

**SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY
NEWSLETTERS**

1967-1969

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, O.C., 20004



Dear Fellow Members:

April 15, 1967

Since the last report on Society affairs and happenings of interest to our members, there has been some limited activity, not startling, but nonetheless welcome to those of us who have been prodding and urging members to show some outward and visible signs of life.

Mr. Carlston Healy, a member in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, wrote an excellent and scholarly skit in blank verse entitled "Sonnet 29", which was produced and presented by "The Players" of Detroit, in their own theatre on Dec. 3rd 1966. This touched on the relationship of Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Oxford, and told the story of the "hoax" within the scope of proper poetic and dramatic license—of the selection of the "Stratford Stooze" to distract the public and serve as a "red herring" to conceal the real author's identity. This was enthusiastically received by the audience, and so much interest shown, that Mr. Healy arranged to have about 400 of our "flyers" Oxford as Shakespeare mailed out to all of the Players Club members with their December bulletin.

In the New York area group, which has been dormant for some time, there is now a stirring. Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Charles, enthusiastic members formerly of Dayton, Ohio, recently moved to Fort Lee, New Jersey. They secured a list of New York area members and invited all of them to meet at their home one evening in March, got acquainted, and make plans to further the Oxford cause. This was a success, and out of it came an offer from Miss Marianne Everett, who owns a private school at 39 E. 75th St. to make available an auditorium for future meetings. Advantage was taken of Miss Everett's generosity, and an April meeting was held at 8:00 p.m. on Apr. 10th. Between forty and fifty members and guests attended. Mrs. Dorothy Ogburn, and the President of the Society made brief talks. The audience was interested and responsive and six new members joined the Society. Another meeting is planned for May. There may be some good reason why our members in other localities cannot follow this example, but such does not occur to the writer, off-hand.

All new members who have joined since Jan. 1st, have received, in addition to our usual literature, a copy of "Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, The Real Shakespeare" by Wm. Kent and Others. These were purchased from our sister society in England. We think this particularly valuable for beginners, a sort of primer, which gives a good, though condensed, account of Mr. John T. Looney's basic contribution, nay, discovery and identification of the real Shakespeare. We have now obtained an additional supply, by slow surface mail, and are mailing a copy to all of our members who have not yet received it. We commend it to you, and suggest you lend it freely to your sceptic, or agnostic, friends. Mr. Kent has been dead sometime, and when he wrote this, did not have available some of the later research of our scholars. If the writer may, for the nonce, assume the role of a reviewer, it is suggested that the quotation from Othello on page 8, while undoubtedly full of personal overtones of the author and his relations with his first wife, may more probably be related to events of the year 1585, instead of 1574, when Oxford fled to the continent, and came back a little later with his friend Bedingfield. In Aug. 1585 Queen Elizabeth entered into a treaty with the States-General in which she undertook to maintain 5000 foot and 1000 horse during the continuance of the war. Col. Norris was to command the Field Army and the Earl of Oxford was appointed General of Horse (cavalry). Norris sailed for Holland on Aug. 24th. The Earl's Guard landed on Aug. 28th, and the Earl himself on the 29th. In October the English took the offensive and captured Arnhem from the Spanish. To quote Ward, "Leicester's appearance

at this point is interesting. It would seem that as soon as Oxford had left for Holland on Aug. 29th, a scheme had been set on foot by Leicester and his party to supersede him, for on Sept 8th Walsingham had written to Davison that the Queen was talking of sending over "a nobleman" to advise the States. This is curious in view of the fact that Lord Oxford had only just gone; but once he had left the Court, there was nobody in London to take his part except the Queen and Lord Burghley..... A bitter feud had always existed between the Norris and Knowllys families, and Leicester, through his marriage with Lettice Knollys, had been drawn into this quarrel. Leicester's influence no doubt caused the Queen to rebuke, instead praise, Norris for his victory. Oxford was ordered home. The ship with his personal belongings was captured by "pirates" about Oct. 14th, and Oxford landed in England on Oct. 21st. The day after Oxford left for England, the Queen signed Leicester's Commission as Lieutenant General of the English forces in the Low Countries, and in November Sir Philip Sidney (Leicester's nephew) was given the rank of General of the Horse. Leicester himself, later received squally shabby treatment from the Queen, but that is another story.

Around Dec. 18th, '66, our last News-Letter was mailed out to our members, stressing renewal of dues and the need for contributions of money and/or services so the Society could continue its work. A self-addressed stamped envelope with return blank was enclosed with each letter. The response has been spotty. While it was a disadvantage to have these arrive with a spate of Christmas cards from friends and purveyors; on the other hand, as we are an Educational Foundation, and all dues and contributions are Tax-deductible, it was hoped that some of our more substantial members would take advantage of this before Dec. 31st; in other words, divert some of their tax money to their Society. No soap! We have members who are scholars, writers, researchers, and speakers, who are interested in scholarship and research, but have very little money. Others have money, but are not interested in scholarship or research, but apparently, only in more money. A little over 50% have sent in their dues. A few who can be, and have been, counted on the fingers of one hand, increased their contributions substantially, for which we are grateful. Others either lost the envelopes in the Christmas rush, or laid them aside intending to attend to it later, and by now may have forgotten entirely. To these we say **PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHECKS FOR DEC., JAN., FEB., MAR., AND IF YOU DO NOT FIND ONE WITH THE SOCIETY'S ENDORSEMENT ON THE BACK, PLEASE LET US HEAR FROM YOU.** We cannot run without money and may we assure you that, though the headquarters, such as they are, are in Washington where all your money goes, none of it is given to us, and the C. I. A. is completely unaware of our existence.

We would like to make the year of 1967 the one in which our Society, concentrating on research, can come up with genuine manuscripts, with genuine Shakespearean references and allusions, in the Earl of Oxford's own handwriting. Our research has found one such, now in this country, believed by its owners to be circa 1590, but which we can prove to run back to 1570 and 1580. Blank pages therein have what look like marginal comments in handwriting resembling Oxford's more than any other man of that period. Samples of Oxford's handwriting have been secured by your Society, showing his handwriting at the age of 13, 21, 25, 30, forty and 50 years of age. While the owners say they know nothing of the history of this MS, or where it came from before 1959, we have traced it back to a sale in England in 1931, along with two other MSS. known to have been in the possession of the Vere family. Certain internal clues therein may lead us to a cache of other MSS, which might, repeat might, lead to a genuine MS. of a play or sonnet in the author's own handwriting. Contrary to the academic claim that all MSS. have been thrown away, we do not believe it. There is a good chance that if one full year could be spent in England in research, history could be made.

July 27, 1967

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, O.C., 20004



Dear Fellow Members Shakespeare Oxford Society:

Enclosed with this News-Letter, but not a part thereof, is a copy of an official decision handed down by the highest court in England in 1964. It can be read profitably by all of our members, especially those who are faint-hearted and, though believing in Oxford, are reluctant to speak up in Stratfordian, or mixed, company, lest they be swamped or overwhelmed by the force of the facts and arguments the holders to the Aubrey-Stratfordian Attribution, a "cult for the credulous" (to quote the noted scholar and antiquary Mr. Walter Hart Blumenthal) can use to silence and confuse them. It also goes to show that intelligent and informed persons in high places in England do believe there is a "Shakespeare Authorship Question"; the weakness and paucity of "facts" the orthodox can cite on their side; as well as an opinion as to the value and importance of the type of research and investigation in which your Society is now engaged.

Recent Activities.

On June 12, a meeting of some Society members and their friends was held at Miss Everett's School on East 75th Street, New York City. Mr. Andrew J. Charles presided. A talk was given by Mrs. Dorothy Ogburn, Mrs. Margaret Maxwell, an active Oxfordian of Plattsburgh, New York, who recently joined the Society, played a recording of two Elizabethan songs she believes to have been written by Oxford. We are also informed Mrs. Maxwell recently spoke to a group of around 35 in Plattsburgh on Shakespeare-Oxford.

In California this spring, Mrs. John Crowley of Pasadena, California, made talks to two highschool history classes. She had been invited by one of the teachers, when she heard one of Mrs. Crowley's sons say that his mother believed Oxford was the real Shakespeare. Mrs. Crowley prepared some excellent comparative charts, as visual aids, and sent copies to her Society.

In the Detroit area, Mr. Carlton Healy arranged for an invitation to be extended to the Society to furnish the speaker for the Grosse Pointe Men's Club Luncheon on October 24th. This has been accepted. We understand around 250 usually attend. We have learned, indirectly, that the Bohemian Grove Club, intends to produce Mr. Healy's "Sonnet 29", mentioned in our Dec. 15th News-Letter, at their famous resort in the Redwoods north of San Francisco.

There may have been other activities of our members, but unless we are advised of such, it is impossible to mention them.

On the research side, the pursuit of one Elizabethan manuscript with possible Shakespearean allusions, believed to have been in the possession of the Vere family, took us from Washington to California, to London, back to California this June, only to learn the owner had died suddenly of a heart attack in Oxford, England last September. His personal representative was most cooperative, and withdrew from a safety-deposit box what was believed to be the object of our search. It turned out to be a book printed in 1605, valuable enough, but not the manuscript we were looking for. This suggested that all the MSS. had been disposed of some time ago. Further investigation, and the courtesy of a rare book and MSS dealer in the East, led to the discovery that it had been sold in 1957 to an Eastern University. It was inspected there and electro-print of it secured. It did have certain coded numbers, as did another companion manuscript sold circa 1930 which may furnish a clue to the identity of "the grand possessors". The

next step is to follow this up, if time and finances permit. We think this is an important, if not the most important, activity the Society can engage in.

Coincidentally, this month two letters were received by the Society from the presidents of two small educational foundations; one on the Pacific Coast, and the other on the Atlantic. Excerpts:

"Enclosed is the Foundation's check for a Sustaining Voting Membership in the Shakespeare Oxford Society. Thank you so much for all the "goodies" (brochures and our News-Betters) you sent along. They are most interesting. I shall forward some of your material to various friends of mine and hope they, too, will be interested enough to join. It was most pleasant to meet and talk with you, and should you get out this way again, please don't fail to call on us".....

The other: "Gentlemen; Enclosed you will find the Foundation's check for \$100.00. This sum has been devoted by the directors as a contribution to your activities for the present fiscal year. Although this is in the nature of a no-strings-attached gift, the directors wanted me to congratulate you on the research work done in England last year, and to suggest that if at all possible, this type of thing should be encouraged on an ever increasing scale by the Society. Yours for scholarship and truth." Both of these letters were signed by the respective presidents of the two foundations.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society is a free association of its members joined together to promote or foster the purposes set forth in its charter and by-laws. No one has been conscripted or drafted. It is a reasonable presumption that those who maintain their membership have faith in the Oxford cause. But that is not enough. The Bible tells us that faith without works is dead, and exhorts us to be doers of the word, not sayers only. With a few honorable exceptions, from all outward signs, most of our members are Micawbers, waiting "for something to turn up" to hasten the acceptance of Oxford as Shakespeare, and the rout of the orthodox Stratfordians. This is, of course, a pious wish, but "wishing won't make it so." If you are looking for the mass conversion of the English Professors and Literary Critics, or their renunciation of William of Stratford, forget it! They would have to be born again. By "something" most mean, or hope for, documentary proof. It is a fair assumption that documents do exist which might be persuasive, but wistful wishing that, like the clod in the poem, each document is feeling a stir of might, an instinct that reaches and towers, and groping blindly before it for light, is going to climb to a soul in grass and flowers, is a bit unrealistic after nearly three hundred years of inertness. Some of us believe that they will have to be dug up, by intelligent, persistent, and resourceful research. What can you do to help? Don't let your membership participation turn into a mere spectator sport.

Verily yours for E.Ver,

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

December, 11, 1967

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, D.C., 20004



Dear fellow members Shakespeare Oxford Society:

This News-Letter has been held up, awaiting the arrival from England of pamphlets containing subject matter that should be of interest to all our members, including a scholarly contribution from a member of our Society. We cannot delay any longer for several compelling reasons, not the least of which is the imminent increase in postal rates. We are, however, enclosing a brochure-already on hand-"On the Poems of Edward de Vere" by Miss Ruth Wainewright, the Librarian of the Shakespeare Authorship Society, and co-editor of the Shakespeare Authorship Review. Some of our members think of Lord Oxford only in connection with his probable authorship of "Shakespeares" Works, and perhaps do not realize he was a lyric poet of the first order, and recognized as such by his contemporaries and later critics and scholars.

The Society has received no reports of recent activities since our last News-Letter of July 27, other than the renewal of activity in England during September in the search for genuine Oxford-Shakespeare documents, in which measurable progress was made, and the preparation of a pamphlet; "Shakespeare. A Plea for Realism" by one of our most distinguished scholars, which seems to have, to us, such merit and timeliness, that plans are being made to publish it as a brochure of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, which can be distributed to our members and contributors, as well as made available to others who show interest in the matters discussed. The following paragraph is from the Nov. Newsletter of Senior Men's Club of Grosse Pointe. (Mich.)

"Shakespeare and the Cardiff Giant".

"The talk given by Mr. RICHARD C. HORNE, JR. President Shakespeare Oxford Society (they maintain headquarters in Washington, D.C.) was certainly a "change of pace" for 271 members and guests that were present at the October 24 luncheon-meeting. Those of us who are literary geniuses enjoyed the remarks, while those not so inclined certainly were enlightened about Oxford as Shakespeare. MR. HORNE, a Washington attorney proved by his remarks that he a literary authority, especially on Shakespeare. He went back more than 300 years--1623 to be exact--when the first folio of Shakespeare's plays was published with rather ambiguous and equivocal implications in the prefatory poems and introduction... A four page printed pamphlet published by the Shakespeare Oxford Society was provided each member that he would be better acquainted by this broad controversial subject matter... A fitting invocation was pronounced by TOM BOYD. Introduction of the speaker was by CARLETON (TIM) HEALY."

Enclosed with this News-Letter is our annual notice for renewal of dues and subscriptions, plus blank form and stamped self-addressed envelope for renewal and enclosure of check. Some objection has been made in the past that December is not the best time for these notices; they may be mistaken for Christmas cards, bills, etc., and be lost or mislaid; besides it is an added burden in the Christmas rush. It is agreed there is something to this, but it cannot be helped, and contributions have to be made before Dec. 31st to be tax-deductible for your report on 1967 income. It is going to take more than a little

effort to confuse a 6"x9" manila envelope from Shakespeare Oxford Soc., carrying a 10 cent stamp, marked FIRST CLASS, holding a blue brochure, a News letter of two or more pages, plus a renewal blank, and stamped envelope addressed to the Society, with an ordinary Christmas card or an advertisement. Writing a check, putting it in an envelope and moistening the flap does entail some effort, but everything is relative; especially when compared with one person's having to compose a News-Letter, type it out, take it to duplicator-printer, collect and collate the sheets, staple, fold, insert; address and stamp outer envelope, moisten and clamp, plus addressing and stamping enclosed white envelope, each operation over a hundred times. Contemplating the two hardships leaves the writer with a dry eye and still unwrung withers. For the information of our recent members who did not receive the Dec. 1967 News-Letter, a paragraph from it is reprinted here.

3. Notice of Dues. Enclosed is a subscription blank for subscription or renewal of dues for 1967. We know it is less than a year since some of you joined and paid dues. Also it is more than a year since some of you have paid dues. The Society has a card with each member's name upon it with the amount and date of each payment. It is also entered in a book. Dues cover a membership for one year, running from the first date of payment, e.g.: Dec. 64-Dec. 65, Feb. 65-Feb. 66, July 66-July 67. Your dues are credited for one full year from the date due. Dues are all we have to go on, or count on, in making plans. If we had an endowment or substantial contributions, the dues could be reduced to a nominal \$2. or \$3. annually, and a campaign put on for a large membership. Right now think about giving a \$5. membership or two, to friends for Christmas. Send us the names and, if you wish, we will send the notice of membership and literature with your compliments.

You may wonder what was the response to our July News-Letter; a plea for active membership participation in what we, and the highest Court in England, consider of great importance. It was so phenomenal that it is hard to find words to describe it; that it either touched off an avalanche of apathy, or incited an iceberg of indifference.

Every communication to our members has stressed that contributions to our Educational Foundation are TAX- DEDUCTIBLE. If this has registered at all, it has been with members who do not "mess with" income taxes, or use the short form with standard deductions. For those who know what Form 1040 looks like, we might as well have been giving the gradations on the Baume, Beaufort, or Brinell scales. If you are "discontented"- to use an expression of Lord Oxford's"- with the way your tax dollars are being spent on socialistic boondoggles and frills, and wish you could have some say about it; then here are glad tidings: YOU CAN! Every dollar contributed to your Society, is one less going to the "Johnson Administration", and is a legitimate deduction from, and a reduction of, your taxable income. Your check is a voucher recognized by accountants and I.R.S. auditors. Our annual report to the Treasury as an Income Tax Exempt Foundation lists the names of contributors of \$100. or more. We will mail you a receipt showing it was for a tax-exempt corporation, for amounts of \$50. and above.

Verily yours for E.Ver.

Shakespeare Oxford Society, by Richard C. Horne, Jr.

(Note. The views expressed and implied in the last paragraph are the writer's own and do not represent those of any other officer, trustee, or member. Nor are they a reflection of his own private opinions necessarily, often being his way of trying to bring out the money for his Society)

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, D.C., 20004



May 25, 1968

Dear Fellow-members Shakespearean Oxford Society, Inc.

An explanation is due for the delay in this News-Letter, which can best be understood by a relation of the events as set out below.

