# The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

SPRING 1956

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VENUS AND ADONIS BY GIULIO ROMANO

[illegible]

# SHAKESPEARE AND THE PALAZZO DEL TÉ

BY H. AMPHLETT

In the Ducal Palace at Mantua is a picture representing Venus pursuing Adonis but hindered by Mars, of which a photographic reproduction appears on the front page.

It was painted in the early 16th century by Giulio Romano, the only artist mentioned by name in the works of Shakespeare: hence its interest to us.

Giulio Romano (so-called from his birthplace) whose real name was Giulio Pippi de Granuzzi, was born in Rome in 1492 and studied under Raphael, whose work he closely imitated, until Raphael's death. Then, with the invitation of Fredrigo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua to become his chief painter and architect, and freed of his master's restraining influence, he developed the crude, flamboyant, but often intensely vital style to be seen in the "Venus and Adonis". His architectural works are infinitely superior to his paintings, and the Palazzo del Té which he designed for his master, is an extremely handsome building, as is his own house, self-designed and decorated, in the same city.

In *The Winter's Tale* where he is mentioned by name (Act V, Scene II) it is as a sculptor, and I think it probable that, although to my knowledge no sculptures have come down to us as by his hand, he did indeed follow his father Christoforo's calling and practise this art as well as painting and architecture. Conversely, the author of the poem *Venus and Adonis* may have seen the father's work and later confused it with that of the son. We know that Giulio designed the tomb of Baldassare Castiglione and the probability is that he carried out the work himself.

In this connection it is to be observed that in the background of the picture appear several statues portrayed in high light and shade as standing in niches under a pergola. The introduction of these shows the sculptor's interest, not, perhaps, so much as a workman in the craft, but as a connoisseur and collector, for these are *antique* statues as is attested by their mutilated condition. Several have their forearms broken—the usual break for a thrown down and once buried statue. During the Renaissance a revival of interest in classic literature was followed by an appreciation of classic sculpture, which was avidly sought for by digging in places where ancient eminent Romans had had villas and for which they had imported antiques from Greece: Cicero was one who wrote repeatedly to his friend Atticus in Athens, requesting him to buy and dispatch antiques for his new gymnasium.

Thus Giulio Romano, as a connoisseur of Greek and Roman sculpture introduced those collected by his patron, Gonzaga, into the background of his *Venus and Adonis*, where their broken condition renders them anachronistic.

When the Earl of Oxford came to Mantua, as he would have done whilst visiting Padua and Venice, Romano had been dead twenty-nine years; but the very vitality of the paintings, to the eyes of a young Englishman, whose country's art was so stiff and unemotional, would have been exhilarating, and would have caused a lasting impression coupled with the artist's name. The Hall of the Fall of the Giants, where Titanic figures wrestle with cyclopean masonry, like dozens of writhing Samsons in the throes of destroying the Temple of Dagon, gives the feeling of statues rather than painting; the whole being completely overwhelming in the comparatively small room. Elsewhere in his travels he must have seen more beauty—Correggio's gentle *Jupiter and Io* in Milan, for instance—but nowhere would he have seen more action and force.

Since Oxford had edited and written a preface for *The Courtier* of Baldassare Castiglione, the tomb and portrait-bust of this eminent humanist would have held a special and poignant interest for him and here again he would have heard the name of Romano.

In the Courtyard of the Palazzo he would have seen one of the duke's antique treasures—a Roman sarcophagus, on the side of which there appears once more, and this time, in low relief, the story of *Venus and Adonis*, depicted, not with the Romano violence, but with great beauty and tenderness. Here, with his arm round the shoulder of Venus, the dying Adonis gives her a parting kiss, whilst his friends support him, and the "loves" bathe and bind his wounded thigh. In a further panel, the huntsmen spear the "tusked boar" as it charges again at Adonis and tramples the dogs. Here we have the pictorial story as Shakespeare visualised it in all its classic beauty.

Passing to the Sala de' Cavalli Oxford would have seen the paintings by Andrea Mantegna of Gonzaga's favourite stud horses as we see them today, and so magnificent is the chiaroscuro that they appear to be in the round, standing away from the wall.

These were Barbary horses in the famous Gonzaga stables, from which the late duke chose his presents for royalty; Henry VIII received two, which must have given great pleasure to that fine horseman.

Why should Shakespeare pause in his love story of *Venus and Adonis* for the matter of eleven verses to describe Adonis's horse and the mare which it fled to join? Why did he name the horse of Richard II "Roan Barbary?" Is not the sequence of thought shown here where the first impressions were made?

In another room in the Ducal Palace were to be seen wall-paintings of the Fall of Troy, and in *Lucrece* we find the poor Roman matron looking at just such pictured scenes. It was a favourite

subject for large cartoons or tapestries and there was a famous set at Urbino that was borrowed for Gonzaga's marriage to Isabella d'Este and which may never have been returned. A comparison of the two would be interesting.

Fredrigo Gonzaga, from a pretty boy had grown into a forceful man of character and learning. As a host he must have been, in his noble and handsome surroundings, vital and stimulating, creating an imperishable memory in the mind of his young English guest, who lifted ideas as he needed them direct into his works—even his host's name.

The Adonis legend and cult belong primarily to Syria and the cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. The River Adonis, rising in Mount Libanus, flows past Byblos into the sea, bringing with it, at certain times of the year, the red sands of the upper reaches, so that it appears to be stained with blood. Adonis was a symbol of spring—later of death and resurrection, born again in the flowers that came with the return of the sun. Temples were erected to him, and during the mysteries of his rites little jars of flowers were carried by devotees or set on his altar. These are the *Venus Gardens* referred to by Shakespeare in Henry VI (1.6.6.)

> "Thy promises are like Adonis Gardens
> That one day blossomed and fruitful were the next."

It is believed that it was for a festival in his honour held in Alexandria that Bion, the Syracusan poet, wrote his *Dirge of Adonis* commencing—

> "The Death of fair Adonis I deplore!
> The lovely youth Adonis is no more.
> The cruel fates have cut his vital thread,
> And all the loves lament Adonis dead."

Part of the lamentation is spoken by Venus herself as in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis.*

Not the least curious element in the legend is the position of the boar itself. As a cause of Adonis's death, it is, in some inexplicable way, the prelude to his resurrection. It was probably regarded as Adonis incarnate—a God sacrificed to itself.

