

# THE Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

APRIL, 1942

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## IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Editor of the News-Letter, after consultation with the Treasurer, finds himself able to issue two numbers (April and October) during the current year; and the President and Committee are in favour of such publication. They do not feel justified, for

obvious reasons, in asking members to continue regular subscriptions during the war period, but would be grateful for any voluntary subscriptions or donations in aid of the proposed publications. Please send direct to the Treasurer.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

The Editor regrets to have to record that our valued member, the Rev. R. Flynn, Vicar of Belcham St. Pauls, Suffolk, has undergone a serious operation, and has been finding recovery a slow business. Members will join in extending to him, and to Mrs. Flynn, their sympathy and good wishes.

Members will find in this issue a short report from Admiral Holland upon his researches into the topical allusions contained in the Shakespearean plays. He adds, in a covering letter: "I have many times thought that I had come to the end of my researches. Well, I really think I have at last, for I have tapped every possible source of information that I can think of."

Mr J. J. Dwyer writes that the film, "Pimpernel Smith," as he saw it, contained no more Oxford propaganda than could be put on a postage stamp. When the Editor saw the film last summer, at Bridgewater, the Oxford propaganda therein could not have been put easily on a post-card, and was, moreover, impressively put forward. Evidently the film has been cut since it was first presented, though not before many millions had seen it in the original form.

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Many members, who have regretted that the *East Anglian Magazine* was compelled, temporarily, to cease publication, will be glad to read the following



extract from a letter dated March 10, 1942, from Mr. F. L. Ranson, of Lavenham:

"The publication of the *East Anglian Magazine* is held up for a time. I saw the Editor a few weeks ago, and it is the paper shortage which is the chief cause of suspension. He was extremely grateful for all the valuable contributions we made, and which became a "looked-for" feature: and he is hoping that we shall continue them."

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The Editor will be glad to receive from members letters, information, articles, or other material which may be useful for future numbers of the News-Letter. All communications should be as brief as possible. Particular attention is called to the appeal which appears upon the first page of this issue.

## How Lord Oxford Paid His Way

During the close of last year, some interesting correspondence passed between our President, Mr. Gerald Mann, Mr. J. T. Looney, and the Editor, concerning the means by which Lord Oxford defrayed his Shakespearean and other expenses. Mr. Mann's interest in the Oxfordian question had been aroused by a reading of Col. Douglas's book, "*Lord Oxford Was Shakespeare*," a subject upon which the former addressed a literary group, at the house of his son, who is a House-Master at Winchester College. Among the questions asked was the one posed above, which Mr. Mann, finding it difficult to answer adequately, passed on to Col. Douglas. Mr. Looney, in a letter to the Editor, Dec. 29, 1941, writes:—

I have replied to Mr. Mann's letter, my points being:

1. That authorship was not in those days a road to wealth or even modest profit, and we may therefore dismiss the view that the plays were published to raise funds. Such an idea might be all right for Stratfordians in a tight corner—like Sir Sidney Lee—and even Carlyle seems to have swallowed it; but the Oxfordians have no use for it.
2. That Oxford had no need of such a source of income to meet the Shaksper expenses, for these reasons:
  - (a) His income from state funds.
  - (b) His marriage to a lady of means, the daughter of a wealthy landowner.
  - (c) His connections with the third Earl of Southampton, another wealthy man, said, by tradition, to have made a gift of £1,000 to Shaksper.
  - (d) The marriage of his daughter to the wealthy Earl of Derby: himself obscurely interested in "penning plays," and unlikely to withhold financial help in carrying through the Shaksper plot.

The Editor's letter to Mr. Mann added the point that Shakespeare, attacking Chapman, his "rival poet," writes in sonnet XXI:

Let them say more that like of hearsay well;

I will not praise *that purpose not to sell.*

Oxford certainly despised marketing his writings; and in "*Love's Labours Lost*" II.I he makes the Princess of France say to Boyet:—

Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye,

Not uttered by *base sale of chapmens tongues.*

Here Chapman, a professional writer, is openly named as a "base salesman."