Late in January 1968, the two leading Washington papers, "The Post" and the "Evening Star" published extracts from a "News-Letter" which Dr. Louis B. Wright, for over twenty years the distinguished Director of The Folger Shakespearean Library, sent to them announcing his imminent retirement. We were not privileged to see a copy of this "News-Letter" which was highly complimented by both papers together with many encomiums on its author's scholarship and wit. From the extract which they both featured, namely: "Especially to my successor I happily bequeath all of those earnest, humorless, evangelistic souls who want to convert others to the belief that somebody else, almost anybody else, wrote Shakespeare's plays. They will write him letters, send him telegrams, call in person, and prove themselves the greatest bores since Job's friends gathered to comfort that hapless man.", we assume it partook of the nature of an Arthurian farewell to his Paladins of the Knights of St. John (Aubrey, not Hospitaller), or a Parthian shot at the Paynim, perhaps of both. Anyhow, it was a reaffirmation of the party line on Oxfordians and lesser breeds without the Law, viz; The Aubrey-Stratfordian Attribution of the Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays, is not now, nor never has been, doubted or challenged by sane, literate or informed persons. This dogma is presumably binding on any successor.

Mr. Charlton Ogburn, Jr. wrote Dr. Wright a sharp, personal, letter taking exception to this latest example of his tactic in a controversy, and offering to substantiate his charges in a debate, in any forum, or the pages of any periodical or book. Copies of his letter were sent to both papers, several periodicals, and to our Society. Later we wrote both parties that if a suitable forum had not been offered, or agreed upon, we would make our next "News-Letter" available to both for a debate, if they wished, or, in default of a debate, to publish Mr. Ogburn's letter, after offering to delete any mistake, or error in quotation, or fact, that Dr. Wright could point out; and then give Dr. Wright equal, or more space if he found it necessary or desirable, to reply. His reply to be free of any editing upon our part. Both Mr. Ogburn's and our letters were ignored by Dr. Wright. This was not surprising, as most Stratfordians, when confronted with an opportunity to step up and give a reason for the faith that is within them, seem to feel an affected nescience is the better part of discretion. Mr. Ogburn agreed to the publication of his letter in our News-Letter; but then the editorial problem arose as how best to maintain an objective stance, with background and balancing material, in default of participation of Dr. Wright; and not lay ourselves open to criticism that our position was too subjective, one-sided, and, in effect, et tu quoque. These difficulties were not resolved, and the plan for publishing both sides of an argument, with a thousand or more copies available for distribution, was reluctantly postponed until another day.

Now on a somewhat lighter note. Last January, the following letter was sent to the Editor of the "New Yorker" by one of our members, a Washington lawyer, asking that it be passed along to the reviewer. A note from the editor was received, thanking him, and saying it had been passed along as requested.

"Jan. 6, 1968. Dear Miss-----. A friend of mine has just sent me a page from the Dec. 30, 1967 "New Yorker" with your entertaining and favorable review of "Brief Lives" at the John Golden. I am sure the reason it was sent me was the marked passage of "or Edward de Vere Earl of Oxford, who is believed by one of the silly cults to be the true author of Shakespeare's plays." From your choice of the adjective, to which no exception is taken, though it has become somewhat stale from use, I take it you are a believer in, or devotee of, the orthodox, or revealed faith, in the Shakespearean Authorship Question. / I wonder, however, if you are aware that this charming old gentleman, played so fascinatingly by Mr. Dotrice, is the Father and Founder of the Fundamentalist Faith, viz; the attribution of the authorship of "Shakespeare's plays to William of Stratford. / John Aubrey (1626-1697) who, in his own delightful phrase, spent most of his time "delitescing" at homes of friends to avoid the bailiffs, completed his "Lives of Eminent Men" in the 1680's. Halliwell-Phillips says Aubrey was "one of those foolish and detestable gossips who record everything they hear or misinterpret". Anthony A. Wood, his employer, referred to him as "a pretender to antiquity, a roving maggotie-pated man who thought little, believed much, and confused everything." / Recent historical research shows that the popular delusion -the Aubrey-Stratford Attribution- which the eminent historian and antiquarian Walter Hart Blumenthal calls "A Cult for the Credulous", has no firmer foundation than gossip and hearsay-three or four times removed-often mutually contradictory, and first heard of a hundred or hundreds of years after the "author's lifetime;" and that the Shakespeare "Biographies", from 1709 to date, have all the authenticity of, and are as much an exercise in futility as, a treatise working out the pedigree and blood-lines of "Rudolph, the Red-nosed Reindeer." / Is it possible we are all "cultists" under the skin? Sincerely yours

---- S. (illy) C. (ultist)"

In the Detroit area, Mr. Ralph Tweedale, a close student of the Sonnets, and one of the small group of our members who are also members of the English Shakespearean Authorship Society, reports while he was in London on April 24th, he attended the Annual Dinner, which was chaired by the President, Mr. Christmas Humphreys, Q.C. who made an excellent talk on Oxford. It was announced at this dinner that Mr. Humphreys had been elevated to the Bench. Congratulations. Mr. Carleton Healy is working on expanding his playlet "Sonnet 29" with the view of a more elaborate production. Our readers will recall its successful presentation by The Players Club of Detroit in December 1966.

In Southern Calif., S. Colum Gilfillan, Ph.D., an enthusiastic and productive member of our Society, read of the elaborate plans of the Shakespearean Society of West Hollywood in the L.A. "Times" in December 1967. He wrote the president, offering to come and tell them who the "real Shakespeare" was. He was invited to address them at a meeting on April 21st. This he did and, with the help of a few of our other members, passed out some of our literature to a fair-sized group who, though most, if not all, had never heard of Oxford, expressed interest. Taking advantage of a short visit to that area by one of the Society's officers assembling research data, Mr. and Mrs. John C. Crowley of Pasadena, hurriedly arranged for a dinner at a friend's house on May 5th, where a score or more of selected guests met and listened to a talk on recent research and its possibilities, if followed up. These guests had already heard of, and been conditioned to, the Oxford cause, largely through the zeal and activity of the Crowleys. Xerostats of some of the MSS were examined carefully by several of the lawyers present, one of whom is a collector of ancient legal MSS, and familiar with English Secretary Script. The marked similarity, if not identity, to samples of Oxford's handwriting, in the marginal

notes and entries on some of the blank pages, was noted independently, before attention was called to it by the speaker.

From Savannah, Georgia, the Society was mailed the following clipping from The Savannah Morning News and Evening Press, April 7, 1968.

"Dorothy Ogburn (Mrs. Charlton) will arrive tomorrow to visit her sister, Isabel Knapp (Mrs. W. McN.) and while here will speak at the meeting of The Friends of the Library April 16 at 8 p.m. in the auditorium of the main Library. Not surprising, the subject of Dorothy's talk will be 'The Authorship of the Shakespearean Plays'. Dorothy and her late husband devoted twenty years researching the Shakespearean Plays and wrote three books on their discoveries- which convinced them that the true playwright was Sir Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Since her husband's death, Dorothy (who is vice president of the Shakespearean Authorship Society of London) has collaborated with her son, Charlton Ogburn, Jr. on another book on the subject and a new book by Dorothy, with still more clues to the identity of the author of the Shakespearean plays will be out shortly. It is these recent discoveries that will be revealed to Friends of the Library."

This will be of interest to the many friends of Mrs. Ogburn in our Society. If some of her recent findings on "early Shakespeare" are about to be published, it is good news indeed, for we consider them a most valuable and scholarly contribution to knowledge on this neglected subject.

From the New York area, or chapter, potentially one of the most important, the Society has had no reports of any meetings, or constructive activity, since our last bulletin. The same applies to the New England area.

One or two more new members have joined from Hawaii, largely through the activity of Mr. Roger Benezet, son of the late Dr. Louis P. Benezet who made valuable contributions to the Oxford cause, in his research and articles, as well as his published works "Shakspeare, Shakespeare, and De Vere", and "The Six Loves of Shakespeare".

Back in Continental U.S. the missionary or evangelistic spirit of most of our members seems to be at a low ebb, dormant, or non-existent. The number of renewals of annual membership in January, was lower this year than usual, and not accounted for by the usual percentage of loyal members who neglect to send in a renewal when they receive the notices and stamped addressed envelopes in December, intend to mail it in, lay it aside, forget about it, and then belatedly send their check. Were not the thought unworthy, one could almost postulate the existence of activity of what, for want of a better word, might be called "Reverse-Recruitment."

This bulletin, or News-Letter, is being sent out to all members in good-standing in 1967, whether they have paid dues for 1968, or have dropped out intentionally. Paying dues one year imposes no obligation for another year, but your officers would appreciate your courtesy in using the stamped envelope (now you have to put on an extra one-cent stamp) to either renew, or ask that your name be dropped from the rolls and mailing list; no reason required or expected. If you really do not remember whether you have renewed or not, or for some reason did not receive the notice, and still want to stay in the Society, send in your check. It will be returned to you if it is a duplicate. We are a non-profit, tax-exempt, educational foundation, reporting to Federal and State Departments, and have to conduct our affairs in a business-like manner to retain this status.

Now an encouraging word to our loyal members who have renewed, and to those who overlooked it and are now about to send in their dues. We are not in bad shape in finances or morale. About 25 of the non-renewers are "one-shot" regular memberships, paid for as a gift to friends by members of longstanding, who wanted their friends to be exposed to Oxford propaganda. In many cases this "did not take", nor was the degree of interest aroused sufficient for them to want to continue membership at their own expense. This is perfectly understandable. As a matter of fact, the Society has never been stronger, or more able, or inclined, to carry out the purposes stated in our charter, thanks to the generous financial support of loyal members, plus careful husbandry, and the many hours of work put in, and continuing to be put in, by an active elite. The Society's work, and the results being accomplished, are recognized and respected here and abroad. While its management cannot boast they found it brick, and left it marble; they can say, with pardonable pride: its house is now built of brick, not of straw, or sticks, and in no danger of being blown in, by huffs and puffs, come they from without or within.

Sincerely yours for E. Ver,
Shakespeare Oxford Society, Inc.
by Richard C. Horne, Jr.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, D.C., 20004

February 28, 1969



Dear Fellow Members Shakespeare Oxford Society;

In a manuscript commonplace book, now in this country, circa 1575-90, are a number of poems by Oxford, Arne Vavasour, Dyer, Sidney, Raleigh, et al, including one of Shakespeare's in the *Passionate Pilgrim*. In this collection is one entitled "The State of France in 1588" The latter not only serves as a clue to the date of the collection, but also suggests a theme for this News-Letter. A News-Letter as its name implies, should contain news of the activities of the Society since the last N-L and of individual members, as reported to headquarters, or observed personally by the editor. With apologies to the late Sir E.K. Chambers: After all the careful scrutiny of clues, and all the patient balancing of reports, or lack of them, the last word for a self-respecting editorship can only be that of nescience.

We are all, of course, aware of the well-known simile or metaphor of the iceberg. I am thinking of the one-eighth visible part above the surface. There may be vast and intense sub-terranean, or should it be, submarine, forces at work that I wot not of, but unless and until, they boil up to the surface, like the oil in the Santa Barbara Channel, they cannot be reported to our members.

There is some progress in individual research in connecting Oxford with "Shakespeare" through newly discovered MSS, but the results so far, though promising have not reached the stage where premature would help, rather than hinder. In one of these MSS being studied there appears, in what looks very much like Oxford's handwriting, Julio Romano. Now most of our members, as well as others fairly familiar with Shakespeare, will recall that his is the name of the only actual painter mentioned in the Plays (T.W.T.). There are, however, three or four other references in the poems and plays showing that the author was familiar with the work and history of Julio Romano, and all of these also link up with Lord Oxford and his travels in Italy 1575-6. One fact led to another, each ~~was~~ fitting into the other, so it seemed an inescapable conclusion, to an open mind, that Shakespeare must have travelled in and known Italy well. Karl Elze pointed this out about "Unser Shakespeare" a hundred years ago. A fringe benefit was the discovery of a book, in Italian, with some actual words used in Hamlet, which antedates Belleforest's Histoires Tragiques with the story of Amleth from Saxo Grammaticus, which the "authorities" tell us is the earliest source that Shakespeare could have used. Thinking that this would be of interest to our members, a draft of a News-Letter was prepared, covering and discussing, at some length, the Italian phase of Shakespeare with citations either unknown, or ignored, by the Aubrey-Stratfordian "historical scholars." Just as it was in shape for the printer, it had to be scrapped! And thereby hangs a tale..

Last July, arrangements were made with the Shakespearean Authorship Society in London to purchase all of their back publications and issues, including any old copies of The Shakespeares Fellowship News-

*disclosure

2.

Letter, which preceded the S.A. Review. There was some hitch in the mailing of them, so that the last came in late December. To my surprise and chagrin, it was found that some of the research done in the B.M. in the summer of 1968 had been anticipated by research there and in Italy, by members of the English Society, such as Mrs. le Riche, Miss Amphlett, Geo. Lambdin et al, and published and commented upon ten or fifteen years ago! My sensation was somewhat that of a man who had spent weeks hacking a new path through jungle growth in what he supposed was unexplored territory, only to find that maybe only a mile or two to one side, a road had been cleared and graded years before, even if it now was grown up in weeds, unused and unknown to today's travellers. While I had never read these articles or even knew they existed, I knew full well I was vulnerable to a charge of plagiarism, from one or more in this country who had a file of, or had read, these News-Letters long ago. Convinced that my time could be more profitably occupied than in defending myself from such a charge, I immediately wrote England asking permission to reprint, with due acknowledgement and credit, some of these and other extracts, from the old News-Letters, for the benefit of our members. I have not yet heard from this request. For the information of those few who are too familiar with the offense of plagiarism, the following definition and distinction may be of interest. "Copy it all out of one book; that's Plagiarism. Copy it all out of three books; that's Research."

There is a silver lining in this cloud of delay. During World War II, the activities of the English Society were suspended, including the publication of the Shakespeare Fellowship News Letter. Mrs. Eva Turner Clark along with others, made it possible for the American Branch of the Fellowship to carry on the Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly, published in New York under the able and scholarly editorship of Mr. Charles Wisner Barrell, the Secretary of the American Branch. Too many of our members know of Mr. Barrell only as the man who subjected "portraits" of Shakespeare to X-ray and infra-red photography, and found three of them, including the Folger Library's prized Ashbourne Portrait, to be over-painted and altered portraits of the Earl of Oxford. He was the active agent in having the American Edition of Looney's Book printed in 1950; wrote the "Afterwords", and was, and is, one of the best Shakespearean and Oxford scholars and researchers in the U.S., and is so regarded in England as per a recent letter received by the writer from one of the officers of the English Society. We have conferred several times lately with Mr. Barrell at his home in No. 6, Grove Street, New York, N.Y. 20014, on the Oxford cause and how best to further it over here. Mr. Barrell generously furnished a bound copy of Vol. VII of the Quarterly, and has since graciously given permission to quote or reprint his articles in the Quarterly, on phases of the Oxford case, not covered in the literature or pamphlets hitherto available to our members. You have a treat in store. He also has, unfortunately not as yet published, most interesting and intriguing research on Sir Edward Vere, whose importance has not been sufficiently appreciated, or even realized by us, though covered, to an extent, by Prof. Louis P. Benezet, in his "Six Loves of Shakespeare". In brief The State of the Shakespeare Oxford Society in 1968, is Static, and the Status is strictly Quo.

But what of the Aubrey-Stratfordians in 1968? It is now nearly fifty years since the publication of J. Thomas Looney's "Shakespeare Identified; in Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford." Have the Stratfordians as yet come up with a single fact to disprove Looney's discovery, or to connect their man with the Poems and Plays? The answer is still: No. It was noted as far back as the early Forties in England, that Academic Aubreyans, who had scoffed at the Oxford Theory and insisted "Shakespeare wrote his own plays"; when challenged, always took refuge behind "we are too busy to debate." One editor of the Shakespeare Fellowship New Letter commenting on this, said this made the Oxfordians seem lazy indeed, and suggested there ought to be a parliamentary commission to examine into such oppressive working conditions under which the orthodox were forced to labour. The "too busy virus" epidemic in England, soon spread across the Atlantic, carried, no doubt, by savants returning from sabbaticals, and up to now, has been their shield and buckler. Even retirement, gives no surcease from toil, and no time can be found to slay, or at least scotch, the Oxford snake.

The credulous cultists, and docile disciples of the Stratford Mythos, unfitted and unable to cope with the conclusions and challenges of the heretics, have yearned for the day when their champion or champions will find time, at last, to give the coup de grace, the ultimate "come-uppance" to the scoffers. The range of Academic and Authoritarian Alps, plus the Orthodox Ossa and Olympus, have long been in labor, and last June gave signs of imminent parturition. A newspaper reporter from the Washington Post was summoned to Mount Olympus for the "grecian accouchement." In a two page special article in Sect. E.1 Sunday June 23rd, 1968 headed "Shakespeare's Man" illustrated with a sketched portrait of William Shakespeare by Pablo Picasso (a contemporary and "in a position to know"), Mighty Mouse was disclosed to the waiting world. Hold on to your collective hats!

"A few noblemen in the time of Shakespeare, the Earl of Oxford (a notorious cad and bully) among them, received a certain amount of adulation as men of letters, but it is impossible to tell now whether they actually wrote the poems attributed to them or hired ghosts to write them. It would be much easier to believe that the Earl of Oxford or the Earl of Derby hired Shakespeare to write for them than to think they foisted their compositions on the playwright!!!"

This is "scientific, historical scholarship"!!!!