Theocritus (born about 315 B.C.) wrote a poem on the death of Adonis in which Venus summons the Boar and forces the beast to confess. The modern translation runs as follows:

> "To him spoke Aphrodite,
> 'Of wild beasts all the vilest,
> This thigh by thee wast wounded?
> Was't thou that smote my lover?'
> To her the beast made answer—
> 'I swear to thee, Cythere,
> By this and by thy lover,
> Yea, and by these my fetters
> And them that do pursue me,—
> Thy lord, thy lovely lover.
> I never will'd to wound him.
> I saw him like a statue,
> And could not hide the burning.
> Nay, for his thigh was naked.
> And mad was I to kiss it.
> And thus my tusk, it harmed him.
> Take these my tusks, O Cypris,
> And break them and chastise them,
> For wherefore should I wear them
> These passionate defences?
> If this doth not suffice thee
> Then cut my lips out also
> Why dared they try to kiss him?'
>
> The Cypris had compassion,
> She bade the loves attendant
> To loose the bonds that bound him.
> From that day her he follows
> And flies not to the wild wood
> But joins the loves and always
> He bears loves flame unflinching."

Did Oxford know this poem? It seems certain that he did, for he says of the boar—

> "If he did see his face, why then I know,
> He thought to kiss him and hath killed him so."
> (*Venus and Adonis*)

Was he not Adonis—and the Boar?

* * *

The importance of the Romano painting of *Venus and Adonis* to our thesis was first observed by Dr. John R. Mez, who brought the photographs of this and of the Roman sarcophagus to England on his last visit.

## NOTICES

THE ANNUAL DINNER will be held at the English-Commonwealth Headquarters of the English-speaking Union, 37 Charles Street, Berkeley Square, London, W.1, on Monday, 23rd April, at 6.45 for 7.30. Tickets 17/6.

The Chair will be taken by the President, Mr. Christmas Humphreys, M.A., LL.B. (CANTAB.), J.P. The toast to the Ever-Living Memory of Edward de Vere will be proposed by Captain Evelyn Broadwood, M.C., F.I.M.I.T. Mr. H. L. Bryant Peers will propose the Fellowship, and Miss Ruth Wainewright will reply. Mr. J. W. Russell will propose the Guests, and Major-General Sir H. Guy Riley, K.B.E., C.B., will reply.

Applications for tickets should be addressed to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. T. L. Adamson, 6 Upper Cavendish Avenue, London, N.3.

DEBATE POSTPONED. We regret that Dr. John R. Mez, who was to have proposed the motion that: '*George Gascoigne* was a pen-name of Edward de Vere', at 33 Portman Square, at 3 p.m. on Saturday, 14th April, is unable to come over from Switzerland owing to the illness of Mrs. Mez. The Debate is, therefore, indefinitely postponed. The meeting will, however, take place as arranged, and Miss Katharine Eggar, A.R.A.M., will read a paper on the Elizabethan Companies of Players.

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# REPORTS OF MEETINGS

## THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8th October, 1955

The Chair was taken, during the first part of the meeting, by Mr. T. L. Adamson.

After the reading of the Minutes and the usual reports, the Chairman announced with regret the resignation of the President, Rear-Admiral H. H. Holland, paying high tribute to his long and devoted service to the Fellowship, though in recent years he had been unable to attend its meetings, and to his excellent books. He proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Admiral Holland, which was cordially endorsed by the members, and then went on to say that he had great pleasure in proposing, as the Admiral's successor, Mr. Christmas Humphreys, whose nomination had been suggested by many people. Mr. Humphreys was unanimously elected, and Mr. Adamson asked him to take the Chair.

With the exception of Mrs. Robins, who did not wish to stand again, the remaining vice-presidents were unanimously re-elected, with the addition of Miss H. Amphlett, who was proposed by Miss Eggar and seconded by Miss Bowen.

All other officers were re-elected, and the acting Editorial Board, consisting of Mr. T. L. Adamson, Miss Amphlett, Miss Bowen and Miss Eggar, who were appointed by the Committee on Mr. Kent's resignation from the post of Hon. Editor, were elected *en bloc*.

Mr. T. L. Adamson (Hon. Treasurer) and Miss Bowen (Hon. Secretary) are ex-officio members of the new committee. The following members were re-elected: Mr. J. Shera Atkinson, Miss K. Eggar, Mr. F. L. Nichols, Mr. J. W. Russell and Miss R. Wainewright. Miss N. Loosely was proposed by Miss Bowen and unanimously elected.

The meeting closed with a stimulating talk from the new President, who said that we were not here to "push" Edward de Vere—that would exclude people who were interested but not prepared to go the whole way. It was research we should concentrate on, but we must rouse public interest in the problem of who wrote Shakespeare. He suggested publishing a four-page leaflet and thought that a new Library Catalogue should be drawn up and printed as soon as possible. These matters are receiving the attention of the Committee.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Humphreys was proposed by Mr. Adamson and carried unanimously.

# THE PRESIDENT'S CROSS-EXAMINATION

On 8th November, at the Alpine Club, Mr. Christmas Humphreys cross-examined a Panel of Oxfordians on the difficulties of their case. He was assisted by Mrs. Robins as "Junior Counsel". The panel consisted of Miss Amphlett Miss Eggar, Mrs. Le Riche, Miss Wainewright and Mr. Adamson. Mr. John Russell, was in the Chair and introduced the Panel.

The first question asked by Mr. Christmas Humphreys was "Can we find in the early poems of Edward de Vere, any evidence of Shakespeare's genius?". Miss Amphlett replied to this, saying that de Vere was a pioneer in versifying and the poems were only juvenilia. Miss Wainewright, quoting as an illustration an early poem of Keats, said that early poems of any poet need not necessarily show his later genius. Mr. Adamson instanced some of the early poems of Wordsworth which hold no hint of the charm and beauty of such later poems as "Tintern Abbey". Mrs. Robins thought that perhaps de Vere kept a kind of scrap book into which he placed poems for use later on in his plays.

