invaluable re-issues of Oxfordian "classics" reviewed in previous issues of the Newsletter) about the October national conference revealed the fact that they would be unable to attend, but that they could attend the meeting at

Chevy Chase, on their way home to Louisiana from New York City.

On the day of the appointed "chapter" meeting, a bare handful of local members put in an appearance (somewhat like the situation in San Francisco in August — described in the Summer 1977 Newsletter): Dr. and Mrs. Cyr, President Charlton Ogburn (accompanied by his wife Vera) new member Chalmers Sweeney, new member Mary Brown and her husband, and Robert Meyer. However, this scanty showing of locals was more than made up for by the attendance of the Millers, along with that of Dr. and Mrs. A. Bronson Feldman of Philadelphia, who rode down with the Millers.

Dr. Cyr opened the meeting with an announcement of the October national conference (see preceding article). President Charlton Ogburn gave a progress report of his correspondence with various staff members of The Washington Post, following their recent article about a party given by a member of the Folger Shakespeare Library staff, Diane DeVers, at which the guest of honor was Prof. Samuel Schoenbaum (author of Shakespeare's Lives, Oxford, 1970). The article, written by Henry Mitchell of the Post, drew readers' attention to the Oxfordian theory by way of the similarity of surnames between the Earl of Oxford and the Folger hostess, only to make an ad hominem attack on doubters of the Stratford myth. Mr. Ogburn and the Newsletter editor each wrote letters of protest to the Post, neither of which was printed. Subsequently, Mr. Ogburn received a ten-page, triple-spaced letter from Mr. Mitchell, which only demonstrated once more the average layman's invincible incomprehension about the authorship issue.

Mrs. Miller then gave a report on her latest activities, the most important of which included an award of \$750 she had established through the Southern Writers Conference for the best television documentary on the Earl of Oxford as Shakespeare, and a grant by Sol Feinstone of

\$10,000 to the Shakespeare Oxford Society for the purpose of research in England on the Earl of Oxford and the Oxfordian theory of Shakespearean authorship. This generous gift, to be known as the "Sol Feinstone Research Fund," included in its specifications that the money was to be put in a savings account to draw interest, and was to be drawn upon by Ruth Loyd Miller through the Society to pay for research in England. None of the funds were to be used by Society members for travel, nor to send anyone to England, but to pay actual duplication costs of documents, manuscripts, etc. and fees for personal services in English libraries, archives, and MS. collections. This instrument was then initialed by Ruth Loyd Miller, Craig Huston, and Sol Feinstone. Mrs. Cyr then at the meeting received the check from Mrs. Miller and made arrangements for its re-transfer in accordance with Dr. Feinstone's wishes. It was also agreed at the meeting that future Newsletters would carry a "Sol Feinstone column," giving a progress report on the funded research (see following article).

Mrs. Miller also announced that in pursuing the theme of "the First Folio as a family affair" — developed as the first part of Oxfordian Vistas (the second volume of her edition of J.T. Looney's epochal work) — she had discovered that Henry de Vere, 18th Earl of Oxford, had given Ben Jonson three volumes of translations of Plato's works. As the date of publication in these gifts is 1578, it is a reasonable assumption that these were part of the 17th earl's library. Mrs. Miller said she was also working on finding evidence for a hypothesis she was tentatively developing (and inferring from several letters already found between several members of the Cecil, Vere, and Pembroke families and King James I), that the First Folio's publication may have been speeded up as a means of persuading the King to release the 18th earl from the Tower, where he was imprisoned upon the Earl of Bucking-

ham's accusation of treaason.

During the meeting, Mrs. Millar also suggested that members doing research on Oxford contact her, in order to avoid duplication of efforts, since she has copies of most of the important documents in the Public Record Office.

The meeting then adjourned a little after the noon hour.

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SOL FEINSTONE MAKES GENEROUS GIFT  
TO THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY

As announced in preceding articles in this issue, Dr. Sol Feinstone had in September bestowed upon the Shakespeare Oxford Society the magnificent sum of ten thousand dollars for research in England. Also mentioned earlier was the resolution adopted at our national conference at Rosslyn to express our appreciation collectively for this gift. Accordingly, Dr. and Mrs. Cyr arranged with Sol Feinstone to visit him at his home, along with Honorary President Charlton Ogburn and Craig Huston, a member of and legal consultant to our Society (also author of The Shakespeare Authorship Question, Dorrance, 1971) on Friday, December 2 to present Dr. Feinstone this resolution.