Whether the faithful are awed or satisfied with the Manifestation of M.M., the Ipsissimus Dixit from Numero Uno himself, we would not know, not being in their confidence. Perhaps if not, they can take whatever consolation they can extract from the words of an Early 18th Century Shakespearean Editor: *Man never is, but always to be, blest!*

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
~~Man is always to be, but never, blest.~~"

What about the hopes of us Oxfordians? When can we reasonably expect to see light at the end of the tunnel? In 1969? Hardly; barring a miracle. The present tactics are not noticeably productive of results. We are talking to each other, converting the already converted. It is seriously doubted if there are as many active propagandists, lecturers, debaters, and writers for the cause, as there were in the Thirties, Forties and Fifties. There are many more who no longer believe in the Stratford Mythos, but they remain reticent in word, deed, and pen, fearing to be swamped or overwhelmed by orthodox professors, critics, book reviewers, trained historical scholars etc. etc. Nobody wants to be considered a nut in the sight of others, be they ever so ignorant. This is really a baseless fear, for if the Stratfordians have learned one thing from contact with the less gullible, it is the wisdom to

refrain from accepting any challenge to debate in public, or in the pages of any newspaper or periodical of general circulation. Members of our Society, no matter how little confidence they feel in themselves regarding scholarship, can safely—figuratively speaking—tweak the nose or twist the tail of any self-proclaimed Stratfordian Authority, and challenge him to meet you, and another, in a public debate; you to choose a partner, and he another, or share equal space in print. When confronted with the ploy—about the only weapon in the arsenal of the average Stratfordian—to wit: "You don't believe Shakespeare wrote his own works?" say Of course I believe Shakespeare wrote his own works. Who Else? I also believe he must have been a literate, educated man, familiar with, and speaking and writing Court and London English; not someone with no known qualifications, other than a similar, but not identical name etc., etc.. If he wants to continue the argument, you have an immense advantage over him if you have read the literature furnished you, and recall a fraction of it. He knows very little, if any, of the weakness of the Stratford case, and nothing at all about Oxford. If you can irk or irritate him into a public debate, your Society will furnish you with a paper to lead off with, and a colleague who can handle rebuttal, and questions from the other side, or from the audience. If you can accomplish this, the "winking out" of an orthodox speaker, you will have done more for the cause than many of our "scholars and/or experts(?)" and put the Society and the cause in your debt. Remember the words of the poet: "They also serve who only act as bait."

Now a word to members who are working on a novel, serious book, or article, play etc. etc. on Oxford story. What are your chances on getting it accepted and published. Answer; None., or a "Chinaman's" if you know what that meant in our Far West an hundred years ago. Those of us who have studied this situation do not believe you can find a publisher in the U.S. who will put any of his firm's, or his own, money in such a project, nor a periodical of general circulation that will not reject an article submitted on this subject. (The reasons for this judgment are sound, but too complicated to go into here.) If you decide to publish with your own money—or a friend's, keep away from the "Vanity Press" The money will be wasted, and your last state will be worse than the first. Those who do not know what this means should read the article in the Dec. 23rd 1968 NEWSWEEK titled "The Vanity Press". Those who take the weekly can look it up; others can find it in public libraries. It is possible to have something printed in soft-back by local printers, if not too long, at a much lower cost, and use the savings for advertising and promotion. If the Society has sufficient funds in its publishing account, it can be of material assistance in such an undertaking.

Will academic English "Authorities" abandon Stratfordian Sharper or accept Oxford in 1969? No; for two reasons; (1) Shaw said "You cannot convert a man whose livelihood depends upon his not being converted?" (2) There is now no dialogue going on the authorship question between us and the "Establishment". They have seen to that. We have stockpiled a vast armament of arguments and unanswerable facts, and inescapable conclusions that "it" is not the Stratford Man, but most probably Oxford, to such a degree that we could properly be charged with "overkill", but we have no target to loose them on. The general public, the un-committed, are in millions, but the means to reach them are unavailable to us now, and bid fair to remain so, unless there is some dramatic "breakthrough".

5.

Can we prove that Oxford is Shakespeare? Not now; perhaps never. A majority of the male members in both the English and American Societies are probably lawyers. As a matter of fact, the writer knows of no lawyer, who has examined the evidence, or lack of evidence, who believes that Will of Stratford wrote the Poems and Plays. Some few think the author was Bacon, most Oxford, and a sizeable number, that a group, with Oxford as a leader, was responsible. Those few who profess to believe in Stratfordianism, have paid no attention to evidence or facts, have not studied the research done in the Twentieth Century, but have studied "Authorities" from Hemminge and Condell on down (they had no reason to lie) and affect to believe that any opinion that has persisted for so long, must be necessarily so. This is a mis-application of the doctrine of stare decisis, ancient custom and use, since the mind of man runneth to the contrary, Court will take judicial notice etc. Of course this same kind of reasoning will prove the sun goes round the earth, the earth is flat, "here be dragons", and that earthquakes and volcanos are caused by a great dragon underground, lashing his tail and snorting fire.

Oxfordian lawyers say that while there is no absolute proof beyond a reasonable doubt now available, there is a strong circumstantial case, made up of many facts, that Oxford, not Sharper, was the author. This is sufficient to get and sustain a verdict in a civil case, based on the greater weight of the evidence. But, if writing the Poems and Plays was a crime, and William of Stratford was before the Court for a preliminary hearing to see if he should be bound over for the Grand Jury, we will give an undertaking to have the case dismissed because no credible, material, or relevant evidence had been produced to connect him with the crime. If the judge did not grant this motion forthwith; then to prove his innocence on three grounds: (1) Physical incapacity; (2) Alibi; (3) General reputation in the community in which he resides. You do not have to be a lawyer to understand this. Anyone who has watched one or more Perry Mason episodes is fully qualified and capable.

A "breakthrough" such as finding a document of a play or poem positively linking Oxford and "Shakespeare", would settle the question "in our time", as well as prove a literary and historical sensation. All of our problems would be solved, publishers would seek out writers, even commission them to write; books out of print would be re-issued, and our traducers would be publicly discomfited, caught with egg on their faces, and made, as Snuffy Smith would say "a laughing stock" before the world. If we have to make a choice as to where we should direct our energies, and utilise our limited resources, further search on these lines offers the best opportunities for success, in the opinion of most of us who have studied and examined the various possibilities.

Last summer in following up a suggestion that this search-for original documents- should be a joint effort of anti-Stratfordians, some time was spent (and, as it turned out, wasted) in exploring the possibilities of such cooperation. The climate, now, is unfavorable for several reasons and motives. Some are patent, and others not beyond all conjecture. The reluctance and opposition have been narrowed down, however, to two classes: (1) Those who fear it may not succeed; (2) Those who fear it will. If any of our members are interested in more detailed information and want to cooperate, we would be pleased to hear from them.

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Cooperation with all who doubt, or discount, the Aubrey-Stratfordian Attribution and Mythos, should be the rule for Oxfordians, Baconians, Groupists, Marlovians, Stanleyites, Mannersites(?) and plain every day agnostics and ecoffere, committed to no particular candidates. This bond of a "common enemy" should be respected from self-interest, if nothing else. Sniping at, and nit-picking with, in print, other Oxfordians et al, is unbecoming, unproductive, and unwise. Once we iconoclasts have overthrown the Stratford Craven Image and Brazen Idol, there will be plenty of time to decide upon the rightful heir to the kingdom, and Oxfordians should not be fearful of the final result. All of the above have made valuable contributions to the common cause, and if an Oxfordian scholar wants to cooperate with, or respect, only one who "sees eye-to-eye with me on every question" including interpretation of each of the Sonnets, he will find that ally only in the mirror.

Provincial Dialect in Shaksper's Day.

While looking over old issues of the Shakespeare Fellowship we found a reference by Mr. H. Cutner to a sample of provincial dialect in the western counties in the eighteenth century. His reference was the Graphic Illustrator. A check of the Lib. of Cong. catalog identifies this as "The Graphic and Hist. Illustrat- or etc. Ed. by E.W. Brayley July 1832-Apr. 1834. The bound vol. showed in the index four articles on old dialects. The numbered pages did not show the exact example cited by Mr. Cutner, but a hurried examination showed several items not indexed, so we are printing the extract as Mr. Cutner found in his copy. A fringe benefit from this was finding the journal, in installments, of "A survey of 26 Counties by a Capt. Lieutenant and an Ancient (Eneign) (Lansd. MS 213.f.315) I am sure by now some have recognized a familiar note. This trip, 1634, is cited by Mr. J.G. McManaway in the Folger Booklet the "Authorship of Shakespeare" as his evidence of "within a few years of his death Shakespeare was bringing fame to Stratford." Mr. M's proof is given: "In that day's travel we came by Stratford upon-Avon, where in the Church in that town, there are some monuments; which Church was built by Archbishop Stratford, those worth observing, and of which we took notice were these... a neat monument of that famous English poet, Mr. William Shakespeare, who was born hsrre." The Folger booklet implies (though not stated in actual words) that this is proof of actual pilgrimage to the Birth-place and Shrine, such as to Canterbury or Compostella, but what are the facts, as shown by the journal?

These men, the Capt., Lt. Hammond, and ancient were friends, all attached to the military company at Norwich. For some time they had been discussing how to spend their upcoming vacation, holiday, or leave. They decided upon a trip together, on horseback, starting from Norwich, going to the Northern border, then west, and south, and turning east back to Norwich. about 800 miles. At every place they came to, they were to visit Cathedrals, churches, and castles, and note some of the history of each, but pay particular attention to monuments, noting each down in the journal. They went as far as Bristol and Bath, then struck across England, heading for home. Near the end they visited Warwick Castle, Kenilworth,

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 Coventry. Stratford was not a goal, a place to spend the night, or start out from. It just happened to be on the road between places. What we now call a "rest stop". They apparently strolled into the Church, Holy Trinity, the only thing worth looking at in the village, and while the horses were "taking tea" (or maybe thirty) Lt. Hammond jotted down the names on the monuments. Mr. MacManaway inserts three dots... (sic) between "these" and "a neat". This use of a blue pencil, is significant, for the journal shows the dots represent the names of monuments in the church listed in the order of their importance (in the Lt's. opinion) and what do you know, Stratford's most distinguished son, whose fame had brought the pilgrims hither, comes last! We would not be so unkind as to suggest least, nor that Gentle Master William just missed by the skin of his teeth being left out. This date, 1634, is nine years after the appearance of the First Folio, and two after the Second, yet Shakespeare is "that famous English poet". Is it not strange that Lt. Hammond did not connect him with the famous playwright, or that the clerk or verger, or whoever told the Lt. about the verrees that Sh. is supposed to have "fanned up" about John Combe, did not know he was the famous one to whom all scenes of Europe homage owe? Is there any evidence that anyone at all in Stratford ever thought or said he was the playwright before the Rev. John Ward made the ambiguous entry in his diary in 1662? Note; The Rev. J.W. is the next example Mr. McM. cites "of bringing fame" etc. 28 years after the Lieutenant. The sample of dialect follows this digression, for which we apologise.

"In all the innumerable books I have read on ~~the~~ Shakespeare I cannot recollect one ~~X~~ that was spoken in Warwickshire in the 16th century. Obviously the people who could then read and write were mostly Londoners and University men, and their English was that spoken by the aristocratic classes. But if in spite of our widespread education, dialects persist as different as those spoken in the wilds of Cumberland and Cornwall, often extremely difficult for a Londoner to understand, what must it have been in Shakespeare's day? Here is a specimen, a farmer talking to his man, of Somersetshire (much like Warwickshire). Stratfordian scholars will no doubt be able to find plenty of reasons why their hero never spoke a dialect at all but, as befits a genius, came into the world fully endowed with the English displayed in Love's Labour's Lost and Hamlet.

Larence! why does'nt let I up? Oot let I up.
 Naw, I be a sleapid, I can't let thee up eet.
 Now, Larence! do let I up. There! bimeby maester'll ooms, an a'll beat I a thin a ninch o' me life: do let I up! Naw, I wunt.
 Larence! I bag o'ee, do let I up! D'ye see! the sheep be all breakin droo tha hedge into tha vive-an-twenty ygoore; an Former Haggit'll goo to La wi'n, an I shall be a killed!
 Naw, I wunt-tis zaw whit! I hant a had my nap out.
 Larence! I da zay, thee bist a bad un? Oot thee hire what I da zay? Come now and let I eooose wi! Lord a maesy upon me! Larence, whys'n thee let I up?

X dealing with the sound of English

8.

Caz I wunt. What? muss'n I ha an our like wither vawk ta ate my bird and cheese? I do zu I wunt; zww 'tis nivr-tha-near to keep on. Maester tawled I, nif I war a good bway, a'd gse I iz awld wasket; and I'm shower, nif a da come and vine I here, an tha sheep brawk into tha vive-an-twent yaores; a'll vlang't awa vust. ' Let I up! Naw, I tell ee I wunt.

There's one o' tha sheep 'pon his back in tha gripe, an a can't turn auver; I mis g'in ta tha groun an g'out to'n, an git'n out. There's another in tha ditch; a'll be a'buddled; There's a girdle o' trouble wi' sheep; Larence; case'n thee let I goo, I'll see thee a ha penny nif oot let me.

Naw, a cant let thee goo set' eto eto.

This gives a fairly good idea what the English language was like in Warwickshire in the mid-eighteenth century. What must it have been two hundred years before this?

Back to Shakespeare Oxford Society "nute and bolts" (business). Enclosed herewith is a notice of the last payment of dues and an opportunity to contribute or pay dues to the Society. if you want to. This is a free country, every-and any-body can believe in Oxford and disbelieve in the Stratford Man without let or hindrance; or owing a person or group a penny. Wishing that something would "turn up" to discredit Shaxper and recognize Oxford as Shakepeare, is also "for free", like the best things in life. If, however, you believe that an organized, cooperative, and concentrated action to direct our efforts and resources toward that goal, and maybe attain it in the lifetime of those now living, is worth trying or desirable, then we would welcome your membership and contribution. A stamped addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. The form of the notice is an old one we have on hand, and no significance or slight to anyone is to be read into it by the hyper-sensitive. Those of you who have already sent in dues and contributions, without notice or solicitation, will understand. The envelopes can then be used to send in practical suggestions for the good of the Society, or to suggest an alternate course of action to the one now being followed. A little novelty now and then, is relished by the wisest men; so how about giving us a suprise by starting out "Would it be of help if (I) (we) would do so and so-----?" "How can we help the cause-----" instead of "Why don't you-----"?

Among our members are several schools of thought as to the size and function of the Society. Perhaps factions would be a better choice and more descriptive. Swift, in "Gullivers Travels" tells of a country in which there two Parties; The Big-Enders, and the Little-Enders: those who broke their eggs at the big end, and those who preferred to break their's at the little end. I read these stories when a child, took them literally, but now understand that they had elements of satire on then conditions

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in England, and the Big-Enders and Little-Enders referred to factions in the Church of England.

In our case, it is Big-Puddlers vs. Little-Puddlers. The division is based on the relative advantages, and disadvantages to the frogs- of the size of the puddle. We are not involved, remain neutral, but must point that in either puddle, things do not remain static. Evaporation is constant; the big puddle can dry up to a small puddle; and the little puddle can leave the big frog high, dry, and hoarse, with none to listen. But what makes the prognosis dire and gloomy for both is: THERE ARE NO TADPOLES!!

Pallida Mors, and the fowls of the air will strike at both alike, and the rest is; silence. Refreshing showers (Danaëic preferred) and restocking with rancid recruits can avert a catastrophe. If we have to go out, let's go with a bang and not a whimper!

Sincerely yours for E. Ver,

Shakespeare Oxford Society, Inc.
Richard C. Horns, Jr. President.

encls.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

April 7, 1969

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, D.C., 20004



Dear fellow Members Shakespeare Oxford Society:

Here is the first reprint of one of the excellent research articles of Mr. Charles Wisner Barrell in Vol. VI, No. 2 Shakespeare Fellowship quarterly, Apr. 1945. The reason for this choice is that in April 1967 a letter was received from one of the officers of the English Society telling me that Capt. A. Kedgehill Trout, a retired bookseller, and a member of that Society, had heard that in the Folger Library was a MS. known as Anne Cornwallis Common-place book containing poems by Oxford and Anne Vavasour, as well as a poem signed "Shakespeare". If that were so, it would indicate that the pen name might have been used much earlier than 1593. That same day I went to the Folger Library, and with the assistance of the library staff, whom I have always found to be most courteous and co-operative, I examined the MS book, which is kept in the vault. The Shakespeare poem, from the *Passionate Pilgrim* is indeed there but one of the few bearing no signature or attribution. The book itself, however, fairly reeked with Vere and Oxfordian allusions and connections, both explicit and implicit, and some of the poems sounded like "early Shakespeare", especially those of John Bentley. I checked on the cross-references and found that a full description and discussion of it by W.H. Bond had appeared in the F.O. Adams Memorial Studies, 1946, published by the Folger. After reading this, a full report and comments were air-mailed to London for Capt. Trout and the Secretary of the English Society. Bond's article implied that nothing was known of John Bentley except that there was an actor of that name who died in 1515. That he left a will, which was preserved in Somerset House (J. Brudenell) and that a careful comparison of the signature shows no point of similarity to the handwriting of the Bentley poems. This strengthened one of my hypotheses, viz; that Oxford was perhaps toying with another name for poems at that time. Later I learned from England that John Bentley was an actor in one of Lord Oxford's companies, and that Anne Cornwallis' father had bought Fisher's Folly from Oxford in 1566. In 1900 I found in the British Museum, Halliwell-Phillips' statement that the *Passionate Pilgrim* poem in this MS. was the earliest example of Shakespeare that he knew of, and that he mentioned the Vere connection. I mentioned this to Mr. Barrell in December, and found he knew much more about the connection of Oxford with this common-place book than did I, and he had written about it over twenty years ago. He gave me his article and permission to reproduce. Since I have had the opportunity to examine the original and Mr. Bond's study, which Mr. Barrell did not have at the time his article was written, I have taken the liberty of appending a page of "Editorial Notes" which will follow his account.

Readers will note that there is a mention of Mr. Kent immediately following Mr. Barrell's discussion. This was left in deliberately for Mr. Kent is the author of the green brochure "Edward de Vere, the Real Shakespeare" sent to all of our members, and was for a number of years the Editor of the Fellowship review. He was an expert on London, past and present, and the author of the description of London, now in the *Encyclopedia Americana*.

Most of our members have renewed already and late returns are still coming in. Communications have been answered as time permits.

Sincerely yours for E.Vere,
Shakespeare Oxford Society, Inc.

April 7, 1969

Earliest Authenticated "Shakespeare" Transcript Found With Oxford's Personal Poems

A Solution of the Significant Proximity of Certain Verses in a Unique Elizabethan Manuscript Anthology

By CHARLES WISNER BARRELL

SOME sixty years before J. Thomas Looney began work on his revolutionary identification of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, as "Shakespeare," James Orchard Halliwell (later Halliwell-Phillips) — one of the greatest collectors of Shakespeareana and most painstaking students of the Stratford native's career that has ever lived, brought out the fact that the names of the mysterious Bard and the mysterious poet Earl have actually been linked together in unmistakable significance since the 1590's, at least.