The next question asked was "If Lord Oxford wrote the plays, why were they not acted by his own Company of Players but by a rival Company such as Burbage's?" Miss Eggar gave an excellent resumé of the theatres and companies of players at that time, pointing out that the majority of the plays we know were produced at the Globe by the Lord Chamberlain's Company from 1598 onwards, and that the Lord Chamberlain's Company was one of Oxford's Companies. Mr. Humphreys read a passage from Miss Amphlett's book *Who was Shakespeare* mentioning the fact that Oxford took over the Earl of Warwick's Company of actors in 1580.

Mr. Humphreys then asked "Why the pseudonym Shakespeare—Shake-spear?" It was pointed out that the man of Stratford never used a hyphen. Among the suggestions given in reply was that Gabriel Harvey used the term in his speech at Audley End when he pleaded with Lord Oxford to throw away the pen and take up the sword—"thy countenance shakes a spear".

Miss Wainewright thought this merely poetic hyperbole and that Lord Oxford might have chosen the name from its connexion with Pallas Athene whom Harvey mentioned in his address. ('Pallas striking her shield with her spear-shaft shall attend thee'.) She would symbolise for him both martial exploits and the wisdom of the Muses. Mr. Adamson thought that the term was used because of the broken spear in the Bolebec crest—one of Lord Oxford's titles being "Viscount Bolebec". He stated that Lord Oxford had had three daughters by his first wife, and in 1593 his heir was born (who became Viscount Bolebec) and therefore the title and crest were very much in his mind. Mrs. Le Riche agreed with this and mentioned her visits to the College of Arms.

The next question asked "If Lord Oxford wrote the plays, why did not someone give the secret away after his death?" Miss Eggar stated that interest in Shakespeare dwindled after Lord Oxford's death. Little was heard until 1623 when

the very expensive First Folio was brought out. Mrs. Le Riche mentioned the fact that the Lord Chamberlain's registers are missing for a three year period. Mr. Cutner spoke of the extraordinary preface to Troilus and Cressida—"From a Never-Writer to an Ever-Reader" and Mrs. Le Riche drew attention to the fact that this Preface was suppressed until 1609.

Mr. Humphreys' last question concerned the group authorship. Mr. Adamson did not believe that there was any collusion in the really great plays. *Pericles* and *Cymbeline* show definitely more than one hand and *Henry VIII* he attributed mainly to Fletcher. He dealt with the theory of the Earl of Rutland authorship which was the subject of a recent book he had reviewed in the *Literary Guide*. Mr. Evans suggested that perhaps there was co-operation on the part of Rutland in *Hamlet*. Rutland went to Denmark in 1603 and the First Quarto was published in 1603. There was considerable difference between the First Quarto and the Second which came out in 1604. He thought that Rutland, on his return to England, passed on the knowledge gained from his visit. Miss Bowen said that many people believe that the First Quarto was a piracy and very likely compiled after the Second Quarto.

Mr. Christmas Humphreys invited more people to join the Fellowship and enter themselves upon the fascinating search into this greatest of all mysteries.

## THE MAGIC CIRCLE

BY A. J. EVANS 3rd December, 1955.

Mr. Evans began his lecture by assuming that the great majority of his audience did not believe that William of Stratford wrote the Plays. He then proceeded to give three reasons for thinking that they were the product of a Group.

1. The enormously greater vocabulary used by Shakespeare than by any other author.
2. The huge number of new words invented by him.
3. The vast and varied knowledge shown in the Plays.

For these reasons he thought the plays were probably written by at least two poets, writing in collaboration, who afterwards passed them round to the aristocratic clique who added their own knowledge, ideas and phrases to them. The two poets were, in his opinion, Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford and William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby—Derby being the Master Mind—and the most notable member of the rest of the Group was Bacon.

He thought that Oxford and Derby were astonishingly similar in qualities and education, but, though Oxford was recognised as a great poet, only a few knew that Derby was. He considered, however, that Spenser's reference to *Aetion*, meaning Eagle, must certainly apply to the latter, because the crest of the House of Derby is an eagle and a child, and Lathom House was known as the Eagle's nest.

William Stanley's life, moreover, suggested that he was part-author of the Plays. He had property in North Warwickshire, in the Forest of Arden, near where Holinshed lived and died, and close to many places mentioned by Shakespeare, who certainly knew the route to London from north Warwickshire. In 1572 he went to St. John's College, Oxford, and from there to study law at the Inns of Court, and would have been more likely to use law similes at the time the plays were written than de Vere, who was there in 1567.

In 1582 Stanley started on his long travels abroad, visiting France, Spain and, it can be inferred, the Court of Navarre, with its connection with *Love's Labour's Lost*. Both Vere and Stanley knew northern Italy well, but the latter also visited the eastern Mediterranean, referred to in four of the plays. Stanley's tutor Richard Lloyd was the author of *The Nine Worthies* which without doubt was mocked at in *L.L.L.*

Mr. Evans thought that it was about 1587 that Stanley may have begun collaborating with Oxford, when he was in search of a suitable audience and critic. Oxford may have been beginning the first draft of *Hamlet* then, but, because that play and others introduce many features of his life, it does not prove that Oxford was the author of the final versions.

*Venus* and *Lucrece*, in Mr. Evans' opinion, were written by Stanley alone, because of the likelihood that they were the work of a young man, and Shakespeare calls the former poem 'the first heir of my invention'. Oxford possibly wrote many of the Sonnets, but his known verse and character suggested a melancholy and revengeful man, who could not have written the lighter and more fanciful comedies.

Mr. Evans then gave five additional reasons for believing that Derby wrote the final versions of most of the plays. These are being considered by the Study Circle, but cannot be even summarized in a brief report.

## THE BANISHED DUKE

BY GWYNNETH BOWEN 14th January, 1956

In her closely reasoned paper Miss Bowen set out to answer this question: "Who is the Banished Duke of *As You Like It?*" She pointed out that although the play is a stronghold of orthodoxy all its main characters are courtiers, and referred to Mr. Percy Allen's hypothesis that Sir Oliver Martext is a hit at Martin Marprelate, the Puritan pamphleteer who attacked bishops and players in 1588, and that William is William of Stratford, who thus can hardly be the author of the play.