Sol Feinstone, despite his wealth, lives a rather Spartan existence with his wife Roae on a Pennsylvania farm close by the Delaware river where George Washington crossed at Christmas time in 1776 and subsequently defeated the Hessians. Large portions of the area have been made into a national park. To S.O.S. members, Sol Feinstone may be best known for his endowment of several libraries, including the one at St. Lawrence University, where a host of "Sol Feinstone Rooms" contain collections of volumes devoted to the Oxfordian theory. He has also created the David Library of the American Revolution, located

on his farm, which houses historical treatises, biographies, and holographic documents of important personages in the American Revolution. While enjoying the Feinstones' hospitality, we were also treated to a fine luncheon in a historic inn nearby and to a visit afterward to the Sol Feinstone Elementary School whose library is yet another of this fascinating man's humane endowments.

Near the end of our visit, we presented Sol Feinstone the Resolution of Appreciation (text below) and received from him in return several books of his authorship on topics of American history, of which he is an eminent authority. We then signed the resolution in his presence.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO  
SOL FEINSTONE

On October 15, 1977, the members of the Board of Trustees of the Shakespeare Oxford Society learned of Sol Feinstone's generous research grant to the Society, and,

Whereas, the Board here assembled in Arlington, Virginia, for its annual meeting wishes to express formally its appreciation to Sol Feinstone for his contribution to the Shakespeare Oxford Society, and,

Whereas, the Board wishes to recognize Sol Feinstone's generous support of research to be conducted in England which will aid the study of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, as the true author of the Shakespearean plays and poems, and,

Whereas, the Board wishes to salute Sol Feinstone, not only for this recent evidence of his dedication to the Earl of Oxford's cause, but also for his years of devotion to that cause,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that this

expression to Sol Feinstone of Washington's Crossing, Pennsylvania, be spread upon the minutes of this meeting and be made a permanent record of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and that a copy of this resolution be sent to Sol Feinstone with the thanks and best wishes of the Board of Trustees and the members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. (Date October 15, 1977 and Society's seal.) (Signed) Charlton Ogburn, Jr., Honorary President; Gordon C. Cyr, Executive Vice-President.

...AND WHILE WE ARE AT IT!

The Shakespeare Oxford Society acknowledges the generosity of members Rhoda Henry Mesener (who continues to forward \$3.00 gifts to the Society for each copy sold of her novel Absent These From Felicity), Dr. S. Colum Gilfillan of Los Angeles, California, and Morse Johnson of Cincinnati, Ohio.

We express our gratitude to Vice-President Gilfillan and to Trustees Messner and Johnson for their contributions to research.

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SHAKESPEARE AND COLCHESTER

by Harold W. Patience  
Secretary, English Chapter  
Shakespeare Oxford Society

Situated fifteen miles from my home town of Braintree, Essex, is Colchester—Britain's oldest recorded town—where Roman earthworks and walls still exist and where can be seen, of course, the famous Roman/Norman Castle. The town takes its name from "chester" (Roman camp on the River Colne). It was besieged by General Fairfax during the Civil War of Cromwell.

Strange coincidences link Colchester not only with Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, but with the Shakespeare works.

1. The modern by-pass is named "Cymbeline Way" after an ancient British king who ruled from Colchester—Cunobelinus, otherwise known as Cymbeline. This, of course, is the title of a Shakespeare play, considered by some to be an early work of the

great playwright.

2. In 1573 (when he had been married to Anne Cecil for two years) Lord Oxford's country seat was the manor of Wivenhoe, a village situated only four miles from Colchester at the mouth of the River Colne. Confirmation comes from the earl's introductory letter to Thomas Bedingfield with which he prefaces his 1573 publication of Bedingfield's translation of Cardanus' Comforte. The letter bears a concluding sentence: "From my new Country Muses of Wivenhoe".

3. In Dr. Bronson Feldman's excellent monograph Hamlet Himself there is a reference to Hamlet's reply when Queen Gertrude invites him to eat by her: "No, good mother, here's a metal more attractive". Dr. Feldman writes:

"The Earl of Oxford stands out among English thinkers by the glow of his cordial interest in the advances of science, in particular of the chemistry of Paracelsus. Hamlet's joke on the magnetism of Ophelia plainly alluded to a book that came out in 1581, The New Attractive, containing a short discourse of the Magnes or Lodestone...now first found out by Robert Norman, Hydrographer. De Vere's interest in the subject endured to his death. Four years before that grievous event Dr. William Gilbert of Colchester, Essex, published his classic work De Magnete, where the word 'electricity' first appeared."

4. Also, in Hamlet Himself we read the following:

"In the same month (September 1583) Oxford sold to Roger Harlackenden, a former steward, the manor and park of Earle Colne, which embraced the burial building of the Earle of Oxford. While executing this break with tradition, he served on a commission in Colchester to enroll recruits in the army".