The evidence is contained in a small volume of poems copied in the handwriting of one Anne Cornwallis. And Halliwell-Phillips dates the transcription of this unique collection between the years 1585 and 1595. He published the first account of his acquisition of the Russia leather-bound quarto bearing the large feminine signature, "Anne Cornwallis her booke," in a volume entitled, *Catalogue of Shakespeare Reliques In the Possession of James Orchard Halliwell, Esq., F.R.S.* in the year 1852. Only seventy copies of the *Catalogue* were printed and it has now become so rare that comparatively few students of the authorship question even know of its existence. Through the courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, I have been able to consult a copy and will now give a digest of Halliwell-Phillips' remarks on the Cornwallis manuscript together with some subsequent findings regarding the identity of the Elizabethan lady who made this contemporary collection of poems in her quaint and priceless little "commonplace book."

Halliwell-Phillips purchased the item from the Russell family of Enfield, following its acquisition by Dr. Russell at the sale of the Bright manuscript collection at Sotheby's auction rooms in London in June, 1844.

The description of the Cornwallis collection is given thus in Sotheby's sale catalogue:

* * *

SHAKESPEARE, A POETICAL MISCELLANY
OF THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH, containing

verses by Edward Vere, Earl of Oxford, Sir Edward Dyer, Furbur, G. M., Sir P. Sidney, and Shakespeare; Russia, 4 to.

The lines by Shakespeare are an elegant little poem which appeared first in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599, a surreptitious publication in which they are most incorrectly given. The present Manuscript offers not only a better arrangement of the stanzas, but also a far superior text, in proof of which we subjoin the last stanza:—

Manuscript

Now hooe, enough, too much I feare;
For if my ladye heare this song,
She will not sticke to ringe my eare,
To teache my tongue to be soe long;
Yet would she kisse, here be it said,
To heare her secrets thus bewrayed.

Printed Text

(Poem XIX, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599)

Not soft; enough, too much I feare,
Last that my mistress heare my song;
She'll not stick to round me if the eare,
To teach my tongue to be so long;
Yet will she kisse, here be it said,
To hear her secrets so bewray'd.

In this (manuscript) reading we get rid of the harsh and false metre of the third (printed) line, and obtain a more natural imagery; the lady wringing her lover's ear for betraying her secrets, being certainly a more appropriate punishment for his fault than that of merely whispering to him.

Invention has been racked to account for the utter disappearance of the poems of Shakespeare in his own hand. The Rev. Mr. Hunter, in his recently published *New Illustrations of the Life and Writings of Shakespeare*, ingeniously supposes that the last descendant of the Poet, Lady Barnard (granddaughter of the Stratford citizen) in her over-religious zeal, may have destroyed any writings that remained in her hands. (Later research proves that she never possessed any such assumed writings, C.W.R.) To whatever cause it may be owing, it

is a certain fact that, at the present time, not a line of (William Shakespeare's) writing is known to exist. In the absence of his (literary) autographs, any contemporaneous manuscript is of importance; and in this view the present (Cornwallis) one may justly be deemed a literary curiosity of high interest.

* * *

This account (remarks Halliwell-Phillips) is correct as far as it goes, but the compiler has omitted to notice the curiosity of the MS. as containing the earliest copy of any of Shakespeare's writings known to exist. The writing of the MS. is very early; and I very much doubt if any portion of the volume was written as late as 1590. (Some years later Halliwell-Phillips raised this estimated date to 1595.) If I am correct in this supposition, we have here a strong confirmation of Mr. Knight's opinion, that Shakespeare began to write at an earlier period than has been usually supposed.* The MS. formerly belonged to Anne Cornwallis, and has her autograph, so that its descent from Vere, Earl of Oxford, is clearly deducible.

* * *

Here we have the eminent Halliwell-Phillips—seemingly unbeknownst to Mr. Laomry—pausing nearly a hundred years ago on the very threshold of a great discovery. Like Inspector Lestrade, he has the leading strings of a sensational solution to a fine mystery. But he fails to grasp their significance. The association of the names "Vere, Earl of Oxford" and "Shakespeare" seems important to him—though not *quite* important enough to call for a little extra research and deduction!

How ironical this will seem to present day students of the vast quantity of Oxford-Shakespeare testimony now available—that the otherwise insatiably curious and realistically-minded Halliwell-Phillips did not pursue at this time the clues that lay within his hands! Poe's reasoning in regard to the invisibility of *The Purloined Letter* is again proven basically sound. The thing best hidden is often that which lies most openly in view.

Halliwell-Phillips continues his 1852 commentary with a genealogical chart, showing that Anne Cornwallis (whom he identifies as a daughter of William Cornwallis and a granddaughter of Sir Thomas Cornwallis, Comptroller of the Royal Household under Mary Tudor) was a cousin of

Edward de Vere through her maternal grandfather, Lord Latimer. Like the 17th Earl of Oxford, Latimer was a blood descendant of Richard de Vere, 11th Earl of Oxford.

We will go on with Halliwell-Phillips' remarks on the manuscript collection before adding some comments of our own upon the actual identity of this poetry-collecting member of the Cornwallis family. Oxford's personal association with the house of Cornwallis will be shown to be a more interesting one than Halliwell-Phillips seems to have realized.

* * *

The MS. commences (says H.P.) with some verses by J. Bentley, whose fame as an author rests solely on the present volume. It includes some poems printed in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, and one by C.M., supposed to be Cervase Markham. There is also a poem attributed to Sir P. Sidney, but it occurs in *England's Helicon*, with the name of Dyer attached to it.

In conclusion, I may observe that during a search of ten years (later extended to about fifty years), and after a careful examination of every collection of the kind I could meet with, either in public or private libraries, the present is the only specimen of any of Shakespeare's writings I have seen which was written in the sixteenth century. Scraps may be occasionally met with in miscellanies of a later date, but this volume, in point of antiquity, may be fairly considered to be unique in its kind, and as one of the most interesting illustrations of Shakespeare known to exist.

* * *

Over and above this identification of the daughter of William Cornwallis as the original transcriber of the verses, Halliwell-Phillips is unquestionably right in dating their collection to a period within the 1580's, with the outside limit for their gathering placed at 1595.

This is due to the fact that the majority of the poems can be definitely shown to have been written well before 1586, the year in which Sir Philip Sidney died.

Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to consult the actual manuscript volume bearing Anne Cornwallis' signature. It is now owned by the Folger Library, but is still packed away with other treasures acquired from England. When it is available for consultation, we shall be able to see, for instance, just which verses are transcribed from *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, first printed in 1576. Lord Oxford's initials appear upon seven

*Charles Knight was one of the first Shakespeare editors to voice the confident, important basis of the assumed Earl's extensive chronology, the overwork pattern of which has since been completely shattered by such notable investigators as Alexander, Greenough, Hall, the Black and Bennett.

lyrics therein. Several of Sir Philip Sidney's signed poems are known to have been wrongly attributed to his associates, among whom Sir Edward Dyer was prominent. *England's Helicon* (1600) contains more than one confused and confusing attribution. The initials G.M. may represent Gervase Markham, who had written his *Thyrsis and Daphne* "as early as 1593," as Halliwell-Phillips suggests. They could just as well stand for George Montemayor, a much better poet, who was born in Spain about 1520 and from whom "Shakespeare" is said to have translated some episodes used in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

For a practical certainty we know that the *Eccho* verses, which represent a collaboration between the Earl of Oxford and his mistress, Anne Vavasor, must have been composed during the earlier years of their liaison—between 1579 and 1581. After the latter date their relationship was never on the same carefree, playful basis apparent in these youthful lines.

The *Eccho* verses have been reprinted many times by writers on the Oxford-Shakespeare case since their original inclusion in "*Shakespeare*" *Identified*. They appeared most recently in the NEWS-LETTER for June, 1942. But always, it seems, the copy used has been the one from the Rawlinson Poetical MS., 85.11, in the Bodleian Library. Sir Edmund Chambers, who has seen both the Rawlinson and the Cornwallis versions of the *Eccho* song, says that the copies vary slightly, but that the names of Lord Oxford and Anne Vavasor are attached to each. The Shakespearean repetitions from these lyrics, as often pointed out, reappear both in Juliet's balcony speech and in *Venus and Adonis*, 829-34. Strangely enough, Halliwell-Phillips does not seem to have been aware of this fact.

It would surely be incredible for anyone to assume that Shakspeare of Stratford had easy access either to Anne Cornwallis' commonplace book or to the Rawlinson script. Hence, there is never any mention made in Stratfordian circles of the *Verses made by the earle of Oxforde and Mrs Ann Vavasor*—which lingered in the Bard's mind. Neither, for that matter, do Shakspeare's accepted biographers—other than Halliwell-Phillips—ever refer to the fact that "Shakespeare's" poem XIX in *The Passionate Pilgrim* first appears anonymously in the Cornwallis anthology. Not a word on so interesting a circumstance is given, for example, in Sir Sidney Lee's *Life* of the alleged Bard, although Lee devotes acres of space to tenuous speculation regarding the Stratford native's brain-pickings of suppositious "travelers" and "men prominent at

Court" who "are believed" to have supplied him with background color for his masterpieces!

Another very cogent reason for arguing that the Cornwallis transcripts were collected in the 1580's is the fact that the opening verses, bearing the name of "J. Bentley," may be assigned on the best of grounds to the noted Elizabethan actor, John Bentley, who was a leading man with the Queen's Players from 1583 until his death in August, 1585. The known facts of Bentley's career are briefly given in Nungezer's *Dictionary of Actors* (1929). Thomas Dekker in *A Knight's Conjuring* (1607) describes "inimitable Bentley" as a poet among poets; "though he had been a player, yet because he had been their lover, and a register to the Muses."

Thomas Nash, a contemporary and evident acquaintance, also pays high tribute to Bentley's creative quality in *Pierce Pennilesse* (1592), bracketing him with Tarlton, Ned Allen and William Knell as the foremost stage performers of Nash's memory. He says he hopes some day to write a full account of these players in Latin so that their accomplishments "shall be made known to France, Spain and Italie: and not a part that they surmounted in, more than other, but I will there note and set down, with the manner of their habits and attire." So when Nash tells us that John Bentley was an artist whose abilities should be signalized throughout Europe, we can be quite certain that he was literate enough to have composed the verses bearing his name in Anne Cornwallis' album. What a pity it is that Nash, the keenest and most garrulous chronicler of the Shakespearean age, never mentions the Stratford "genius" at all!

And so we see that by the ordinary rules of logic and chronology, Halliwell-Phillips is perfectly justified in dating the contents of the Cornwallis anthology according to his original estimate—between 1585 and 1590. For every identifiable contributor, with the sole exception of the uncertified marvel of Stratford, answers the requirements of the case without the slightest strain on credulity. The inclusion of "Shakespeare's" anonymous contribution is the one difficult thing to explain. That is apparently the very reason why the professional authorities so studiously avoid the problem.

In the first place, the poem—one of the hawdiest effusions to bear the Master's imprint—is plainly not a copy of the 1599 *Passionate Pilgrim* version. The latter is a pirate printer's mangled and mis-transcribed steal from this—the truer original. It would be absurd to argue otherwise. Moreover, if

it were the other way about, why should the collector leave the famous name of "Shakespeare" off the poem, while carefully setting down lesser ones? Such being the case, the 1599 date of the first printing of Poem XIX means absolutely nothing in respect to its original composition and acquisition by this Elizabethan lady of wealth and social position. Neither will it do for the Stratford conjecturalists to opine that their butcher's apprentice from the illiterate household by the Avonside "must have" scraped acquaintance with Anne Cornwallis shortly after he "ran from his master" to London—or to the Cornwallis estate in Norfolk—where he presented her with this humid commentary on the refined arts of love-making.

Although we must do violence to the Stratfordian's approved rule of side-stepping all such annoying dilemmas, an answer should be sought to these questions:

1) When and where was the material for this unique anthology collected?

2) Who was the particular Anne Cornwallis who transcribed the poems?

The best answers, I think, will be found in the documentation of the poet Earl of Oxford's private life.

This at once shows us that Lord Oxford was not only a distant relation of the Cornwallises of Brome, Norfolk, as Halliwell-Phillips emphasizes, but had intimate, personal contact with William Cornwallis, eldest son and heir of Sir Thomas Cornwallis, the statesman. Letters in the Cecil family collection at Hatfield House, as reproduced in the *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury*, Vol. 3, pp. 377-8, under date of December 20th and December 31, 1583, tell us that some time previously, evidently in the autumn of the same year, the Earl of Oxford had sold his large and palatial estate in Bishopsgate Street Without, commonly called "Fisher's Folly," to William Cornwallis. The Earl had put through this deal hurriedly and secretly—without the knowledge or consent of his father-in-law Burghley—and very much to the Lord Treasurer's eventual chagrin.

The first letter explaining this transaction is written by Sir Thomas Cornwallis in reply to what must have been a sharp and serious reproof from Burghley. For Sir Thomas expresses himself as troubled, not to say frightened, by a turn of events which might loose the powerful Burghley's enmity. He disclaims all personal interest in the transaction, declares that he strongly advised his son against purchasing the property—which the Lord Treas-

urer evidently wished to hold against the support of Oxford's three surviving daughters by Anne Cecil—and eloquently begs Lord Burghley not to blame him for the actions of his headstrong son.

"I protest that I never saw nor heard any part of the assurance which hath passed between the Earl and my son," he declares. . . . "And, good my Lord, . . . think me not so doting and foolish in my age that for the attaining of Fisher's Folly, I would once put in adventure to lose the goodwill and favour which I have ever found towards me, since our first acquaintance."

In his later letter, Sir Thomas, having mollified Burghley, states that his son (William Cornwallis) "will not confess any intent or knowledge to defeat any purpose of your Lordship. For the secrecy he used he allegeth some reasons, but for the hasty conclusion (of the purchase) he layeth it wholly upon my Lord of Oxford."

Fisher's Folly was one of the show-places of Elizabethan London. It occupied the present site of Devonshire Square, just east of Bishopsgate Street Without. It is described as a huge structure with "gardens of pleasure, bowling-alleys and the like." Built by Jasper Fisher, one of the clerks in Chancery, and a member of the Goldsmiths' Company, the maintenance of this princely establishment proved such a strain on its builder's resources that the place was called Fisher's Folly. Oxford, with characteristic disregard of his own financial uncertainty, appears to have taken over the estate about 1584. Except for a visit which the Queen once paid him here, there is no record of the Earl having gone in for lavish entertaining while he owned the house. His city residence was still maintained at Oxford Court by London Stone. But by 1586 the poet's financial situation had become so precarious that he was obliged to accept a pension from the Crown. At the same time, he is known to have had many theatrical associations, he was still the acknowledged patron of many poets and dramatists,¹ and his own reputation as the best of the Court writers grew apace. All of these facts indicate that Lord Oxford had really acquired Fisher's Folly as headquarters for the school of poets and dramatists who openly acknowledged his patronage and leadership. These men included John Lyly, Thomas Watson, Robert Greene, Anthony Munday, Thomas Churchyard and Thomas Nash—all of whom tell us that they are, or have been, on terms of personal association with the Earl. In *Strange News* Nash

¹See the testimony of Thomas Nash, Gabriel Harvey and others, as reproduced in the October, 1944 and January, 1945 *Quarterly*.

describes the household of the literary nobleman in London where he has done most of his writing.

The passage is somewhat heated, for it is in reply to Gabriel Harvey's strictures on Tom's personal activities:

"For the order of my life, it is as civil as a civil urunge.² I lurk in my corners but converse in a house of credit, as well governed as any college, where there be more rare qualified men and selected good Scholars than in any Nobleman's house that I know in England. (My italics.)

"If I had committed such abominable villanies, or were a base shifting companion, it stood not with my Lord's honour to keep me. . . ."

These comments occur in the midst of surrounding references to the poet Earl of Oxford, the same "*Gentle Master William Apis Lapis*" to whom *Strange News* is dedicated, as we have shown.

Furthermore, the legal statement prepared by Thomas Kyd in 1593 to clear himself of the charge of heretical writing in collaboration with Marlowe, describes the same kind of an establishment, supported by a Lord with important theatrical and literary interests. Kyd's patron has always been a man of mystery to the orthodox "authorities." But he is obviously one and the same with Nash's patron -- the poet Earl of Oxford.

All such evidence leads me to the conclusion that Fisher's Folly housed Oxford's circle of writers for a time.

After William (later Sir William) Cornwallis took the place over in 1589, he is known to have provided a situation in his household as "reader" for Thomas Watson, one of Oxford's literary proteges. Cornwallis tells a strange tale of his relations with Watson--whom he describes as a prolific popular playwright--in letters to Sir Thomas Heneage.³ The Cornwallis statements regarding Watson's playwriting activities deserve, and shall have further investigation elsewhere. The point to be emphasized here is that it is abundantly apparent that the acquisition of Oxford's house by the Cornwallis family in 1583 provided the perfect opportunity for a member of that family to secure the copies of personal poems which are transcribed in the anthology bearing the signature of "Anne Cornwaleys." From some overlooked corner of the Earl's library at Fisher's Folly these verses could have been retrieved, the anonymous "Shakespeare"

poem among the others. This certainly bears every evidence of being one of Oxford's early commentaries upon his affair with Anne Vavasor.

And now, finally, as to the actual identity of Anne Cornwallis:

William Cornwallis had a daughter of that name. We do not know the date of her birth, although there were at least two adolescent children in the family in 1588.

Moreover, Cornwallis had an aunt named Anne who "died unmarried." His own mother--the wife of Sir Thomas Cornwallis--bore the same cognomen. Anne was also the name of both of the wives of Charles Cornwallis, William's younger brother.* Thus, we have four Anne Cornwallises, all closely connected with William Cornwallis of Fisher's Folly, either by blood or marriage--and all of them seemingly alive and of age to have transcribed "Anne Cornwaleys her Booke" within the period of the 1580's or early 1590's.

Here the case must rest for the present. But Lord Oxford's personal connection with the rare manuscript volume which contains the first authenticated transcription of a "Shakespeare" poem is clear and unmistakable, just as Halliwell-Phillips pointed out nearly a hundred years ago.