Edmund Spenser wrote the stanzas on Willy in *The Tears of the Muses* during his visit to England of 1589 to 1591, when William of Stratford had not been heard of, and having dismissed the claims of Sidney, Tarlton and Lyly, Miss Bowen brought out

the similarity between Spenser's "gentle spirit" sitting in "idle cell" and the Euphues mentioned in the title of Lodge's *Rosalynd. Euphues Golden Legacie. Found after his death in his cell at Silexedra*, which was published in 1590. She connected both with the "eremite" addressed in a mock charter written when Queen Elizabeth visited Theobalds, Burghley's country house, in 1591. As this cannot be Burghley, who had *changed places* with the eremite, Miss Bowen suggested that he is none other than the Earl of Oxford, the Banished Duke himself, and the author of *As You Like It*, for in the last scene the situation is closely paralleled.

## THE ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

By Richard Southern 11 February, 1956

A small but appreciative audience was present at the Alpine Club when Mr. Richard Southern gave his well constructed lecture on the Elizabethan Theatre. I use this word in the double sense for he constructed, most graphically before the mind's eye, the building of such a theatre at the turn of the 16th century, and quoted from a commission to the carpenter-builder for its erection, from the laying of the sure foundations to the thatching with straw. To illustrate the already clear mental picture Mr. Southern showed drawings and photographs on the screen, amongst which were some explanatory interiors of the model theatre he had himself built.

In three points he differed essentially from scholars of Elizabethan theatre craft.

Firstly he believed that the recessed room, imagined by them to be used for intimate scenes, could be discountenanced altogether, as no producer would wish to obscure, say, the bedroom scene in *Othello* with its poetry and telling dramatical significance. Secondly he believed the interior of such a theatre to be far more modern, (in the 16th century sense of that word), than the hitherto generally accepted barn-cum-Tudor Tea House style. His discovery that the stage pillars were 'marbled'—painted to represent marble—seems to substantiate this contention.

Thirdly (and on this point the audience perhaps found it more difficult to re-adjust their ideas) he believed that the theatre was not eight, but sixteen-sided. This would still allow that there should be the straight line of the bressamer from post to post, but when finished in all its new plaster-work, and as seen from a distance, would give the appearance as drawn by Hollar, of a circular building—in fact, Shakespeare's 'Wooden O'.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

Mr. H. K. Kennedy-Skipton, F.S.A., a member of the Shakespeare Fellowship has been elected President of the Dublin Shakespeare Society. This is a literary and dramatic society about 40 years old which numbers among its vice-presidents such notable persons as Anew McMaster and Lord Longford who founded the famous Gate Theatre in Dublin. We wonder if this is the first time an avowed Oxfordian has been made president of such a society. We understand that Mr. Kennedy-Skipton has made several converts both in Dublin and the Society. He tells us the Society would welcome the visit of any members of the Shakespeare Fellowship who happened to be in Dublin if they would give a day or two's notice to him at his address: Attigoe Park, Straffan, Co. Dublin. He has sent us a calendar of the Society's activities for the coming year.

### Lecture on Lord Oxford at Leys School Cambridge

On the 28th November, 1955, Mr. T. L. Adamson presented the case for Lord Oxford as Shakespeare to the boys of the Literary and Debating Society of Leys School Cambridge, Mr. Peskett, the English master, presiding. The subsequent questions showed a most lively and intelligent interest in the subject. Twenty copies of the Fellowship's pamphlet were ordered.

### The Veres of Kensington

Mr. Ridgill Trout gave an interesting lecture on the above subject, on 6th January 1956, to the Kensington Society, at Leighton House.

J. W. Scott, B.A., the Librarian of University College took the Chair, and expressed great appreciation, which was evidently shared by the audience, Mr. Trout did not hesitate to refer to the 17th Earl of Oxford as Shakespeare, a claim which seemed to fit quite naturally into his account of the whole family, with special reference to the historical plays. It was to be regretted that Mr. Trout did not inform the Shakespeare Fellowship of this meeting, for the references to the Kensington property of the family would have been of general interest.

### Shakespeare's Italy

On the evening of February 8th, Mrs. Kathleen Le Riche gave a talk at the Irish Literary Society entitled "Unguided Journey to Shakespeare's Italy." In this she described the inspirations which urged Lord Oxford to visit Padua, Mantua, Verona, Venice and other Italian cities; the authentic topography and customs of these places reflected in the plays of Shakespeare; and some of the discoveries she and her husband made at the Archivi in each city last summer concerning the sojourn there of Lord Oxford during 1575-6.

Although the talk had taken more than a hour, another half hour was taken in answering questions on Lord Oxford's life and the authorship of Shakespeare.

## CORONATION SONNET

Oxfordians have always claimed Sonnet 125 as one of the most important single pieces of evidence in the whole structure of their case. Its significance was first pointed out by J. Thomas Looney himself, who said, with characteristic caution, in *Shakespeare Identified*:

'As Lord Great Chamberlain he [Oxford] officiated near the person of James I at his coronation, just as, doubtless, when a boy, he had witnessed his father officiating at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. Although his officiating at Elizabeth's funeral is not mentioned so explicitly as the part he took at the coronation of James, it is natural to assume that he would be there. It is just possible that this ceremony is directly referred to in sonnet 125:

"Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or ruining?
. . . . . . .
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation poor but free."

If this can be shown to have any direct connection with the functions of Lord Great Chamberlain, it will be a very valuable direct proof of our thesis. The particular sonnet from which we have quoted comes at the extreme end of the series to which it belongs; and as we are assured that the whole series was brought to a close shortly after the death of Queen Elizabeth, sonnet 125 must have been written about the time of that event. It is difficult to imagine in what impressive ceremony William Shakespere of Stratford could have participated about the same time, necessitating his bearing the canopy and laying great bases for eternity.'

Oxfordian opinion as to the precise occasion of the sonnet has since been divided between the funeral of Elizabeth, the coronation of James I and the thanksgiving procession to St. Paul's after the defeat of the Armada. *In Shakespeare's Sonnets and Edward de Vere*, Canon G. H. Rendall gives a masterly analysis of the whole sonnet with reference to the coronation, and says:

'"Obsequious" (from association with obsequies) is used often of the mourner, but here of the worshipper approaching the object of his devotion with the "poor but free oblation" that lies at his command, that of sincere and worshipful affection. The unexpected "not mixed with seconds", applied to the sacrificial cake of pure wheaten flour, suggests some literary or ritual reference more direct than commentators have yet unearthed.'