One is instantly reminded of Act 3, Scene 2, of King Henry IV, Part 2, where Falstaff recruits soldiers in Gloucestershire. The word commission is actually used by Shakespeare:

Shallow: No. Sir John, it is my cousin Silence, in commission with me...

Falstaff: Fie! this is hot weather. Gentlemen, have you provided me here with half dozen sufficient men?

5. On the facade of Colchester's Town Hall we see a near-life-size statue of Samuel Harenett, Archbishop of York. Son of a Colchester baker, Harenett was born in the parish of St. Botolph, Colchester, and baptized on 20th June 1561.

In 1586 Harenett was appointed Master of the Free School at Colchester, but finding "the painful trade of teaching" little to his taste, he resigned the post in the fall of 1588 and returned to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in order to apply himself more closely to the study of divinity. In 1592 he was elected Junior University Proctor of Pembroke College. Five years later he received institution to the vicarage of Chigwell, Essex.

In 1602 Harenett was collated to the Archdeaconry of Essex. In 1605 he resigned his vicarage of Chigwell to become, on May 16th 1606, vicar of Hutton, Essex. In 1609 we find him vicar of Stisted, a village near Braintree, situated only three miles from



whers I writs. In 1628 he reached the apex of his career when he was elected Archbishop of York.

In 1603 Harsnett had published by order of the Privy Council a vigorous exposure of Popish designs entitled A Declaration of Egrsgious Popiah Imposturss, to withdraw the harts of her Maiestiss Subjects from their Allsgeance. Many Shakespearean scholars believe that it was from the Declaration that the playwright took the names of the spirits that Edgar mentions during his pretended madness in King Lear. In Hackney, Harsnett, and the Devils in King Lear Miss Gwynnsth Bowen quotes Professor Alexander on the dating of Lear as follows:

"King Lear in the form found in the Quarto of 1608 (the first edition of Shakespeare's play) cannot be earlier than Harsnett's Declaration (1608)".

Miss Bowen goes on to say: "This, even if true, would not of course rule out the possibility of Oxford's authorship, for he had still another year to live. But is it true? The answer to that question must depend upon the answers to certain other questions. In the first place, can we be sure that Harsnett did not borrow from King Lear; could he perhaps have read the play in manuscript? Secondly, is it possible that both writers borrowed from a common source? "It is no doubt assumed that Harsnett could not have borrowed from Shakespeare because his book is not a work of fiction. On the other hand, it is well known that from 1597 to 1604, as Chaplain to the Bishop of London, Harsnett had the job of censoring plays for the preaa, so he certainly could have seen King Lear in manuscript, if such a manuscript existed before his own book was published—which is the very point at issue".

Miss Bowen then points out that Harsnett not only had a source, "but named it; quoted from it at some length; and gave his page references. In his preface he writes: 'And that this declaration might be free from the carpe and cavill of ill-affected or discomposed spirits, I have alledged nothing for materiall, or authentically herein, but the expresse words ayther of some part of the Miracle booke, penned by the priests, and filed upon Record, where it is publique to be seen...'".

Miss Bowen concludes that "as a friend and neighbor of Lord and Lady Vaux, the chances that Lord Oxford saw the book of Miracles long before it was 'filed upon Record' are very high indeed, and he may well have seen it before April 1594, when Philip Henslowe, owner of the Rose Theater, recorded in his famous Diary two performances of a play called King Leare. Was this, as generally believed, the same play as the anonymous King Lear, published in 1605 and still extant; or was it, as Professor Alexander suggests, an early version of Shakespeare's play; or was it, perhaps, King Lear, as we know it, devils and all?"

Archbishop Harsnett bequeathed his Library to the Corporation of Colchester, "in trust for the clergy of the town and neighborhood" on condition of a suitable room being provided for the reception of his books. The library is, to this day, still housed in a separate room—at the Colchester Public Library. The Catalogue of the books is dated 1888 and, not unexpectedly, we find that the majority of volumes comprise "heavy" Latin theological works, together with nearly a score of Bibles. There are, however, several books and authors, listed as being in the collection, which Shakespeare must have studied: Sophocles, The Greek Poets, Plutarch, Polybius, Vergilius (Polydorus), Sturmius (Oxford actually visited him in Germany!), Homer, Hesiod, Cardano (Girolamo), Basle, 1599 (another coincidence). Most significant of all is the listing of Saxo Grammaticus ("Danica Historia, Libris XVI..Frankfurt, 1576") It is generally agreed that the author of Hamlet took the basics of his plot from Saxo. Perhaps Lord Oxford borrowed Harsnett's copy of Saxo and made notes in the margin. I plan to pursue this point in the future.