A London Worthy's Letter

One of our British members who deserves well of The Fellowship is William Kent, Editor of the *London Encyclopedia* and author of the fine reference volume, *London Worthies*, in which he gives the fullest account of the Oxford-Shakespeare case yet to appear in any book of its kind. Mr. Kent, like many other Oxfordians in the war zone, has had to carry on his work under handicaps of tragic consequence. He wrote us in April, 1941 that most of his library has been destroyed by bombs. Not long ago we heard from him again:

"Last July we went through a third enemy attack. All our furniture went, and our flat was a heap of ruins. This was the work of a pilotless plane. Fortunately, injuries were slight. I have recovered some of my books this time, but many in a torn, filthy condition. I have also lost two valuable Shakespeare notebooks, containing material for a volume I contemplated. However, I have started new ones and, indeed, filled one already. But the loss is grievous . . . I wonder if you could manage to send me duplicates of the NEWS-LETTERS and QUARTERLIES you sent me?"

We can, and certainly shall, Mr. Kent!

²A pun on Scilla, from which London's oranges were imported. Note that Shakespeare uses the same pun in *As You Like It*, II, 1.262:

"The sunn is neither red nor sick . . . but still . . . still as an orange."

³Tower Miscell. B.6. No. 152 (Hewell papers 86.1).

^{*}See *Our Fight on Sir William Cornwallis the Escapist*, Review of English Studies, Vol. 8, pp. 153-69.

8. (Editorial Notes on A.C. Common-place Book in Folger Library)

1. This is a small oblong quarto of nineteen leaves bound in leather. It was in the library of Saml. Lysons, an antiquarian and collector in 1790, and he apparently preserved the original paper of the verses by inter-leaving it with fresh strong paper. The binding is in diced russia, which Bond says "survives to the present day". On the spine of the binding is printed in gold, a title which reads approximately(I say this because I cannot lay hands on my original notes) Poems by Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford & Others. or Poems by Lord Oxford -- & others. In any case the only name on the spine is Oxford's and some identification.

2. There are several distinct hand-writings in the poems. Some have the name of the supposed author at the bottom in a spidery hand which may or not be Anne Cornwallis'. "Vavaser" and "Sir P. Sidney" are in the same hand also. There are only two of Oxford's and two of Anne Vavaser. Seven poems in a small cramped hand are signed with variations of "John Bentley".

3. Leaves through 3 to 19 which contains the literary text are uniformly 14 X 19.5 c.m. but two preliminary leaves differ in size-but are considerably smaller. Anne's name appears on verso 1st leaf, and the second contains on its recto a "pedigree of the Cornwaileys family(says Bond). This is a little less than frank. It is not a pedigree of the Cornwallis family, but a brief tracing of Anne's descent, on the distaff side from the 11th Earl of Oxford to show her relation to DeVere. Bond says this is in the autograph of Saml. Lysons. This shows that either Anne or Lysons thought it important to show the deVere connection.

4. It is almost an inescapable conclusion that these poems were written and/or copied in the '70s or '80s. Dyer's belong to '60s and '70s, very little after 1580. Sidney died in 1586. The State of France poem of no particular interest or merit is definite. "Sailing ship" is a fragment of a larger poem by Francis Edwards printed in the Paradise of Dainty Devices, 1576. Vavaser poems circa 1580. Bond believes nothing later than 1590. Says a recent opinion dates it around 1600. As there is an undoubted "Shakespeare poem in the book, it was no trouble for an Oxfordian to surmise that this "recent opinion" emanated from some "scientific historical scholar." Investigation confirmed this for it came from Dr. Giles Dawson of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

5. Anyone of Mr. Barrell's Anne's are potential owners of the book, but Lysons, thought it was the daughter of Sir William, though his idea may have been based on mere surmise.

6. The "Bentley" poems are all in one handwriting and have certain corrections. Bond says "it is hardly too much to suggest they are the author's corrections while the varied signatures appended have the somewhat naive appearance of a man's experimenting with his own name. The inevitable and tempting hypothesis (although hypothesis it must remain) is in the hand of the author."

6. Is it not rather suggestive to think that Bond, who was meticulous enough to measure down to the half-centimeter one of the pages, did not see, or overlooked the only name of the author of the poems given in large letters on the spine, the Earl of Oxford and others. As John Bentley has by far the most signed poems why no comment on the book not being titled "Poems by John Bentley & others, as would occur to almost anybody? Perhaps he did, and the strange elision of references to Oxford and the Vere family were due to the editors. These studies were evidently commissioned and paid for by Folger, and the title page shows the editors as J.G. McManaway, Giles E. Dawson, and Ed. E. Willoughby.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

July 31, 1969

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, D.C., 20004



Dear Fellow Members Shakespeare Oxford Society:

You may recall that the subject of our April News-Letter was the Anne Cornwalley's Common-place MSS. which contains the earliest known "Shakespeare" Poem, along with others with Oxfordian significance. (The legend on the spine reads: "MSS Poems by Vere, Earl of Oxford, & c.") A mention was made on our first page that a request from Capt. R. Ridgill Trout of London was the occasion of our examining these MSS in the Folger Library. On June 12 we received an air-letter beginning "My old friend, Capt. R. Ridgill Trout has asked me to write you on his behalf and thank you for your letter of May 13th. He is, I am sorry to say, in very poor health....." Shortly after another air-letter from his friend began; "You will be sorry to learn that our friend Capt. Trout died on June 17th at the age, I believe, of ninety-one. He passed away peacefully, and it was in every way, a happy release....." Capt. Trout was almost totally blind and deaf, yet in 1968, he had a short notice in the London T.L.S. requesting that anyone having any knowledge regarding the disposition of the contents and/or library of the house known as "Fisher's Folly", later Brooke House, and once owned by the Earl of Oxford, communicate with him. A personal friend of this writer, head of the English Dept. of one of our major universities, clipped this out of the London paper and sent it to me suggesting that I might want to look up Mr. or Miss Trout the next time I was in England. A month or so later, a letter was received from a young man in Los Angeles saying that he had written Capt. Trout re the Earl of Oxford, and had a letter from him with some literature, plus the advice to get in touch with us. This young man is now a supporting member of our Society. If each of our more fortunate members could do as much as this Honorary Member, our membership would now be doubled. Capt. Trout had made himself an authority on the history of the Vere family, and was one of the devoted and scholarly Oxfordians both in England and the U.S. to whom we later ones are so indebted for most of what we know on this subject. Below there follows a copy of a letter published in the "Shakespeare Fellowship News Letter" of Nov. 24, 1950.

The Society Receives a Valuable Gift.

Through the thoughtfulness and generosity of Miss Lois A. Book of Columbus Indiana, we now have a complete file of the Shakespeare Fellowship News Letters of the English Society, and The Shakespeare Fellowship News Letters and Quarterly of the American Branch from 1939 to 1947-8 when lack, or diversion, of funds forced it to cease publication. The two of these constitute a veritable treasure house of Oxfordian lore, of some of which we present members are now familiar, but also of much of which we have not heard. We have sought, and obtained, permission to reprint items, and one re Miss Book, who is still active and alert, will also be found below. Miss Book enjoys the unique distinction that she, when listening to a lecture on Shakespeare by an orthodox professor of English, disagreed with something he said, and in the end, converted him to Oxfordianism. I had heard of this, but this spring in a conversation with the then professor, now an emeritus Ph.D., and a loyal supporting member of our Society, heard him

say, upon learning I had visited Miss Book; "you know she was the one that converted me."

Mrs. Langdon Marvin of New York City tells us that Sir Winston Churchill in declining to read J. Thomas Looney's book, said he "did not like to have his myths disturbed." This sounded so Churchillian, that we wanted to pass it on to our readers, and found from Mrs. Marvin that it came from John Galsworthy, who had declared it "the best detective story he had ever read" and had backed his judgment by purchasing numerous copies and distributing them among his acquaintances with words of earnest recommendation. (Chas. Wisner Barrell in "Afterwords" to American Edition of "Shakespeare Identified.")

In the U.S., the late Prof. Louis P. Benezet, Ph. D. was a Paladin in the Oxfordian cause in the forties and early fifties; researching, writing, evangelizing, and lecturing up and down the land. Attached to this News-Letter is a reprint from the American Branch, Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly, which will serve to acquaint our younger members with the scope of Dr. Benezet's activities and contribution, and, hopefully, serve as an example and stimulus.

There have been some other developments recently in discoveries by our members or which the Society has been advised. The fact that there is no mention of them in this News-Letter does not mean that the importance of them is not appreciated, only that it is possible, and most desirable from our standpoint, that the author may want to expand them in a signed article and have them published in our News-Letter in its present format, or perhaps later in another style or Review which we have under contemplation, and which may materialize, if interest, demand, and finances materialize in sufficient substance to justify the expansion.

The up-coming Golden Jubilee of the Publication of "Shakespeare Identified"; in Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford by J. Thomas Looney.

Next year, 1970, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the publishing of Mr. Looney's book, which is the beginning and the foundation of the attribution of the authorship of "Shakespeare" to Edward de Vere, instead of the generally accepted Aubrey-Stratfordian Attribution, so dear to the hearts of academicians. It is meet, fitting, and right that our Society should now give consideration as to how we can best do this, and suggestions on this are solicited from our members.

One of the stock excuses of publishers, editors, et al, in refusing space or opportunity to present the Oxford side of the Authorship Question is that "the subject is too controversial." But is it? Let's look at this for a minute. In the Seventeenth Century, the question of whether the sun went around the earth, or the earth went around the sun, was controversial until Authority stepped in on the geocentric side, pronounced believers in a heliocentric universe heretics, and ended the controversy. But today almost all informed or educated people agree that we live in a heliocentric solar system, and it is so taught in all universities and colleges that I know of, yet I defy anybody to tell me where and when "authority" recanted or receded from its declared position. Has the Oxford v. Aubrey-Stratford reached such a stage that we can say it is no longer "controversial"? If not, where is the controversy going on, and where are the Aubrey-Stratfordians that will debate and controvert Oxfordian claims? If there is of now a controversy anywhere, please tell us of it, for we are "raring" to get into it. Has the hook for "dog tag" slipped up on us unawares, like a thief in the night?

Yours for E. Ver.

Shakespeare Oxford Society, Inc.

The Stratford Defendant Compromised By His Own Advocates

By LOUIS BÉNÉZET

Part One

The adherents of the Stratford story are like the devoted followers of a deep-seated religion. To doubt is to commit sacrilege. When one high priest of Stratford was shown the photographic plates which betrayed that the Ashbourne portrait had been tampered with, he walked away as though he were in a trance. Someone had slain his God.

It is strange to see the straws to which the Stratfordians cling, to keep their heads above the rising Oxford tide.

The writer once took part in a debate at an Eastern college, with the professor who teaches Shakespeare courses, before an audience composed largely of the latter's students.

My opponent, at one stage of the debate, cried out, "I don't know. I can't answer these questions. I'd like to hear George Lyman Kittredge answer them." But when he had recovered his poise, he came forth with his last trump card, his crushing counterattack. It was based on a drawing, the frontispiece of Miss Caroline Spurgeon's book, *Shakespeare's Imagery*.

As through an arch the violent roaring tide
Outruns the eye that doth behold his haste,
Yet in the eddy boundeth in his pride
Back to the strait that forred him on so fast.
In rage sent out, recalled in rage, being past.

This quotation from Lucrece is given by Miss Spurgeon, who tells how, from the eighteenth arch of Clopton's bridge over the Avon at Stratford, she had observed this same phenomenon, water flowing through the center of the arch, then eddying near the shore and gradually edging up stream again near the side of the arch, as proved by straws or small blades of grass afloat on the surface.

My opponent read the description of this eddy as given by Miss Spurgeon. There was triumph in his tone. He had demonstrated, beyond question, that *Lucrece*, at least, had been written by the Stratford man!

I asked whether there was anything peculiar in

the Stratford atmosphere that would cause water to run uphill. No, there was not. If there existed elsewhere an arch of the same shape and a stream of the same force, the same phenomenon would take place? Yes, presumably. And Shakespeare would never have used the simile unless he were sure that his readers had all witnessed this sight, of water flowing through an arch with such force that it piled up and had to retrace its direction alongside the main current? Well, possibly.

I turned to the audience and said: "Nothing, ladies and gentlemen, so illustrates the poverty of the Stratford case as the fact that it rests its proof on so flimsy an argument as this, catching at straws in the Avon to save itself from drowning."

And while we have Miss Spurgeon's book before us, let us examine it for evidence as to the identity of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare is full of allusions to sports and games. His first interest is falconry, and the games that he knows best are "bowls, football and tennis, but his images from bowls, which he clearly knew and liked best, are about three times as many as from any other game."

Miss Spurgeon may not realize it, but in effect she is telling us that Shakespeare was an aristocrat. Tennis was a game played only by the court and the nobility. And as for bowls, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* tells us how the common people were prohibited from indulging in this game by an act of Parliament, passed in 1541 and not repealed until 1845. Only a gentleman whose land brought in an income of £100 yearly might obtain a license to play on his own green. Drake and Hawkins might indulge in bowling, but not a "prompter's attendant" nor an actor.

In her next chapter Miss Spurgeon speaks of Shakespeare's many "images of riding and of bird-snaring and falconry," and she speaks of strong "evidence of personal experience." Here again emerges the picture of the aristocrat. Falconry was an expensive pastime. None but wealthy nobles could afford it. And as for horseback riding, which is so prominent in Shakespeare, and is mentioned in

every one of the plays of the First Folio except *The Tempest*, it was largely confined, in Elizabeth's time, to the aristocracy. The word "cavalier," meaning a rider, was synonymous with "aristocrat." Horses were the property chiefly of the gentry and nobility.

Again consulting the *Encyclopædia*, we read: "The use of horses for work-a-day purposes of transport and tillage is a modern development. In Britain oxen were the only plough animals until the end of the 18th century."

In comparing Shakespeare with Marlowe, Dekker, Jonson, Chapman and other writers of the time, Miss Spurgeon says: (p. 32) "There is, however, one point in these images in which Shakespeare practically stands alone, and that is in the evidence of sympathy with the animal hunted or snared, and in his understanding and feeling for the horse and his movements and response."

After commenting on Jonson's and Chapman's interest in the bourgeois ("fairly well-to-do town types"), "which interest Shakespeare comparatively little," and showing that the latter's characters are nobles or better classes, Miss Spurgeon comments on "Shakespeare's love of humanity" and his "sympathy" with "the poor and broken bankrupt" and the underdog in general. Again the lady does not realize that she is proving that the plays could never have been written by the man who sought to send the impoverished debtor to jail, knowing that the man's family were dependent on his labor. Far more probable, as their author, is the kind-hearted nobleman, who himself knew what it was to be "lame, poor . . . despised" (Sonnet XXXVII) after he had lost his fortune and his standing at Court.

Miss Spurgeon speaks of Shakespeare's wonderfully musical ear and "his real musical knowledge, both theoretical and technical." She proves that he must have been an expert performer. Again we see the picture of the Earl of Oxford, composer and musician, of whom John Farmer wrote that as an amateur he had "overgone" most of the professionals.

She speaks of Shakespeare's "horror of bad smells." Again she has nominated the delicate aristocrat and named the boy who killed calves for his patron, and was brought up in "the dirtiest village in England" by a father whose offal pile was of too rank a stench for even his hardhearted neighbors.

Next the lady speaks of Shakespeare's fastidiousness in eating, of his "sensitive digestion," again painting the dainty aristocrat.

Miss Spurgeon goes on to say that he was a "competent rider and loved horses, as indeed he did most animals," except that his fastidious senses revolted from the dirty way in which house dogs were fed at table.

He had, in short, an excellent eye for a shot, with bow or with arrow, and loved exercising it. He was good at all kinds of athletic sports and exercise, running, dancing, jumping and swimming. He had an extraordinarily sensitive ear for time. . . .

Here again is a perfect description of the young Earl, capped by Miss Spurgeon's wonder how, with his sensitiveness to odors and foul things, "he managed to survive the dirt and smells of Elizabethan England." In contrast we remember the unclean surroundings of the Stratford man's youth and recall that he deliberately chose to go back to them in middle life.

Miss Spurgeon names, as "the five outstanding qualities of Shakespeare's nature—sensitiveness, poise, courage, humour and wholesomeness. . . . If he is abnormally sensitive, he is also unusually courageous, mentally and spiritually."

He is "gentle, kindly, honest, brave and true, with deep understanding and quick sympathy for all living things." Here again she is describing the refined and sensitive nobleman, who wrote such a bitter lament over "the loss of his good name," who was so loyal to his friends and so just and kindly in his dealing with many servants and retainers, rather than the usurer who refused to repay his wife's loan to the poor shepherd and worked against his fellow townsmen in the matter of enclosing the village green.

Miss Spurgeon devotes many pages to her description of Shakespeare's interest in well-kept gardens, with pruning and grafting, transplanting and manuring, indicating that he was familiar with and took great delight in the kind of horticulture that a nobleman might watch, with trained and experienced gardeners attending his grounds.

Some Stratfordians, among them J. Q. Adams, Frank Harris and J. Dover Wilson, have drawn a picture of Shakspeare as something of a parasite, fastening upon the wealthy and improvident young Earl of Southampton, adopting him as a patron, tapping him for a thousand pounds (as per legend), accompanying him on a trip to Italy under the rickshaw of John Florio, and so forth.

But Miss Spurgeon paints for us the portrait of a man like Oxford, who was contemptuous of all sycophants, refusing to kow-tow even to the Queen, sick at heart over the faithlessness of his friends,

among them his own half-sister who tried to have him declared a bastard. I quote:

It is quite certain that one of the things which rouses Shakespeare's bitterest and deepest indignation is feigned love and affection assumed for a selfish end. He who values so intensely devoted and disinterested love, turns almost sick when he watches flatterers and sycophants bowing and cringing to the rich and powerful, purely to get something out of them for themselves. It is as cer-

tain as anything can be, short of direct proof, that he had been hurt, directly or indirectly, in this particular way. No one who reads his words carefully can doubt that he had either watched someone, whose friendship he prized, being deceived by fawning flatterers, or that he himself had suffered from a false friend or friends, who, for their own ends, had drawn out his love while remaining "themselves as stone."