## Shake-Spear 1573-1593 A Short Report on Latest Research into Internal Evidence by Topical Allusions

by REAR-ADMIRAL H. H. HOLLAND, C.B.

The number of allusions in the plays are now as follows:—*Midsummer Night's Dream*, 16; *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 7; *Merchant of Venice*, 28; *Love's Labour Lost*, 22; *All's Well*, 22; *Much Ado*, 40; *Romeo and Juliet*, 31; *Richard II*, 10; *I Henry IV*, 12; *Hamlet* 50; *Winter's Tale*, 18; *Twelfth Night*, 41; *Measure for Measure*, 30; *Othello*, 23; *As You Like It*, 30; *King John*, 19; *Merry Wives*, 34. Total 433. Average per play 25.

In spite of lengthy research I have found no additional evidence in the later plays, but for the earlier plays there is an increase of 70 per cent. The allusions added are in the main, Euphuus and Montaigne (1st edn.) in *Much Ado* and *Romeo and Juliet*; Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* in *Much Ado*; *Montaigne* (2nd edn.) in *Twelfth Night* and *Measure for Measure*.

Incidents from 30 plays are referred to in plays, from *Romeo and Juliet* onwards. They are mostly the plays of Lyly (9), Greene (6), Peele (5), Marlowe (4), Kyd (2), and Munday (1).

*Histrion Mastix* has been studied and proves to be a satire on the Duttons. The most striking passage is one about comedians and Chameleons, which was how the Duttons were described when they forsook Warwick and joined Oxford; but there are many more references to them, and the verses about them to be found in Chamber's *Elizabethan Stage* II.98. I have previously suggested that this play is by Peele, and is referred to in *Hamlet* II.2.67.

Inspired by a remark by Mrs. Clark, I have also studied *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, and find not only, as she says, many references in the Ver scene to Oxford, but also many "Shakespeare" references. Ver's song, for example, is a hotch-potch of all the songs in Shakespeare, from *Two Gentlemen* to *As You Like It*; and there is a parody of Hamlet's address to the players. Both these plays will repay study.



## Mr. Charles Wisner Barrell and our American Branch

The following are some extracts from an interesting letter received from Mr. Barrell, dated Decr. 21, 1941.

"I was with the Training Film unit of the U.S. Army for about a year at Fort Monmouth, but last July was called back to my former job with the Western Electric Company, to produce films for them on the fabrication of war materials. I have been there ever since, working long hours, week-ends and holidays. . . .

In the few hours of leisure I have tried to do my bit in contributing to the News-Letter, and am glad to say that the little periodical has made good headway in the best circles over here. We have as regular members of the Fellowship such collegiate bigwigs as Harvard College, Yale, the Universities of Chicago, Pennsylvania, and Michigan, Ball State College of Indiana, Pennsylvania State College, Rollins College of Florida, Mills College for Women in California, etc.: The New York Public Library, Holyoke, Mass. Public Library, and a number of distinguished scholars, bibliophiles and jurists.

That letter of Stetchow's regarding the authenticity of the C. Ketel "Ashbourne" (Portrait of Shakespeare) is full of mis-information. . . . As soon as space and time admit, I will answer this person adequately. . . . In fact, with civilization girding for the greatest battles in all history, our success in keeping the Oxford movement alive in this country has been about all we could hope for. Once the Axis powers have shot their bolt, and the sound of the guns has died down into something like righteous normality again, we shall go forward by leaps and bounds." . . .

Members on this side of the Atlantic will congratulate Mrs. Clark, Mr. Barrell and their collaborators on such encouraging success. We shall await with interest the reply to Mr. Stetchow. (Ed.)