Since the publication of Canon Rendall's book in 1930, we have witnessed two coronations, the second of which was not only heard but *seen* all over the world. Never in history has so much been said and written about the coronation ceremony, but still the 'ritual reference' has not been unearthed. Could it have anything to do with the duties of the Lord Great Chamberlain at the service itself?

As all researchers know, the most exciting discoveries often seem to come by chance, and this question was certainly not in the forefront of my mind when, in re-reading E. K. Chambers' *Elizabethan Stage*, Vol. I, Chapter 2 (*The Royal Household*), I came across the following passage:

'Presumably the *magister camerarius* became the hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain, whose coronation services, which are connected with the charge of the King's bedchamber, the handing of a basin and towel at the banquet, and the preparation of the royal *oblations*, afford a sufficient indication of the duties of the court office.'

The preparation of the royal oblations! The rest was familiar enough, but this vital piece of information had somehow been passed over in all the Oxfordian books I had read. Attention had been focussed upon the functions of the Lord Great Chamberlain before and after the service, but the important part he had to play within the Abbey had not received due consideration. Vague memories of the coronation of Elizabeth II floated to the surface of my mind and fused with Shakespeare's sonnet.

I began a feverish hunt through all the coronation literature I could lay hands on, and I found that the royal oblations consisted of bread and wine, an ingot of gold of a pound's weight and—latterly, but not at the time of James I—a pall or altar cloth, and it was the duty of the Lord Great Chamberlain to pass these things to his sovereign as required. An ingot of gold of a pound weight, even if it 'knew no art', could hardly be called a *poor* offering, but the bread—the sacrificial cake 'not mixed with seconds'—here, indeed, was a ritual reference directly concerned with the coronation duties of the Lord Great Chamberlain. The question arises: Was the allusion merely a topical metaphor introduced into a sonnet addressed to the Fair Youth, or was this particular sonnet which, as Looney says, comes at the end of the series, addressed to the King himself? I have come to believe that it was, and that it constituted a *refusal* to bear the canopy. And here, I must reluctantly take sides with the Stratfordians on a point of grammar. Miss Amphlett (*Who Was Shakespeare?* p. 166) and other Oxfordians maintain that 'I bore the canopy' is a statement of fact in the past tense but, in doing so, they overlook the significant words *were* (not *was*) at the beginning of this first line of the sonnet and *or* (not *and*) at the beginning of the third line.

'Were't aught to me I bore the canopy'

means in modern English prose:

*Would it be* anything to me *if* I bore the canopy?

The word *if* is omitted, perhaps for metrical reasons, perhaps in accordance with the usage of

the time, but it is doubly implied. (See Fowler: *Modern English Usage—Subjunctives*). Let us concede to the orthodox that the phrase is a hypothetical question: we can well afford to do so. It would, at all events, have been an absurd question for William of Stratford to ask.

And now let us examine the four lines omitted from Looney's quotation:

'Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent,
For compound sweet foregoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers in their gazing spent?'

Here, Canon Rendall's commentary is most helpful. 'Thrivers', he explains, are *investors*, and "*Dwellers* on form and favour' plays on the double sense of 'those who make much of' and 'those who build on' as firm tenure and habitation, speculating upon the advancements, profits and promotion of which Court life disposed." But the allusion is perhaps more literal than Canon Rendall guessed, for, to quote Mr. Lawrence E. Tanner, Keeper of the Muniments and Library of Westminster Abbey (*History of the Coronation*, p. 44):

'In medieval times the tenure of a Manor by virtue of rendering some personal service to the King was not uncommon. Such tenures, by Grand Serjeanty as it was called, were abolished in the 17th century, but the actual service continues to be rendered in two notable instances at a Coronation. It is by virtue of holding the Manor of Scrivelsby that the head of the Dymoke family claims to be the King's Champion, and is now allowed to carry one of the two Standards in the procession within the Abbey. In the same way it is the privilege of the Lord of the Manor of Worksop to provide a glove for the Sovereign's right hand and to support the Sovereign's right arm "as occasion may require." ... Even more ancient is the claim of the Barons of the Cinque Ports to *carry the Canopy over the Sovereign at a Coronation*.'

To bear the Canopy was, then, no part of the coronation duties of the Lord Great Chamberlain. Moreover, that office, as Mr. J. Shera Atkinson observed in an article published in the *News-Letter* of September, 1952, 'though treated as descending like landed property . . . was not attached to the ownership of Castle Hedingham or any other property.' The Lord Great Chamberlain was no *dweller* on form (ceremony) and favour —an expression which exactly describes the reciprocal arrangement of Grand Serjeanty.

The Earl of Oxford did, however, claim the right to play his unique hereditary role on the day of the Coronation, and was awarded the customary fees (B. M. Ward: *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, p. 346). But there is no mention of fees for the services performed in the Abbey itself—

'No. Let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mixed with seconds, knows no art,
But *mutual render* only me for thee.'

The sonnet ends on a totally unexpected note:

'Hence, thou suborn'd Informer, a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control'

This is clearly a rhetorical *aside* aimed at a third party, not the recipient of the sonnet, but its precise meaning has eluded the commentators. It is, on the face of it, a confident, almost triumphant repudiation of a charge of *treason*, appropriate enough if the sonnet is addressed to the King, but still requiring some explanation, for the reference is obviously private and personal. Who was the suborned informer? No answer is to be found in the life of William Shakespere, but it seems that 'information' was given against the Earl of Oxford by the Earl of Lincoln in 1603. (See William Kittle: *Edward de Vere 17th Earl of Oxford and Shakespeare* p. 160 and H. Amphlett: *Who Was Shakespeare?* p. 150). The story has come down to us in a letter, dated October 10th, 1603, from Sir John Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower, to 'Lord Cycell' and the Privy Council. The gist of the matter was that, shortly before the death of Queen Elizabeth, a great nobleman of Hackney (identifiable as the Earl of Oxford) had invited the Earl of Lincoln to dinner and, in private conversation afterwards, had broached the subject of the succession, naming Lord Hastings, a great-nephew of the Earl of Lincoln, and suggesting that 'there should be meanes used to convaye him over into France, where he should fynde friends that wolde make him a partye, of the which there was a precedent in former times.'

