

From the Editor

New Discoveries and Theories

The monograph which opens this issue of *The Elizabethan Review* is almost unique in that it represents the first time in more than 70 years that significant new information about Edward de Vere has been uncovered in the archives. Contrary to what many suppose about Elizabethan era materials, there is still much that has not been indexed and archived for scholarly research, especially in England. Mrs. Pearson's pioneering work is a case in point, as is her research into local and county records in England, valuable repositories of documents which rarely have been perused by those interested in the Shakespeare Authorship Issue or the Earl of Oxford.

Her monograph has been adapted from her PhD dissertation in history at the University of Sheffield in England, and is essentially a political biography of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Mrs. Pearson's dissertation follows the Earl's lifelong financial and legal activities, both of which left an extensive paper trail in the records, and also examines the Earl's political relationships at Court. Since her biography of Oxford does not address the Shakespeare Authorship Issue, it can best be described as the biography of an Elizabethan nobleman based on contemporary documents.

Along with the enduring value of primary research is the importance of

theories, the strategic value of which is to explain the seeming contradictions of a case based on compelling circumstantial evidence, such as the Oxfordian hypothesis.

For these reasons, this issue's other signal contribution is Richard Lester's detailed hypothesis of how the Earl of Oxford may have "covered up" his authorship of the Shakespeare works. His cogent alternative to the traditional theory should prove to be an instructive contribution to the authorship debate.

We mourn the passing of one of the leading Oxfordians in the United States, Charlton Ogburn Jr., author of two books on the Oxfordian case, the latter gaining international prominence in both hardcover and paperback editions. His achievement was to popularize the authorship issue in general and the Oxfordian hypothesis in particular--*The Mysterious William Shakespeare* was used as the primary "evidence" for the Oxfordian case by three Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court in adjudicating a moot court on the issue in 1987. His lifetime interest and contributions attracted scholars who otherwise would never have heard of the Earl of Oxford.

Since our last issue, the journal has earned for itself the honor of two stars in the *Encyclopedia Britannica's* Internet Guide, and a recommendation of which we are quite proud.