## Nostradamus

The Editor calls the attention of members to James Laver's recent book, "*Nostradamus, or the Future Foretold*," not only because of its great intrinsic interest, but because—to all Oxfordians who are interested in that very important subject, anagrammatic word-play and punning, as used by Elizabethan writers—the book is strongly corroborative of interpretations of Shakespearean passages made by Admiral Holland, the late Martin Haydon, Capt. B. M. Ward, the Editor and others. For instance, Nostradamus, when writing, about the middle of the sixteenth century, his prophetic doggerel quatrains, used puns, anagrams, and word-play precisely as does Oxford, who, probably, caught the trick in part from this prophet, who was a French Jew, and wrote in French. Henry IV of France, and other

Kings, are frequently hinted at by the use of the word "noir" (black), which, eliminating the N, is an anagram for "roi" (King). Oxford, writing of the three successive French Valois Kings, Francis, Charles, and Henry, makes Quince in *The Dream*, say, "Your French crowns (Kings) have no hair on them nowadays", meaning that all those three successive monarchs reigned, and died, without heirs. Such tactics are exactly those used by Nostradamus.

Nostradamus's prophecies can only be described as amazing, one of the most conclusive being the quatrain in which, with names complete, including "Varennes", he describes the flight of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette from Paris, to Varennes, and their capture and execution by the guillotine ("tranche," slice) some two and a half centuries before the event happened! Nostradamus calls Louis "Cap," which is correct—because it stands, obviously, for Louis *Capet*. Truly marvellous people these Elizabethans!

## The Vere Motto

by J. J. DWYER

The Vere motto, *Nil Vero Verius*, obviously comes from a line in the famous Eucharistic hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Adore te Devote*, of which the third and fourth lines of the second stanza run this:

Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius:  
Nil hoc verbo veritatis verbius—

meaning, "I believe whatsoever the Son of God has spoken: nothing (is or can be) truer than this word of truth."

The Hymn is to be found in the Roman Missal, and has been known all over the world since the thirteenth century.

*Editor's Note.* Mr. Dwyer will, I think, agree that here we have also the origin of the frequent use of the word "*Verbum*" (the word), in hidden Elizabethan references to Vere as Shakespeare, as in the sonnet, so well known to Oxfordians:

That every word doth almost tell my name.

## Melford Hall and Shakespeare

by PERCY ALLEN

— The destruction by fire on February 14, 1942, of the Elizabethan wing of Melford Hall, the historic mansion of Sir William Hyde-Parker, is to be deplored by all, and especially—outside the more immediate sufferers—by all Oxfordians, by reason of the close connection of the Hall, and of Long Melford, with "Shakespeare," and with the plays *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Cymbeline*, in particular.

Queen Elizabeth, during her progress into East Anglia, in 1578, was overtaken at Melford Hall by the French Ambassadors, come to negotiate the Alençon marriage, which is the principal theme of



*Twelfth Night*. The Queen, very angry, because the side-board at Melford Hall was not loaded with plate enough to dazzle sufficiently the French visitors, soundly rated Lord Sussex, the Lord Steward, for his remissness; this to the great annoyance of Oxford, who was a close friend of Sussex. Consequently, when asked by Queen Elizabeth to dance before the Ambassadors, he resolutely refused, though the request was repeated. I have no doubt whatever that the late Martin Haydon was right, when he—for the first time, I think—suggested that the following passage from *Romeo and Juliet* refers to that incident, and that the words “great chamber”—with the dancing-motive immediately following—“Ladies . . . will have a bout with you”—aims directly at Lord Oxford, who was Lord *Great Chamberlain*.

1.5.7. *First Servant*. Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-cupboard, look to the plate . . . you are *looked for*, and *called for*, and *asked for*, and *sought for* in the *great chamber*.