Both Miss Amphlett and Mr. Kittle seem to accept, almost without question, what Sir John Peyton *said* the Earl of Lincoln *said* about the Earl of Oxford, but does the story ring true? Who, in the first place, had more interest in Lord Hastings' succession to the throne—the Earl of Oxford, who at the age of twelve had been nearly betrothed to one of his aunts, or the Earl of Lincoln, who was, in fact, his great-uncle by marriage? In any case, we have only to look into the record of the Earl of Lincoln to see that his word was not to be trusted.

Kittle cites as his prior historical source, a book called *Godes Peace and the Queenes, Vicissitudes of a House* 1539-1615, by Norreys Jephson O'Conor (1934,) in which Lincoln is described as almost insane, O'Conor holds no brief for Oxford but, after recounting some of Lincoln's previous escapades, he writes:

'For the remainder of the Queen's reign the Earl was quiet, but, with the accession of King James, Lord Lincoln again brought himself into notice. His claim to bear the ball and cross, and to be carver, at the King's coronation, in July 1603, was rejected for lack of evidence, which seems typical. Since the Earl had grown increasingly suspicious of plots against him, to increase his self-importance there remained only an excuse to warn the sovereign of a plot against himself. For this the Earl soon found oppor-

tunity, and, on September 21st, 1603, he sent information (apparently to the Privy Council) that, "Whylst her majestie lyved the French ambassador made meanes by dyvers to hyre my house at Chelsey'.

Lincoln then proceeded to give evidence against a certain Mr. Trudgion, adding:

'And those speeches of the Erles of Ox[ford] that yf any were sent into France (how small soever his tytle were) . . . made me feare, and thynk that thes men myght doo the kyng good servyce in bewraying their knowledg, which I thought my dyeuty to ympart, yf I had any possible meanes to enforme hys maiestie. But so it pleasyd god that, withyn few days after, afore any advertysement culd be sent, I saw hys quyet entry; and yet nevertheles went to the toure [Tower] afore her maiesties death, told Sir J. peyton thereof . . . I told Sir hew harrys thereof, and Ser gent harrys and others, besyde my letters to hys maiestie'.

But neither Sir John Peyton, nor anyone else, seems to have taken much notice of the Earl of Lincoln and, in spite of all this talebearing, the Earl of Oxford stood high in the new King's favour. He was in a position to say with contempt:

'Hence, thou suborn'd Informer, a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control'

GWYNNETH BOWEN

## THE NAMES OF THE KING AND QUEEN IN "A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM"

OBERON is the Eastern fairy prince in *Huon of Bordeaux*, and may have been taken from that romance. The name, however, is not French but Norse; *Alberich, Alberi, Aubrey*, and our own *Aelfric* are variant forms, all meaning "elf-rule". *Albericus* Vere, who held lands under Edward the Confessor, later joined William the Conqueror, married his sister Beatrix, and was the founder of the De Vere House in this country. Thenceforward, *Aubrey* was a name frequently used by the De Veres, and regarded as peculiarly their own. If we suppose Edward de Vere to be the author of the play, and discoverer of the name *Oberon*, he could hardly fail to be struck by its resemblance to the names of his illustrious ancestors. The Character as drawn, a spirit of another sort, kindly disposed toward foolish mortals is very different from the grim Elf-king of legend; some may find traits of de Vere himself therein. All I wish to point out, however, is the etymological appropriateness of the name, if the author were de Vere. Admittedly there was no "copyright" in such matters, but it may be noted that the junior poet, Greene, in his play, *James IV*, changed the name to OBORAM.

TITANIA, taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, is not a name but an epithet, meaning Titaness or Titan-born. Mythologically the Titans were a gigantic race, akin to, but enemies of the Gods.

In the *Metamorphoses* the epithet is applied:

1. Once, to Pyrrha, who repopulated the world after the deluge by throwing stones over her shoulder. A harmless pursuit.
2. Once, to Diana, when she turned Acteon into a stag, to be torn to pieces by his own hounds.
3. Twice, to Latona, not as the goddess presiding over childbirth, but on the occasion when she transformed some churlish peasants into frogs.
4. Several times, to Circe, who changed men into beasts.

Generally, therefore, the descendants of the Titans were selfish beings, possessed of great magical powers, and contemptuous rather than hostile toward man. These are not exactly the qualities we attribute to *Oberon*, nor perhaps to the dainty but mischievous *Queen Mab*. It is unnecessary here to discuss whether *Titania* in the play is a mere person of the drama, an allegory, or a portrait of Queen Elizabeth, the Countess of Oxford, or whoever it may be. I would only suggest that, in investigating such problems, one should take into account the implications of the name advisedly chosen by the Author.

H. S. SHIELD

## NEW BOOKS

### SHAKESPEARE

BY C. J. SISSONS

(Published for the British Council and the National Book League by Longmans Green and Co. 2/-).

This is an admirably planned and excellently written historical survey, in 26 pages, of the changing opinions of writers on Shakespeare from the Elizabethan age to the present day.

It begins by emphasising that his contemporary popularity was not only with the playgoer, but also with the reader of plays and poems. It disposes of the long popular notion that he was an untutored genius devoid of literary ambition or artistic purpose. In the classical 18th century there was naturally some criticism of his failure to observe the three 'Unities'. Dryden described him as an irregular genius, and was regrettably responsible for some of the distressing adaptations of his plays for the stage. Edmund Malone laid the foundations of Elizabethan scholarship by setting the plays in their true perspective in relation to the history of the stage. The main work of this century was the series of editions of the plays, with suggested emendations and explanatory comment. The 19th century saw the philosophising of Shakespeare by the Germans and Coleridge with insistence upon the moral and intellectual weight of the characters and speeches. The critics generally returned to the pursuit of scholarship and the accumulation of facts.