(To be continued)

JUNE-JULY, 1940

5

Shakespeare and Ben Jonson

As one reads the plays of these two greatest dramatists of the Elizabethan-Jacobean era one is immediately struck by a great contrast between them. One is aristocratic, the other bourgeois. The noblemen of one author are natural, at ease, convincing. They talk the language of their class, both in matter and manner. Even more is this true of Shakespeare's heroines. They are aristocrats to the core. On the other hand in portraying the lower classes Shakespeare is unconvincing. He makes them clods or dolts or clowns, and has them amuse us by their gaucheries. He gives them undignified names: Wart, Bulcalf, Mouldy, Bottom, Dogberry, Snout, etc. Only occasionally does Shakespeare hold up a gentleman to ridicule, as he does in the case of Slender and Aguecheek, said by Professor Dowden to represent the same person, a sentiment strongly seconded by certain Oxfordians, who see Philip Sidney as the original.

On the other hand Jonson's bourgeois characters are natural, while his nobles are caricatures.

They bear the same kind of names that Shakespeare gives to his commoners: Sir Paul Either-side, Sir Amorous La-Foole, Sir Epicure Mammon, Lady Haughty, Sir Diaphanous Silkworm, etc.

There is always a strong tendency on the part of English writers from the upper middle class to be resentful of the attitude assumed toward them by the titled nobility.

This same ridiculing of class distinction is a mark of talented commoners. Recall Dickens' Lord Munthred and Lord Verisopht, Sheridan's Sir Benjamin Backbite and Lady Sneerwell, W. S. Gilbert's Lord Tolloller and Lord Mountararat.

It is characteristic of Ben Jonson. He has no sympathy with aristocratic aloofness and superiority.

On the other hand Shakespeare is the natural aristocrat. He never has to think to make his characters of gentle blood act their parts. They do so as naturally as they breathe. Says Edmund of Gloucester of his distinguished brother Edgar:

"In wisdom I should ask thy name;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,

What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn."

Louis P. Bénézet

The Stratford Defendant Compromised By His Own Advocates

By LOUIS P. BÉNÉZET

Part Three

The next witness whom we shall summon to the stand is William Allen Neilson who, with Ashley Thorndike, has given us *The Facts about Shakespeare*. Let us look first at Shakespeare's reading, according to Neilson. To begin with Latin: Dr. Neilson finds evidence that he had read Esop's *Fables*, the *Eclogues* of Spagnoli Mantuanus, the *Orations* of Cicero, the *Amores* of Ovid, the latter's *Metamorphoses*, the histories of Livy, Ovid's *Fasts*, the poems of Vergil, the plays of Terence, Jitto of Plautus, the poems of Horace, the wacks of Seneca. He shows "slight acquaintance" also with the works of Caesar, Lucian and Pliny. Neilson is bothered because so few of these writers had been translated into English in Elizabeth's time, and confesses that Shakespeare's "use of Romance words gives clear proof that his schooling was no unimportant element in his mastery of speech."

Pretty good, this, for the lad who either never went to school at all or dropped out at what we would call the seventh grade. Here he is, equipped with a Latin background that would not disgrace a modern A. B. who had majored in the language. And yet there is Ben Jonson, with his "small Latin and less Greek." It begins to look as if somebody had lied. Fripp, in *Shakespeare, Man and Artist*, (p. 407) takes his shot at Ben Jonson's testimony where he speaks of "the unwarranted theory of Shakespeare's lack of Latin."

Next, Dr. Neilson is puzzled by Shakespeare's knowledge of Greek. The Elizabethan grammar schools only occasionally offered Greek, and no one knows that Stratford taught it. Shakespeare had read Plutarch' *Lives*; *Troilus and Cressida* shows that he knew Homer; and here is Lucian all through *Tamion of Athens*. Dr. Neilson can't explain it. Lucian had not been translated into English, but there is Ben Jonson again, so he says the Shakespeare's knowledge of Lucian "was probably not gained from the Greek original"! Then there is that plain reference to the *Ethiopia* of Heliodorus.*

*"Like the Egyptian thief, kill what I love." *Twelfth Night*.

the English translation of which had been dedicated to Lord Oxford in 1569 by Thomas Underdown. He mentions it, but does not explain it. He dismisses Churton Collins and the ten Greek tragedies, which the latter proves Shakespeare to have read, by saying that "such parallelisms are more naturally explained as coincidences arising from the treatment of analogous themes and situations." More naturally than what? Why it is more natural to think that there are eighty surprising coincidences in thought between Shakespeare and the Greek tragic writers than to think that perhaps Shakespeare had gone to college and read them there?

Dr. Neilson admits that it is "fairly certain" that Shakespeare knew French. He had read Montaigne, Rabelais, "the French sonneteers of the 16th century," and he shows "direct acquaintance with Ronsard." He knows Italian literature, at least in its *novelle*. He knows the *Decameron*, and has drawn upon Boccaccio and Cinthio, also Ariosto. *Othello* and *Measure for Measure* came from Italian sources. Dr. Neilson keeps assuring us that there were, or must have been [italics mine] French or English translations of most of these stories, so that it "cannot be proved" that Shakespeare knew Italian. Shakespeare draws upon Straparola. He has read *Apollonius and Silla*. He has read *Diana*, by George de Montemayor, either in Spanish or in a French translation, or he "may have seen" the manuscript of Yonge's translation, published in 1598.

Again we submit that the "prompter's attendant" is doing pretty well. How many A. B.'s from Cambridge, even today, have read all this French and Latin and Greek and Spanish?

Coming now to his English reading: Dr. Neilson finds that he has read *Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Hampton*, *The Squire of Low Degree*, *Roland and Oliver*, *Huon of Bordeaux*, *Robin Hood*, *King Cophetua* and the *Beggar Maid*, Chaucer's works, Caxton's *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy*, Henryson's *Testament of Cresside*, *The Legend of Good*

Women, Gower's Confessio Amantis and Appollonius of Tyre.

He had read the "obscure Arthur Brooke," Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, collections of stories by Whetstone, Riche, Pettie. "Of the greatest writers of imaginative literature there is none missing from the list of those who knew," Spenser, Sidney, Daniel, Drayton, Constable, Watson and Barnes are among those whose writings he shows that he had read. He "had a thorough familiarity with contemporary sonneteers." He had read Daniels' *Rosamond* and *Barons' Wars*. He knew Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*. He was familiar with "the longer prose fictions of the time," such as Lyly's *Euphues*, Lodge's *Rosalynde* and Greene's *Pandosto*. He had read books on the subject of supernatural beliefs, and takes from one of them, Harsnett's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, names and phrases used by Edgar in *King Lear*.

As for histories, Shakespeare had read Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, Hall's work on *The Union of Lancaster and York*, the *Chronicles* of Grafton and of Fabyan and the *Annales* of John Stowe; also the *Acts and Monuments*, better known as the *Book of Martyrs*, by John Fox.

His reading of contemporary plays, according to Dr. Neilson, was encyclopedic. To name all the plays that he shows familiarity with "would be to write a history of the Elizabethan drama." Preston, Gascoigne, Whetstone, Marlowe, Kyd, Lyly, Peele, Greene, and others, all have left traces in Shakespeare's plays. Or was it, as Oxfordians believe, the other way around?

He had read books of exploration and travel "like Eden's *History of Travayle in the West and East Indies*, Raleigh's *Discoverie of Guiana* and such pamphlets as were used in the vast compilation of Richard Hakluyt." His scientific knowledge "must have been derived from such works as Pliny, Batman upon Bartholome his *Booke De Proprietatibus Rerum*, and from conversation."

"It has been shown by Anders that he knew both the Geneva and the Great Bible, as well as the Prayer Book."

Then Dr. Neilson adds another sentence which completely puts the Stratford man out of the running, as we shall presently show. "When it is further considered that only a fraction of what any author reads leaves a mark that can be identified in what he writes, we shall readily allow that in the matter of study Shakespeare showed an activity

and receptivity of mind that harmonizes with the impression received from his creative work."

Dr. Neilson says "a fraction." He is right. Let us call it a large fraction, one third, in fact. He is saying that he probably read three times as many Latin works as have been named above, three times as many books in Italian and French and English. Now we are talking of a wonderfully well read scholar.

Before we go on with an analysis of the time element involved, let us summon another Stratfordian, Dr. A. S. Cairncross,* taking the stand, testifies:

1. That *Hamlet* was written by Shakespeare "in 1588 or early in 1589."
2. That *King John*, *Twelfth Night*, *Henry IV*, Part 1, *Henry IV*, Part 2, *Henry V*, *Henry VI*, Parts 1, 2, and 3, *Pericles*, *Othello* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* were written and acted before August, 1593.

Ben Jonson, that rock of the Stratfordian cause, wrote in 1613 that *Titus Andronicus* had been on the boards "for twenty-five or thirty years." *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* are dated by many commentators among the earliest of Shakespeare's plays. This means then that the Stratford man had accomplished the great bulk of this reading and study before he was twenty-eight years old, for he was only twenty-four when, for example, *Hamlet* was produced.

Let us see where this takes us, chronologically. Let us admit for the sake of argument that Shakespeare entered the Stratford School in 1571, at the age of seven. By the time he is thirteen, in 1577, he has read Lily's *Grammar*, the *Fables* of T'op, some of the plays of Terence, part of the *Aeneid* of Vergil, the Letters of Cicero. (I quote Churton Collins for the curriculum of the school.)

Now he drops out of school, according to legend, and is apprenticed to a butcher. Halliwell-Phillipps refers to Stratford as a bookless town, but other authorities, arguing from the learning in the plays, say that it "must have been" stocked with all of these classics in French, Greek, Latin and English. J. Q. Adams imagines that the young apprentice goes around borrowing books from the vicar and schoolmaster. But apprentices in those days put in long days of labor, and there was no reading after dark, in homes of the proletariat and the trades-

* *The Problem of Hamlet: A Solution.*

people. Let us grant that William reads ten books each year. Remember that we must allow him his Sundays to wander through the forest of Arden and "pick up" from the wardens all the intimate knowledge that he shows of forest law. This will give him fifty books by the time he is eighteen, when, as we recall, he becomes a married man, and, not long afterwards, a father.

Fifty books should have drained dry the literary resources of the village.* But let us allow that somehow he discovers others in homes not yet explored, and that between 1587 and 1587, when he is not earning a living for his family, or poaching, or helping Anne do the washing for Susanna and the twins, he reads fifty more. These would have to be in Latin or in English. To assign Greek, Italian, French and Spanish works to Stratford would be to put too great a strain upon the already stretched-tobreaking "possibilities."

Now comes the departure for London, although J. Q. Adams has Shakspeare teaching a country school (as per "the actor Laev." through Beeston, via Aubrey) for several years afterwards. If he is teaching a country school (and Adams says that unless we grant this, and if we "think of him as early snatched from school, working all day in a butcher's shop, growing up in a house devoid of books and of a literary atmosphere. . . . we find it hard to understand how he suddenly blossomed out as one of England's greatest men of letters with every mark of literary culture"), he cannot be reading French and Italian works. They weren't found in country schools in Warwickshire.

Let us then send him to London. It is 1587, and one year later he must produce *Hamlet* and *Titus Andronicus*. Within the next five years he must bring forth fifteen other plays and a long narrative poem. Between horse-holding and attending the prompter, he must read, in that time, all the hundreds of plays written by Elizabethan dramatists up to 1593. Rabelais, Ronsard, Montaigne, Boccaccio, Ariosto, Cinthio, Bandello, Homer, ten Greek tragedies, Plutarch, Hall, Holinshed, Lucian, Heliodorus, Fox, Livy, etc. I am allowing that in Stratford he has found and read the works of Plautus, Horace, Seneca, Caesar, Pliny, Riche, Pettie, Sidney, Daniel, Lodge, Spenser, Clarendon, Constable, Watson, Barnes, Grafton, Falvian,

*White says: "When he was eating the bread of poverty, he must have found time to obtain some knowledge of books, of which, except Bibles and the schoolhouse grammar there were not a dozen in all Stratford."

Stowe and Livy, besides *Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Hampton*, *Roland and Oliver*, *King Cophetua* and *the Beggar Maid*, *The Legend of Good Women*, etc.

Lay out a curriculum for a modern college man who has had "small Latin and less Greek," and no foreign language, and tell him that within five years he must read as follows:

In Greek: Ten tragedies, Lucian and Heliodorus. In Italian: The works of Cinthio, Ariosto, Boccaccio, Bandello.

In French: The works of Rabelais, Montaigne, Ronsard and the 16th century sonneteers.

In English: Translations of Homer, Plutarch, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; some two hundred plays of Elizabethan dramatists, the Chronicles of Hall and Holinshed, the poems of many semi-obscure writers.

In Latin: Ovid's *Fasti* and *Amores*, etc.

In addition to this he must "pick up" a technical knowledge of law, ditto of music, of forest law, of war, of the geography and customs of Italy and France, of the manners of a social class from whose homes he has been strictly barred. Tell him that in addition to this he must support a wife and three children, or earn his own way. Tell him that at the end of five years he must in addition have written ten plays and a poem of 1,200 words. Then tell him what you have laid out is only "a fraction" of what he must read.

No, Dr. Neilson, your fellow Stratfordian, Dr. Cairncross, has shown how impossible your thesis is.

No, Dr. Cairncross, your fellow Stratfordians, Professor Churton Collins and President Neilson, have proved how impossible it is to believe that your man who produced *Hamlet* in 1588 was Wm. Shakspeare of Stratford.

Oxford-Shakespeare Talks

During the past few months, Prof. Bénézet of Dartmouth and Mrs. Elsie G. Holden of Denver have both given successful talks to interested audiences on the Oxford-Shakespeare evidence in their respective parts of the country. One of Mrs. Holden's best-received lectures has had to do with the known drama of Lord Oxford's private life as concerned upon in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*.

Travel permitting, Prof. Bénézet plans to make a speaking tour as far south as Florida in the early spring. We hope to give an adequate report on his activities in our April issue.

The Stratford Defendant Compromised By His Own Advocates

By LOUIS P. BÉNÉZET, A.M., Ph.D.

* * Continued from the January QUARTERLY * *

It will be recalled that we granted, for the sake of argument, that Will Shakspeare, the lad from the home of illiterate parents had been admitted to the Stratford Latin Grammar School at the age of seven, although this is pure conjecture, and there is not a shred of evidence to support it.

Let us now summon another Stratfordian witness. This is Edgar I. Fripp, of Liverpool University. On pages 83 and 84 of his book, *Shakespeare, Man and Artist*, we read of Shakespeare's supposed entry into the school at Stratford. Mr. Fripp does not know what the entrance requirements were, but surmises that in addition to knowing how to read and write the boy shall be "fit for Latin Grammar."

He gives the entrance requirements of two similar schools. The first, St. Paul's, says, "If your child can read and write Latin and English sufficiently so that he be able to read and write his own lessons then he shall be admitted." This is dated 1537.

By 1578 Shrewsbury has the rule that "no scholar shall be admitted before he can write his name, read English perfectly, and have his 'Accidence' without book, give case of a noun or adjective, or parsing of a verb active and passive, and make a (Latin) verse by any of the concordances, the Latin words being given him." This staggered Mr. Fripp. He realized how he had barred out his young candidate, so added that Shrewsbury's standard was high and that Stratford in 1564 "permitted an easier examination." However, he does not tell us what it required.

But where would the son of illiterate parents ever learn, at the age of seven, "to read English perfectly" or even to write his name? Remember that in 1612 the best that he can do with his surname is "Sha(blot)p." We are told that his literate playmates had probably taught him to read and write, and distinguish the case of a noun, etc., and on the other hand possibly they hadn't! No; William Shakspeare of Stratford probably "picked up" enough learning so that just before he died he could write his full autograph, but to picture him entering, at seven, the kind of school that Dr. Fripp

describes is too great a breach of probability.

Fripp finally offers an explanation of the mystery. Says he: "We have mistaken Alderman Shakespeare if he had not a copy of the Geneva Bible in his house. His son shows such familiarity with the opening chapters that we may believe he spelled them out and almost learned them by heart." But the Stratfordian Countess de Chambrun has proved that John Shacksper, as the clerk spells his name, was a Catholic who would never have permitted his son to see a Geneva Bible.

All through his book Fripp is dropping little hints that bolster up the Oxford cause. He points out that Shakespeare, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, uses the name of the Frenchman, La Mothe, who came to England in 1572 as special envoy to plead the suit of the Duc d'Alençon for the hand of Elizabeth. This man Oxford knew personally. But how would the Stratford youth, who was barely eight years old at the time, ever have heard of him, and who in London theatrical society would recall his name twenty years afterwards, when Shakspeare is supposed, in Stratfordian circles, to have produced the play?

On page 63 Fripp tells of a tour of the players of John, Earl of Oxford, in 1560, and of the company of Edward, Earl of Oxford, in 1563, proving that the thirteen year old boy, a year after his father's death, was maintaining the players as his own company.

On page 69 Fripp gives an interesting table of the name of Shakespearean characters and their meanings, proving that the author understood obscure words in French, Italian, Latin and Greek. (Ophelia—help—and Desdemona—ill fortune—both from this last-named language.) He admits that Ben Jonson's story about the "small Latin" is false. "Shakespeare," he says, "became an excellent Latin scholar" and "critics inclined to underestimate his scholarship have had to confess their astonishment" at some of his keen uses of Latin phrases. Like Churton Collins, he fills pages and pages with proof of Shakespeare's wonderful knowledge of authors like Livy, Vergil, Horace,

Cæsar, Seneca, Plautus and other classical writers. Again the lie is given to Ben Jonson.