The strongest links between Shakespeare and Long Melford are to be found, however, in “*Cymbeline*”, where “Milford Haven”, as Admiral Holland first noted—is certainly Long Melford, the Ford by the Mill—“Mill” being pronounced “Mell”, to this day, in the local dialect as Mr. Ranson has told us. “*Cymbeline*” is certainly a spurious Shakespearian made up, in part, from clever imitations of well-known passages from the genuine plays; but, as I showed, some time ago, in an article which appeared in the *East Anglian Magazine*, the play is an allegory of the relations between Imogen (Anne Cecil) and Oxford (Posthumous Leonatus),\* and of the slandering of Anne, precisely as in *Much Ado*. Imogen’s “Milford Haven in Cambria” means “Long Melford in Cambridgeshire,” twenty miles from Cambridge, as Imogen correctly states. In 3.4 Imogen is told that she will pass “haply near the residence of Posthumous”; and Oxford, as we know, possessed in the fifteen-eighties, several residences in that district, including Castle Hedingham and Lavenham. The frequent repetition of the word “Milford”, in the play, is, no doubt, a means of emphasizing, upon playgoer and reader, the real locality in which this interesting drama is set.

\* Posthumous Leonatus = “The deceased Lord born E.O. (Edward Oxford)”

### Mr. Charles Boissevain and Mons. H. R. Lenormand

The Editor has received from our distinguished member, M. Charles Boissevain of Geneva, an interesting letter dated Jan. 26, 1941, enclosing a fragment of a ‘*Causerie*’, “*Shakespeare et le Mystère*”, recently given, at M. Boissevain’s request, by M. Lenormand, the French dramatist, who is seemingly almost converted to the Oxford faith. M. Boissevain writes, in part:—

M. Lenormand is quite a famous dramatic author, and has adapted *Arden of Feversham* for the French stage. It was time, I thought, that after the negative conclusions of Prof. Connes (1926) another voice was heard in France. Lenormand does not seem entirely converted yet to the Edward de Vere solution, but we may look forward, I think, to getting him into our camp later. Artists in France are in bad straits, Lenormand’s work, most of it, being placed on the political index, thus depriving him of the benefit of his copyrights. . . . The last paragraph of Lenormand’s letter has a certain charm, and could be thus rendered:—

“Is it not a fitting subject for a Shakespeare comedy, this trick which Destiny plays with the shadow of the greatest spirit of the Renaissance? A riddle play it is, the final unravelling of which seems now at last achieved; a play written by succeeding generations, and full of erasures, the author always in the dark, the work crowded with hidden allusions. A pastime of lights and shadows in turn hiding and unveiling, three centuries long, the countenance of Shakespeare.”

*Editor’s Note*. M. Lenormand makes one mistake which should be corrected. He states that this latest Shakespearian hypothesis (the Oxfordian solution) comes from America. America has rendered valuable assistance; but the Oxford movement was initiated in England by the publication, in 1920, of Mr. J. T. Looney’s pioneer work, “*Shakespeare Identified*”.

### Mr. Osbert Sitwell on Shakespeare

In the January, 1942, issue of *Baconiana*, Mr. Howard Bridgwater deals with what he calls “The Strange Case of Mr. Osbert Sitwell”, who, some time ago, in an article in *The Week-End Review* entitled “*A Note on Charles Dickens*”, wrote that, if England were submerged, and there survived the works of only two authors, Shakespeare and Dickens, Shakespeare ‘would be the guide to (England’s) permanent and rustic life, to that ideal country of green deep lanes . . . wild flowers, oaks and elm-trees . . . and of the old grey walls of hall and cottage . . . padded with moss and lichen’.”

Mr. Bridgwater and this Editor have often disagreed, but we shall all agree that the transcendent merit of Shakespeare lies, not in his delineation of rural England, but in his superb poetry, and command of language, and in his unrivalled powers of dramatizing every kind of human character and emotion—especially those of men and women of high degree.

If Mr. Sitwell gives us more, in this kind, about Shakespeare, the Editor must revise his opinion, expressed, some three years ago, to Miss Eleanor Farjeon, that—excepting the Sitwells—the Farjeons are the cleverest family in London.