Professor Sissons ends his survey with a masterly summary of the wide range of books on the infinite variety of Shakespeare and his works that marks

the 20th century. He says that the main conflict criticism in this century has lain between the approach through practical sagacity, and the approach through imaginative intuition. He finds room for a fleeting mention, without approval, of the Baconian and Oxfordian theories of authorship. But J. R. Brown, the compiler of the 18 page Bibliography at the end of the book, entirely ignores the very considerable literature from many countries on the important question of authorship. Nor does he include the orthodox Dr. Cairncross's *The Problem of Hamlet* which indirectly raises that same question.

T. L. ADAMSON

### THE MAN WHO WAS SHAKESPEARE

BY CALVIN HOFFMANN

(Max Parrish. 15/-)

Readers of the Shakespeare Fellowship *News-Letter* will have been following with interest the accounts in the public press of Mr. Calvin Hoffmann's application for permission to open the tomb of Sir Thomas Walsingham in Scadbury Church in the hope of finding therein evidence for his theory that Christopher Marlowe wrote the works of Shakespeare.

Wishing to obtain first hand information as to the evidence for this revolutionary claim, the Fellowship invited Mr. Hoffmann to present his case at a Meeting of the Study Circle on 6th October, 1955. He brought the type-script of his just-about-to-be-published book, and laid the whole story of his long investigation before the company, and answered some of the enquiries and objections put forward by those present. The book itself—*The Man who was Shakespeare*—has since been added to the Fellowship Library.

The present writer having carefully considered Mr. Hoffmann's arguments acknowledges with gratitude his contributions towards the demolition of the Stratford myth, but cannot accept his claims for Marlowe.

K.E.E.

### "THE SHAKING SPEAR"

BY BRIAN FLYNN

(John Long Ltd. 9/6).

This modern detective story concerns a booksellers' clerk who fails to keep an appointment with a wealthy collector of old and rare books. A fortnight later, the bodies of the clerk and a junior colleague are found in an old disused toll-house. They had been murdered. The local police are baffled; it seems to be a motiveless crime, and clues are scarce. However, and this is where I began to feel really excited, in searching the clothes of the two victims, Sergeant Ingram finds in a torn pocket lining, a piece of paper with the following words scribbled on it—"The number 17. E. Ox. Uncle Arthur. His pleasure. Lines of writing. An animal with some weapon like a lance(?) Then-at the end of it all—?Edward's Devil".

I venture to think that to anyone outside the Shakespeare Fellowship the 'clue' will appear as it did to the worthy sergeant, to be "a lot of gibberish." But it is this "animal with a lance", which eventually leads Scotland Yard to the murderer. Our intelligent detective with the help of the College of Heralds and the British Museum, finds his way to Castle Hedingham and the Earls of Oxford, *and*, to the '*Bard of Avon* Fellowship'. To me, the most mysterious thing of all is where Mr. Flynn learned so much about our theory of the Authorship.

N. LOOSELY

## "SHAKESPEARE"

### "LORD OXFORD OR LORD DERBY?"

As long ago as February 1922, J. Thomas Looney contributed a striking article, with the above title, to *The National Review*, in reply to one by R. Macdonald Lucas headed "Did Lord Derby Write Shakespeare?"

After referring to the *main stream* of publication of the plays, beginning in 1597, and ending in 1604, Looney says, "during the past century . . . certain broad facts have been established beyond dispute. The first is that quite a number of plays first published in 1623 had actually been written some years before several that had already been published in 1597-1604. This means (1) we have a *proved* interval of at least some thirty years between the actual writing and publication of plays, thus making an exact dating of the works wellnigh impossible. (2) The 1597-1604 publication was an outpouring from a large accumulated stock, and when it stopped suddenly with the authorised *Hamlet* in 1604 there were still on hand many plays which had never been published."

Later on, there is this significant passage: "Nothing is more vital in comparing the respective claims of Edward de Vere and William Stanley than the publication of the 1623 Folio. If "Shakespeare" was alive at the time, this must have been to him the crowning achievement of a long dramatic and literary career; and in preparing the work for the press he would have had fully ten years (1613-23) in which to concentrate his extraordinary powers on its literary elaboration after his last play had been composed. And it was just in those years that William Stanley entered upon a period of quietude and ease such as he had probably never enjoyed before. On the Derby theory the First Folio ought, therefore, to have been a masterpiece of Shakespeare's craftmanship." The writer then goes on to show from A. W. Pollard's work *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos* (1909) some of the chief defects of the First Folio.

1. It contained and rendered permanent the "botch work" contributions of other men, as well as whole plays given up by the best authorities.
2. Certain genuine Shakespeare plays had been

excluded or overlooked, then "Inserted in the only positions available at the eleventh hour." Pollard, pp. 124-5.

3. The general arrangements of the plays had been dictated by considerations peculiar to the *editors*, and to the exclusion of the *author's* point of view (pp. 123-8).

4. In several cases it presented versions of the plays actually inferior to what had already appeared in some of the early quartos.

5. Some of the plays were properly divided into acts and scenes, others only into acts, and others without any division whatever. . . .

6. Some had "small pains spent on them," others were edited with extreme care. . . .

7. In some cases the usual stage directions were given (but not in others.)

"In addition", J. T. Looney concludes, "we have to suppose on the Derby theory that for the last thirty years of his life 'Shakespeare' did not produce a single new play or poem, and that what he had produced even in the ten previous years were mainly incomplete works that others dealt with pretty much as they liked."

. . . "From the point of view of chronology . . . "*It is hopeless*. There is no other word for it." "Derby did not die till 1642."

It might be added that orthodox modern scholarship has done much to reinforce this view. The complicated relations of the printed Quartos, actors' copies, transcripts, manuscripts,—corrections, collations, etc., are dealt with by Alice Walker, in her Textual Problems of the First Folio, 1953. RUTH M. D. WAINEWRIGHT.

## OBITUARY

### Miss Helen Atkinson

We regret that we have lost a staunch member of the Shakespeare Fellowship. Miss Helen Atkinson, although eighty-two years of age, was an alert, tireless follower of Oxfordian activity. On 6th December, she was knocked down by a lorry and killed.

Several members of the Study Circle went to her Cremation service, and all subscribed to a floral tribute and a book in her name (yet to be chosen) for the Library. She was better known to the Study Circle and hardly ever missed a meeting.