Fripp shows that Shakespeare knows the untranslated parts of Ovid as intimately as he does the *Metamorphoses*, which had been translated in 1567, as we remember, by Arthur Golding, Oxford's uncle. Next he testifies to his remarkable knowledge of music, which is like that of a professional. He says, "Shakespeare, we may be sure, was both a vocalist and an instrumentalist." He fails to tell us when and how the butcher's apprentice and prompter's attendant acquired all this skill. Also, does it not seem strange that this lover of music and instrumentalist does not have in his house one violin, cithern or flute at the time when he makes his will?

On page 138 Fripp, having filled his hero's youthful years full of training in the classics and in music, assigns him to three years in an attorney's office, and says that this is the natural inference "from his marriage in 1582 and his extraordinary knowledge, and large and accurate usage, in his writings from the beginning [italics mine] of legal terminology and procedure." . . . "His legal terms are legion; sometimes they are highly technical; frequently they are metaphorical; often they are wrought into the very fibre of his verse; but most remarkable of all, they flow from him, unawares," and so on for three more pages. He finally says that he is not maintaining "that Shakespeare was a barrister, but that he would have made a great one and had gained *somewhere* [italics mine] his trained legal insight." He goes on to say that "the facts demand professional experience in an attorney's office and without doubt at Stratford in or about the years 1579-87." But Sir George Greenwood points out that we have all sorts of legal papers from Stratford lawyers' offices, and nowhere is there a signature of Wm. Shakspeare in 1579-87 to be found among them. Besides, Adams is "sure" that he was teaching a country school at this period, and Professor Elze is "sure" that at this time he was travelling in Italy.

In 1587, according to Fripp, Shakespeare suddenly got tired of the "unromantic drudgery of an attorney's office," and packed off to London with the Queen's Company of actors.

Fripp waves aside all the old legends about poaching, butcher's apprenticeship, holding horses, attending prompters, and the like, saying that they all date from periods "too remote in time" after Shakspeare's death "to concern the historian." He forgets that the one story to which he desperately

clings, i.e., that Shakspeare's father had him attend school from his eighth to his thirteenth year, dates from Rowe, who wrote forty years after Aubrey and the others whom he refuses to believe.

Also, after contemptuously dismissing Aubrey's other yarns for being "too remote" in point of time, he makes a *volte-face* and discovers that "there is noticeable truth in the Aubrey legends that young Shakespeare before he left Stratford was 'inclined to acting' and could 'make a speech in high style'" but not while killing a calf!

Fripp gives the story of sonnets 153 and 154. He quotes a poem in Greek called Cupid's Torch, written by Marianus. It is unmistakably the original of the two sonnets. Says Fripp: "Shakespeare knew some Greek and may have read the original in 'Anthologia Graeca,' 1566." The present writer studied Greek for seven years, but finds several words in the stanza that would have caused him to refer to a lexicon. If Shakespeare could translate this poem, then Ben Jonson doubly lied. Mr. Fripp says it is "more likely" that he read it in a Latin translation. But the first Latin translation, he admits, was that of Lubinus, in 1603, and he has already set 1597 as the last possible date for the writing of the sonnet! Again the back of the university man is evident.

Mr. Fripp devotes three or four pages to Shakespeare's military knowledge. He freely uses soldier jargon. Corselets, pauldrons, forgets, ancients, lieutenants, corporals, Bezonians, bilbos, and similar expressions are commonplace in his talk. Yet Fripp admits that "evidence is wanting that in 1582 or at any other time he bore arms in military service," although "in imagination and on the stage he was a true soldier."

Joseph Quincy Adams, in his *Life of William Shakespeare*, dwells upon the intimacy of Ben Jonson and Shakspeare. He makes much of the Mermaid Tavern, and describes the wit-combats which took place there. In *The Facts about Shakespeare* (1927 edition), page 39, Fuller's story about the wit-combat is given in full, but where Fuller says, "I beheld," this version says, "I beheld," conveying the impression that Fuller, aged three, had been present. An American college president, in correspondence with the writer, when asked why he could not accept Oxford as Shakespeare, replied that he could not forget the testimony of those who were present at the bouts between Jonson and the Bard of Avon at the Mermaid.

Now comes Fripp, joining Sir E. K. Chambers in pronouncing the Mermaid story a bit of imagina-

tion. "There is no evidence," he writes, "to connect him with the Mermaid Tavern and Jonson's *confrères*. Probability is against it, if on no other ground than incompatibility of temper. Whatever the 'wit combats' imagined by Fuller and the respect and affection inspired in the greater by the less, Shakespeare and Jonson could not have been boon companions. The rich and generous genius of the one and the self-assertive, envious talent of the other were inconsistent, if not antagonistic." Here is one more Stratfordian who believes that Jonson's "love this side idolatry" was not genuine, but hollow, and dictated by other motives than sincerity.

Shakespeare Personality, by David Masson, contains many straws which indicate the direction of the wind. Space will not permit lengthy quotation. However, the tone of the book can be sensed from the following: (p. 15) "One omission in the will is rather curious. There is not the least allusion in it to books, papers or writings published. Plate is mentioned (he enumerates other items), but whatever books or papers there were in New Place go unnamed into 'household stuff.' There is not the least trace in the will of the usual anxiety of a dying author as to the fate of his literary remains." Imagine the "true and originall copies" of *Hamlet* and *Othello* tossed into the junk barrel with the kitchen pots, the old shoes and other "household stuff"! It seems strange that other Stratfordians have failed to comment on this extraordinary and most significant omission in the will. Mr. Masson goes on to say that "strangely enough there is not a single sentimental phrase in the will." He comments on some other strange features of the story of Shakespeare's belongings and again reminds us that there apparently was no book in the whole of New Place. Says he: "Books that belonged to Ben Jonson, with his autograph in them, are not very rare." He goes on to say that the same is true of Milton, but "curiously" we have not a single book that belonged to Shakespeare. It does seem extraordinary, when we recall that long list of works that Dr. Neilson proves that he had read.

A last comment by Mr. Masson is worth recording. He is conscious of the baffling cloud of secrecy that surrounds the Shakespeare personality, and he wonders why. He speaks of the fact that in the works of Ben Jonson not only are the dedications "full of personal allusions, but in the appended miscellanies in verse and prose there is a perfect mine of particulars as to the author's relations with his contemporaries and his opinions of them." . . . "Contrast this," says Mr. Masson, "with what we

know of Shakespeare. Nothing on earth could get a poem out of him."

To be continued.

Keep the Light Burning

Efforts to strengthen our membership must not be relaxed at this time despite the inescapable exigency of world events. For, as the shattering tides of war subside, all civilized persons are bound to turn with freshened interest to those goodly intellectual pursuits which lift the mind of man above the level of the sub-human savages whose mad career is ending. This is our apology for trying to keep the Oxford-Shakespeare case alive in a devastated world. Members who have neglected to pay their dues can help by doing so at once.

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The Stratford Defendant Compromised By His Own Advocates

By LOUIS P. BÉNÉZET, A.M., Ph.D.

The concluding paper in a stimulating series.

Let us turn now to another witness, a man of the keenest perception and insight. This is Frank Harris, who comes closer to painting a true picture of the real Shakespeare than any other of the Stratfordian writers.

To begin with, he says that it is nonsense to say, as most critics do, that Shakespeare never put himself into any play. He has done so twenty times. Other critics have thought that perhaps *Hamlet* alone might be autobiographical. But Harris says, "Suppose that Shakespeare, in painting another character, did nothing but paint Hamlet over again, trait by trait, virtue by virtue, fault by fault, our assurance would be almost complete, for a dramatist only makes this mistake when he is speaking unconsciously in his own person." He quotes Coleridge:

"In Hamlet we see a great, almost enormously intellectual activity and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it."

Harris asks what other personage we find in Shakespeare who is "bookish and irresolute, a lover of thought and not of action, of melancholy temper, too, and prone to unpack his heart with words." "Romeo," is his answer. Hazlitt says, "Romeo is Hamlet in love. Both are absent and self involved; both live, out of themselves, in a world of imagination."

The melancholy Jaques is Shakespeare again, according to Harris. It is significant that this character is original with Shakespeare, not being found in Lodge's *Rosalynde*. "His humorous sadness, the child of contemplation, was indeed Shakespeare's most constant mood. Intellectual curiosity shows in Jaques as in Hamlet." This is all intensely interesting to Oxfordians, for these three characters have been felt from the first to be the most evident of the numerous autobiographical sketches of the Earl. Professor Slater has said that David Copperfield is no more autobiographical of Dickens than Hamlet is of Oxford. *Romeo and Juliet* is felt to be the story of his love affair with Anne Vavasor, whose kinsmen were his hated enemies. And Jaques,

like Oxford, has sold his lands to see others, and in general reflects his whimsical melancholy.

Harris sees Hamlet qualities also in *Macbeth*,—in the first act a meditative nature "full of the milk of human kindness," . . . "an irresolute dreamer, courteous and gentle hearted, of perfect intellectual fairness and bookish phrase; and in especial his love of thought and dislike of action are insisted upon again and again." But having made *Macbeth* somewhat in his own image, gentle, bookish and irresolute, he is forced, by the historical fact that *Macbeth* murdered Banquo and the rest, to make a killer of him. "Ambition was foreign to the Hamlet-Shakespeare nature," says Harris. "I am inclined to think that Shakespeare was even more irresolute and indisposed to action than Hamlet himself."

Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, Biron in *Love's Labour's Lost* and Posthumus in *Cymbeline* are other personifications of the author, according to Harris. He makes an excellent case for each. In speaking of Posthumus' fight with Cloten, he is "depicted as a rare swordsman of wonderful magnanimity." Pisanio says,

My master rather played than fought.

And had no help of anger.

"I call this gentle kindness," says Harris, "the birth mark of Shakespeare." And after drawing a very keen parallel between Hamlet and Posthumus, he says of the author: "He shows himself very muddle-witted, credulous and impulsive, quick to anger and quicker still to forgive, with thoughts all turned to sadness and to musing."

He has drawn unconsciously a perfect picture of the Earl of Oxford in his youth, the man who in a quick burst of anger, ran his sword through the spying servant of Lord Burghley; who was persuaded by his crafty cousins that his wife, Anne, was untrue to him, who later forgave and forgot, but who retired to his castle to shun the court and devote himself for the last fourteen years of his life to his own reflections, his writings and his music.

All the way through Mr. Harris' work we keep running across phrases and paragraphs that are descriptive of Oxford, and totally foreign to the character of the Stratford man. For example; "Both these, the love of country life and contempt of gold are, as we shall see later, abiding peculiarities of Shakespeare." Also: "Even as a young man Shakespeare hated the cruelty of ambition and the savagery of war as much as he loved the ceremonies of chivalry and observances of gentle courtesy." Again we see the noble, who was born with lands and wealth, amid the life of the country aristocracy. Mr. Harris, like Percy Allen and other Oxfordians, has picked out Valentine, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, as another autobiographical sketch. He says (p. 183), "Valentine displays the gentle forgiveness of disposition which we have already had reason to regard as one of Shakespeare's most marked characteristics." Recall Richard Grant White's comment on the Stratford man's pursuit of his debtor, that it "is an incident in Shakespeare's life which it requires the utmost allowance and consideration for the practice of the time and country to enable us to contemplate with equanimity—satisfaction is impossible."

Turning to *The Merchant of Venice*, Mr. Harris, again agreeing with the Oxfordians, selects Antonio as another representation of the author. He ridicules those commentators who have represented the merchant "as a master of affairs, a prudent, thrifty soul." He points out that Antonio is quite the reverse: an improvident, affectionate friend who lends lavishly to the spendthrift Bassanio, and, far from seeing through the real motive of Shylock, thinks that the usurer has become humane. This is no hard-headed, penny-pincher (like the Stratford man), but a generous aristocrat who will lend his last cent to a friend and put his own life in jeopardy to give him more rope for his marital gamble. Mr. Harris goes on: "The same prodigality and contempt of money are to be found in nearly all of Shakespeare's plays and *curiously enough* [italics mine] the persons to show this disdain are usually the masks of Shakespeare himself. A philosophic soliloquy is hardly more characteristic of Shakespeare than a sneer at money. This peculiarity is not a trait of his youth chiefly, as it is with most men who are free handed. It seems to be a reasoned attitude toward life and it undoubtedly becomes more and more marked as Shakespeare grows older." (p. 190.)

A little later Mr. Harris writes: "It is astonishing to find this sadness, this courtesy, this lavish

generosity and contempt of money, this love of love and friendship in any man in early manhood; but these qualities were Shakespeare's from youth to old age." He goes on to say that Antonio's "heedless trust of other men and impatience are qualities most foreign to the merchant," but they are shown again and again by Shakespeare's impersonations (among whom Mr. Harris includes Benedick, Biron and Orsino, again following Oxfordian writers).

Mr. Harris now indulges in a wild goose chase, pursuing the Dark Lady of the *Sonnets*. He enthusiastically embraces the theory of Thomas Tyler that Mary Fitton was the "dark lady" and that the "fair youth" was William Herbert, soon to be Earl of Pembroke. He dates the *Sonnets* from 1598 to 1601, being compelled to do so by the fact that William Herbert did not come to court until 1598. Mr. Harris lives so thoroughly in the poems that he cannot see the absurdity of saying that the ex-butcher boy, horse-holding groom and fortune-hunting actor sent the young nobleman, twenty years old, to make love, as a proxy for him, to the Queen's maid of honour, and was astonished and cut to the quick when the lady preferred the future earl!

Here we must recall Sir Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*. Remember how the Stratford man "in 1597 began the business connected with the purchase of New Place. Complications ensued, and the purchase was not completed till 1602." . . . "Between 1597 and 1599 (he was) rebuilding the house, stocking the barns with grain, and conducting various legal proceedings." And managing a theatre, and acting, and writing two plays a year, and pouring out his bitter disappointment in his sonnets, and making love to the Queen's maid of honour.

Mr. Harris now finds himself in a curious dilemma. Throughout his book he has painted the picture of an aristocrat, careless and contemptuous of money, scornful of the common people and of their work-a-day life. But the Stratford man came from the people. Therefore he was a rank snob, a little brother of the rich, a parasite and a sycophant! What a remarkable about-face from the independent, courageous, outspoken Shakespeare that both Miss Spurgeon and Mr. Harris, so far, have created, and how utterly inconsistent with the spirit of Hamlet, Romeo, Posthumus, Bertram, Biron, Benedick and all the other impersonations of the author which Harris has found in the plays!

"Shakespeare was an aristocrat born, as we have

seen," says Mr. Harris. "The lower orders are all food for comedy or farce: he will not treat them seriously. He tells of Agincourt without even mentioning the fact that the English bowmen won the battle. He had the truth before him, for the chroniclers from whom he took the story vouched for the fact; but Shakespeare preferred to ascribe the victory to Henry and his lords." Again he says: "Shakespeare loved a lord with a passionate admiration and when he paints himself it is usually as a duke or a prince."

He then explains Shakespeare's supposed devotion to "Mr. W. H." Adopting the rumor of the thousand pounds of which Mrs. Stopes could find no trace in the records of the Southampton family and which Sir E. K. Chambers dismisses as impossible*, he says, "Shakespeare may well have argued 'If Southampton gave me a thousand pounds, perhaps Lord Herbert will get no more. Master of the Revels or even give me a higher place.'" Having proved to his satisfaction that "Shakespeare was an aristocrat born," he paints him as a such, toadying to young noblemen who will hand him money and position at court. On page 243 he says, "It is a pose, flunkeyism and hope of benefits to come and not passion that inspired the first series of sonnets," which, he says, were written to the young William Herbert, all because the First Folio was dedicated to him and to his brother.

Mr. Harris pictures Shakespeare as broken in spirit after this episode of Mary Fitton. He says that for the latter part of his life "all his heroes are failures." . . . "Brutus, Hamlet, Macbeth, Lear, Troilus, Antony and Timon all fail as he himself had failed." This list, as we know, does not represent the last plays composed by our author; nevertheless it is a fact that the number of "failures" who are Shakespeare heroes increases toward the end of the period. Again, this fits the disappointed Oxford, rather than the prosperous lather of Stratford.

Other Harris quotations, showing his appreciation of Shakespeare's aristocracy, are: p. 272, "We have already noticed Shakespeare's love of good blood and belief in its wondrous efficacy. It is one of his permanent and most characteristic traits."

p. 316, "Shakespeare's neuropathic loathing for

mechanic slaves with 'greasy aprons' and 'thick breaths rank of gross diet.'"

p. 335, "Shakespeare probably exaggerated his own generosity out of aristocratic pose; but that he was careless of money and free handed to a fault is, I think, certain from his writings."

Having declared that Shakespeare, like Antonio, was not a business man, but a generous, prodigal lender and spender, Mr. Harris is hard pressed to account for the Stratford man's acquisition of wealth. He ignores the two shilling suit against Rogers, Thomas Whittington's forty shillings and the other usurious actions at law. He settles it by accepting Rowe's legend that the Earl of Southampton gave Shakspeare a thousand pounds, although this dates from 1709, and he has refused to believe Aubrey (1681) because his writing was too "remote in time" from Shakspeare's life.

Then he is luthered by Shakspeare's return to the bookless house and the illiterate family in the provincial village. He finally accounts for it, as J. Q. Adams accounts for the falling off of the production of plays after 1605, by saying that his health must have broken. On page 493 we read, "It is incredible to me that Shakespeare should leave London at forty-seven or forty-eight years of age in good health and retire to Stratford to live as a prosperous country gentleman. What had Stratford to offer Shakespeare, village Stratford, with a quidde in the chief street and the charms of the village usurer's companionship tempered by the ministrations of a wandering tub-thumper?" Note the use of the word "incredible," which is not too strong a term to employ.

Mr. Harris is right. It is incredible, just as it is incredible that the Stratford man should know so much Latin and law, and be such a natural aristocrat, or be so generous and so contemptuous of money.

* * *

This paper is already too long. Many books could be compiled out of the passages in works on Shakespeare which bear evidence on the side of the Oxford authorship. However, before closing, let us call one more witness. This is Professor J. Dover Wilson, in *The Essential Shakespeare*.

Wilson takes violent issue with Sir Sidney Lee, whose *Life of Shakespeare* has for its theme "the story of the butcher boy of Stratford who made a fortune in London." He says that the image in Lee's heart was that of a typical English manufacturer who happened to deal in *Tenth Nights* and *Lears* instead of brass tacks.