When I told her, four years ago, about the case for Lord Oxford's authorship of the works published under the pseudonym of "Shakespeare", she was so elated and inspired, she studied the books with shrewd judgment. Later, she told me that, not since the days of the Women's Suffrage movement (for which high cause she suffered imprisonment and rough handling), had she been so inspired by anything. She was grateful in her heart and mind, always, that her last years were illumined by the truth about the authorship of, and consequent insight into the greatest poetry of all time, which had formed so much of her cultural background.

KATHLEEN LE RICHE

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### "Who was Shakespeare ?" by H. Amphlett

Further comments in a letter from Mr. J. Shera Atkinson, omitted from our last issue through lack of space.

1. pp. 56 and 143. It is incorrect to state that Edward de Vere "was given his father's subsidiary title of Viscount Bulbeck". Where a peer holds two peerages, his eldest son by custom is called by the second title as a matter of courtesy.

2. p. 93. Miss Amphlett appears to misunderstand Chapman's statement that Oxford "spoke and writ . . . of the discipline of public weals", suggesting that it refers to his "understanding the lot of the underdog". Chapman surely means to eulogise Oxford's knowledge of the science of government—of matters affecting the common weal.

3. p. 127. The fragment of manuscript referring to Lord Oxford is not in Sir George Buc's accounts as Master of the Revels. It is bound up with the manuscript History of Richard III, written by him, in the British Museum Library. The word "friendly" in the quotation from it should be "princely".

4. p. 133. In writing to Lord Burleigh "I serve her Majesty" Miss Amphlett suggests that Oxford "presumably referred to his play-producing for the Court". That is not a possible conjecture. The context shows that Oxford is telling Burghley that he serves (i.e. owes allegiance and feudal service to) the Queen, and declines to recognise any duty to obey Burleigh.

J. Shera Atkinson

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Briefs extracts from a few of the many letters received from readers of *Who Was Shakespeare ?*

I should like to say that for me this interesting work solves the vexed question of authorship both lucidly and convincingly.

Chas. J. Bailey, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

I have just read *Who Was Shakespeare* by H. Amphlett ; the book enthralled me.

Terence N. Goodall, Carlton, N.S.W. Australia

### Lord Oxford's Settlement

Sir,

In view of that aristocratic look of Shakespeare, for which the evidence will be found in the *News-letter* of April, 1954, the following extract from the *Historical MSS Commission's Report*, 14 p. 277, quoted in W. Kittle's *Gascoigne*, may be of interest.

"1574/5 Jan. 30th Settlement by Edward, Earl of Oxford".

"The trustees of certain manors and estates recited the fact of his licence to travel. . . . and that should he die, his whole possessions would pass to his sister, Lady Mary Veer, saving the life interest of his Countess . . . To avert this impoverishment of 'that ancient Erldome house

and famylie of Oxenforde, the Earl remembrynge and considerynge the long contynaunce of his saide house and famylie in the name of the Veers, whereof he is lyneallye discended . . . and in alliance and kindred with moste of the ancient nobilitie of this realme, and in the good will and good lykinge of the Cominaltie of the said realme; and having therefore a speciall desire . . . to leave all or the moste parte of his possessions to such person as in his opinion is most likely to continue the line . . .' he entails, subject to the payment of his debts, of a marriage portion of 3000l. to each daughter he may have (failing male issue).

Schedule of debts."

Even allowing for the debts, most of which were either inherited or incurred while he was a Ward of the Crown, this does not appear to be a settlement made by a waster and a prodigal. It is that of a nobleman, fully conscious of his ancient lineage and great estate, and desirous that the same should be continued. Whether the Earl was present at the execution of this document, I cannot say. The evidence for the date he left the country is conflicting. But we may take it that the settlement was in accord with the Earl's expressed wishes, and it is just such an one as we should expect from the man we seek as "Shakespeare".

H. S. SHIELD

**Marlowe as Stratfordian Decoy**

Our member, Mr. Aitken, has sent us the following significant extract from the *New York Herald Tribune*, January, 1956.

To the *New York Herald Tribune*:

Since you have dignified the current sensation concerning the opening of the tomb in England to discover the connection of Marlowe with the plays attributed to 'Shakespeare' with an editorial in to-day's issue, I venture a comment . . . .

Mr. Hoffmann's book, though it contains almost no factual evidence that would stand for a moment in a court of law, for some mysterious reason was featured violently in the American press. Possibly because it flaunted a whodunit plot, editors of book sections gave it unusual publicity.

For some years the Stratfordians have been troubled by the growing suspicion on the part of the intelligent public that there are many dubious features in the conventional theory that the Stratford actor, William Shaxper, authored the plays and sonnets. In spite of much research no evidence has been found that any contemporary of this man connected him with the writing of the plays . . . .

Slowly but surely the impression has spread that there is something fishy about the whole Stratford set-up. Last summer I even discovered that this skepticism had invaded the sacred precincts of the Holy City itself. I bought, in a Stratford-on-Avon bookshop, a new book, published by Heinemann of London, *Who Was Shakespeare?* by H. Amphlett. This work demolishes the Stratford man's pretentions completely.

When I went to get an extra copy before leaving the city, the large stack of books was getting low. I suggested to the saleslady that selling such a book would wreck the town's industry. She winked, and accepted my guinea.

Stratford-on-Avon takes in around 8 million dollars a year. This is big business. It is not extravagant to presume that something might be done to protect such a heavy industry. What better scheme could be chosen than to promote, in the mind of the public, some preposterous theory such as this of finding Shakespeare MSS in Marlowe's tomb? The public, reacting from such nonsense, may be corralled safely back into the Stratford fold, and the one-and-sixpences continue to roll in.

WILLIAM MCFEE

**Patience Perforce**

Dear Sir,

It is news to me that the line:

'Patience is perforce such a pinching pain'

is found in *Romeo and Juliet*; or indeed anywhere in Shakespeare's text. Yet so it is stated on page 7 of the *News-Letter* for Autumn 1955!

A. W. TITHERLEY,

Dear Sir,

Permit me to express my sincere thanks to Dr. A. W. Titherley for having called attention to an error which occurred in a transcript from my notes. What 'Shakespeare', in *Romeo and Juliet* (1, 5), did say was:

'Patience perforce . . . makes my flesh tremble.'

Hoping to be forgiven for this inexcusable lapse.

JOHN R. METZ

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