* Southampton's entire income was only 1,115 pounds per year. (Mrs. F. C. Stopes: *The Third Earl of Southampton*, p. 101.)

He then says that our greatest obstacle to the true understanding of Shakespeare is the conception we have of him as portrayed in the Stratford bust and the Droeshout engraving in the First Folio. Dr. Wilson, in describing the bust, speaks of its wooden appearance, vapid expression, coarsely shaped half-moon eyebrows, staring eyes set too close together, nose too small for the face, and the "general air of stupid and self-complacent prosperity. All this might suit well enough with an affluent and retired butcher, but does gross wrong to the dead poet." . . . "It is time an end was put to the scandal of three centuries. For Janssen's self-satisfied pork butcher and the Folio engraving taken from it, which J. C. Squire has called 'the pudding-faced effigy of Droeshout,' stand between us and the true Shakespeare, and are so obviously false images of the greatest poet of all time that the world turns from them in disgust and thinks it is turning from Shakespeare himself."

This is just what the Oxfordians have been claiming from the outset. Neither the engraving nor the bust is genuine. They are parts of the hoax, of the plan to give the plays to the world while veiling the identity of their noble author. Professor Wilson does not know the story of the change in the bust, but, judging from Sir William Dugdale's drawing, the original was just as great a libel on the author as is the second copy, installed by John Ward. Wilson fails to see that he has declared that there was hocus-pocus connected with the whole Stratford myth. But there was, and he has put his finger unerringly on the proof: these two portraits which for centuries were palmed off on the world.

Mr. Barrell's revelations (see *Scientific American* for January, 1940) proving that the Ashbourne "Shakespeare" is a portrait of Lord Oxford, have, no doubt, answered Professor Wilson's desire to know what "Shakespeare" really looked like.

Dr. Wilson believes with the Oxfordians that the plays are full of topical allusions, not to the author's "tragic life story of which we know nothing," but to men and events of the reign of Elizabeth. He goes to some length in attempting to prove that Hamlet is Essex. He agrees with Cairncross that "*Hamlet* the play goes a long way back and was, in some form or other, being acted by Shakespeare's company as early as 1594." He admits that Polonius is a caricature of the Queen's minister, Lord Burghley, who died in 1598. It doesn't seem to strike him as strange that an actor from Stratford would dare caricature the Lord Treasurer of England, the most powerful man in the kingdom.

He thinks that *Troilus and Cressida* was written in 1598 to goad Essex into action (and then never played nor published!) Professor Wilson, like the Countess de Chambrun, is sure that John Shakspeare was a Catholic, so he refuses to believe the legend that William attended a school in Stratford taught by "Protestant schoolmaster who was also a clergyman."

He comes forward with a new explanation of William's wonderful erudition. "If the boy received his education as a singing boy in the service of some great Catholic nobleman, it would help to explain how he became an actor, since the transition from singing boy to stage player was almost as inevitable at that period as the breaking of the male voice at adolescence. However that may be, it is certain that Shakespeare had *picked up* [italics mine] as good an education in life and the world's concerns as any man before or since, and had acquired if but 'small Latin and less Greek,' enough to enable him to read and brood over his beloved Ovid in the original. It is also clear that, if the author of *Merry Wives* knew his middle classes, the author of *Love's Labour's Lost* had made himself equally familiar with the life, manner, and conversation of ladies and gentlemen of the land. To credit that amazing piece of virtuosity to a butcher boy who left school at thirteen or even to one whose education was nothing more than what a grammar school and residence in a little provincial borough could provide is to invite one either to believe in miracles or to disbelieve in the man of Stratford."

Well said, Professor Wilson. You take your stand with Sir George Greenwood, Fripp, J. Q. Adams, and the Oxfordians. It is incredible.

Wilson next points out that, as Shakespeare was at the top of his profession as an actor in 1594 at the age of thirty, he must have done some climbing. Hence he must have been acting for a long time. His solution is that Shakspeare began acting in London in 1581 (aged seventeen). But there are the twins and Susanna to be accounted for, so Wilson, remembering that during the summer plays were usually suspended, has Shakspeare return to Stratford over week ends to beget the children. But there was the marriage in November, 1582. Somebody must have gone to London during that month and hailed the unwilling bridegroom to his home.

The plague closed the theatres in 1592-94. Professor Wilson feels sure that Shakspeare "accepted personal service as a member of the Earl's [Southampton's] household and remained with him for most of 1593 and part of 1594." He speaks of the

"well-authenticated tradition" that Shakspeare was once a schoolmaster in the country. This, he is sure, refers to the two years at Titchfield, Southampton's seat. Shakspeare is a country schoolmaster with one rustic boy as a pupil: Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton! We know of John Florio, Southampton's gifted Italian tutor, but Wilson is sure that his work was supplemented by teaching given by the ex-prompter's assistant.

Wilson confesses that Shakespeare's "intimate knowledge," shown in two plays, of Venice and other Italian cities, "suggests more than hearsay." In this he agrees with Professor Elze and the Oxfordians. Therefore, says Wilson, he must have spent the greater part of 1593 in Italy, traveling with the Earl and Florio. But here it is necessary to remind the reader of the work of Dr. Cairncross, who has proved that *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello* and other Italian plays were written before August, 1593.

Dr. Wilson is puzzled to explain the falling off in Shakespeare's production of plays toward the end of his life. Why, after 1601, does his output drop from three per year to less than one? Why was *Timon of Athens* not finished by the great genius? Why is *Coriolanus* so empty, in parts? The answer is a nervous breakdown, as *Timon* plainly shows. Next comes a sentence which is typical of many a Shakespeare biography, with its laughable combination of dogmatic finality on the one hand, and confession on the other: "Prostration follows and the care of good Dr. Hall, who married Susanna the very year of the illness (if it happened at all) [italics mine], gradually restores him to health" (p. 130). He then asks the question which has troubled so many commentators from Bismarck on. Why should Shakespeare give up a lucrative profession, leave London at the height of his fame and retire to "an obscure provincial town like Stratford"?

On page 33 Dr. Wilson has said, "From the beginning he brought from Stratford a delicate nose which found the effluvia of London, human or otherwise, highly distasteful." But Garrick called Stratford "the dirtiest village in England," and we recall Harris's wonder that Shakspeare could endure it after living in London. To picture Stratford, with its midden in the center of the main street, its lack of sewerage, and its smells, as a haven of refuge from the stench of London is not too realistic.

To sum up: Miss Spurgeon, Harris and Wilson have pictured a dainty nobleman, a man of gener-

osity, delicacy, aristocratic outlook, refinement and culture, who scorns money and loves honor. Neilson, Fripp and Churton Collins have pictured an erudite scholar, whose knowledge of Greek, Latin and French is surprising. Collins and Fripp have proved that "Shakespeare" had been trained in law. Elze and Wilson know that he had travelled in Italy. Masson points out that it is very mysterious that he should have left no books and utterly ignored his plays in the will. Several of them join Bismarck in saying that it is almost unbelievable that such a man could have been content to spend his years after forty-one (or forty-five, or forty-eight—no one knows the exact date) in such a place as Stratford.

A noted Shakespearean authority, one of our witnesses in fact, pointed out in a letter to the writer that "the Oxford and Derby theories mutually destroy each other, that if Oxford was Shakespeare then Derby could not have been, and vice versa." My answer to this was that Derby was De Vere's son-in-law, and that the two earls were intimately associated during the last ten years of Oxford's life, so that it was well within the bounds of probability that Derby aided his father-in-law in the composition of some of the plays, that his was the hand that completed the works left unfinished by the great master, that revised others, and wrote *The Tempest*. But what shall we say of the extent to which the various versions of the Stratford man's life destroy each other? Let us examine what is left of Shakspeare's "biography" after we have let the "recognized Shakespearean authorities" pick holes in the story as taught by the average orthodox teacher. We will let them speak under three different heads:

1. *What do we know about Shakspeare's early schooling?* Actually, we cannot prove that he ever went to school, but Adams is sure that he must have attended Stratford Grammar School. Fripp shows, by giving the entrance requirements of such schools, how next to impossible it would have been for the son of illiterate parents to be admitted to the Stratford institution. Wilson is sure that Shakspeare never was sent to the Stratford Grammar School, but that he was educated "as a singing boy in the service of some great Catholic nobleman."

Meanwhile, there is Ben Jonson. He says distinctly that Shakspeare had "small Latin and less Greek." Some critics have explained this by saying that the charge was only relative, for Ben's knowledge of the classics was extraordinary. But Jonson was not a university man, and his use of words does

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

December 10, 1969

918 "F" St., N.W., Room 612, Washington, O.C., 20004



Dear Fellow-Members Shakespeare Oxford Society:

This News-letter is not the one that had been prepared for this month, which was in process of being printed, when the long awaited MS from Mrs. Manwell came in the mail. It has so much intrinsic merit, evidence of percipience, and timeliness, that we decided to "kill" the copy on hand (to save for next month), and use it now, together with published papers of other Oxfordians in by-gone days. One, as you will note, is of 1937; the other 1947. The reproduction of the "flyer" from Holy Trinity Church in Stratford on Avon is as current as October of 1969. Formerly there was no charge for entrance to view The Monument and The Grave, but now a functionary bars access with; "That will be two shillings, please." The two shillings get you a few feet closer, but not close enough to read the inscription on the tomb (Monument) with its curious and enigmatic wording. This was part of the intended News-letter, which contained an up-to-date account of news and progress in the search for documents of the plays, both by heretics, and the guardians of the revealed faith, together with their vicissitudes, some of which are amusing. We will try to cover this next month. Meanwhile look it over carefully as a prime example of huckstering chutzpah. Note that the ancient liturgical symbol of the Trinity (not always a trade-mark of a popular beer and ale) gets "second billing" to the counterfeit coat-of-arms. It became a shrine (?) not within a few years, but the very next day; and not a national, but an international one. The "inter" has been added with a hopeful nod to the "Yankee Dollar".

On our research there has been some appreciable progress. Some of us believe that if Lord Oxford's will could be found, or his library and/or private papers, then there would be proof that he was Shakespeare. His will is not at Somerset House, where it ordinarily would be found. Mr. Craig Huston suggested that it might have been one of the exhibits in the case before the House of Lords in 1625, which settled the succession of the office of Lord Great Chamberlain, and of the Earldom of Oxford; and thus preserved with the papers in the case, or failing that, been bundled up and sent down to the Public Record Office. The Library of the House of Lords does have all the records pertaining to the Peerage and, among them the papers in this case. Permission was granted to make this search, but the will is not there, nor is it in the Public Record Office, nor at two other possible places suggested by cooperative officials. While going over some old Essex records at Chelmsford, the county seat, in company with Mr. H.W. Patience, a native-born East Anglian and a member of our Society, we found a document showing that Oxford in 1604, the year of his death, had made over the revenues and perquisites of the Forest of Essex to his son-in-law and a cousin for a period of seven years. This is another record that in 1604 he appointed Sir Francis Vere the guardian of his minor son Henry. These facts, which are not generally known, suggests the interesting possibility that Oxford may not have made a will at all, but attended to matters affecting his family and possessions in separate instruments while he was alive. If so, who can doubt that his MSS, books, & documents would not have been the object of his care and foresight? In the opinion of this researcher, the place to search is in Essex and East Anglia, either for the documents, or clues to where they may have been taken. There has been some conjecture recently in the S.A. Review, as to where the 16th Earl of O. is buried. While at Chelmsford I found a record saying that the 16th Earl was buried in a wooden coffin, which was placed inside the tomb of the 15th Earl in St. Nicholas Church at Castle Hedingham. This was handed on to Mr. Patience.

More details of research in January News-Letter. Do not forget to renew dues and subscriptions for the coming year. Making bricks without straw is hard enough; without clay; practically impossible.

Sincerely yours for E. Ver.

Shakespeare Oxford
Society, Inc. R.C.H.

News-Letter

THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP

—AMERICAN BRANCH—

The Shakespeare Fellowship was founded in London in 1922 under the presidency of Sir George Greenwood.

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Shame of the Professors

This blistering commentary on the professional obscurantists who dominate the so-called "orthodox" study of Shakespearean biography was originally printed in the July, 1937, issue of a Chicago booksellers' review called Reading and Collecting. It was written by Mr. George Frisbee of San Francisco, chemist, Shakespearean scholar, and one of the original proponents of the Oxford-Shakespeare evidence in this country. A salty logician who never pulls his punches, Mr. Frisbee is something of an Elizabethan throwback himself, both in appearance and facility of picturesque expression. Within the past year he has donated his fine collection of books on Shakespeare and the Oxford evidence to the San Francisco College for Women. As the periodical in which Mr. Frisbee's essay first appeared ceased publication shortly after that event, we are glad to reprint it for the edification of our own readers.

THE EDITORS

The circus has its clowns; the drama its comedians; while for their humorous fellows the universities have the professors of English literature who teach innocent youngsters that the plays and poems of William Shakespeare were written by a man born in Stratford-upon-Avon. They are a conical crew and their antics in evading discussion of the truth regarding Shakespeare authorship afford real students of Elizabethan literature much amusement.

These professors who teach that Shakespeare, the poet, was born in Stratford may be roughly divided into three classes; the tricksters, the cowards, and the gulls. The tricksters are the big shots, the Tittlebat Toploftys that garble data to bolster the Stratford-upon-Avon myth. With them anything repeated often enough becomes, to their peculiar line of thought, fact; regardless of dubious origin. They juggle dates and conjure plays from their imagination to arrange a chronological scheme that will fit the Shakespeare work to the lifetime of the Stratford man. But *Hamlet* was too much for them; as will be shown.

The cowards are the timid souls who know better; and there are many; but who fear the disapproval of the elder pedants. The gulls are the common or garden variety who never gave birth to an

idea; who swallow everything peddled by the big shots; and whose greatest ambition is to cadge a junket from some Foundation, to waste time and money on alleged research. The results are printed; usually with a lot of back-scratching for colleagues; then quickly forgotten until some other fellow discredits the stuff.

The truth is simple; it always is. There were two men. One was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, 1564, and his name was Shaksper, Shakspeare, or Shakspe; he used all three; but never Shakespeare. "William Shake-speare" was the pen-name adopted by the person who wrote most of the plays and poems which appeared under that name. No professor, living or dead, has ever offered the slightest bit of evidence, the tiniest scrap of proof, to show that Shakspeare of Stratford wrote *Hamlet*, or the *Sonnets*. All they offer is guesswork, imagination, conjecture, plentifully padded with "probably" and "we must assume."

Nothing is known of the Stratford man linking him with any kind of writing, other than some half dozen signatures, no two of which correspond. These so-called Shakspeare signatures are all affixed to documents of a legal nature; never to anything showing that the man could really write. Everything recorded of the man deals with commercial

affairs. Nothing links him with drama or poetry.

But, something too much of this. Sir George Greenwood, in his great works, *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* and *Is there a Shakespeare Problem*, shows so clearly that the Stratford man could not have written the "Shake-speare" work, that no professor has dared reply. Greenwood simply mopped up with them. And the professors shun his work as if it were the plague. Perhaps it does plague their consciences; perhaps.

Here is part of his opinion of the tripe that the professors would have us accept: "The more I read these marvellous works, the more deeply I am impressed with the certainty that the man who wrote them was a man of wide reading, much learning, and high culture. I am more and more convinced of the 'highly cultured mind' as the necessary condition precedent of a 'Shakespeare.' My reason revolts against the postulate of the unlettered and untravelled man, who knew no country and no language but his own. A young provincial, with such smattering of education as he may have procured at a free Grammar school, speaking the dialect of his native country, comes to London in 1587, a penniless wanderer, straight from the society of the boors and petty tradesmen of obscure and illiterate Stratford; becomes successively 'horseholder' outside, and 'servitor' inside, one of the London playhouses (and such playhouses!); obtains a place in a company, is constantly playing to London audiences, or touring in the provinces; an actor-manager (as we are told) with shares in two theatres, and with a keen eye to business. And with all this, turning out each year on an average two plays, but in the earlier years, a much greater number, all belonging to the supreme rank of literature; marvellous works; 'not of an age, but for all time'; replete, if not with classical learning; as some high authorities insist; at any rate with profound knowledge of the world, and of mankind, and of the philosophy of life and human nature, and redolent of the highest culture, besides wondrous courtly polished and scholarly poems, composed in quite early days, but marked in the same or even higher degree by the same learning and the same culture; yet remaining *nonem et umbra*, and nothing more for posterity: except indeed for that little knowledge of his life history which we could so well spare."

Where and how did the Stratford man acquire his profound learning, culture, knowledge of mankind, and all the rest of "Shakespeare's" equipment? Professors please tell us; we are eager to know.

Alden Brooks, in his book, *Will Shakspeare, Factotum and Agent*, shows that there is little that is authentic of Shakespeare at Stratford-on-Avon. Most of it is fake played up to interest the tourist trade. The British are averse from having their best paying shrine-debunked, so, in spite of facts that are constantly coming to light, they like to stick to their myth. Fair enough for the townspeople, but self-respecting men ought to be above fostering a fairy-tale in order to boost the tourist trade of Stratford. Do the professors get a cut? Hollywood yes-men are on the pay-roll; why not the Academic Ditto-men?

Shakspeare was born 1564, and it is not certain when he first arrived in London.

In order to give him sufficient years for a play like *Hamlet*, it was settled that it was written about 1602. But, a play called *Hamlet* was in existence before 1590. To get around that, the professors invented, out of nothing but their imaginations, an "old *Hamlet*, an *Ur-Hamlet*," which Shakspeare transmuted into his masterpiece. The real students like Greenwood took no stock in the "old *Hamlet*," but the professors clammed up and sat pretty. Alack and aday for them! An honest orthodox scholar, interested only in the truth, Dr. A. S. Cairncross, in *The Problem of Hamlet*, proves that the play was written before 1588, by none other than "Shake-speare" himself. Proves also that there never was an "old *Hamlet*" nor an "*Ur-Hamlet*." Which leaves the Paediaculi holding the bag, one might say. Not one has uttered a peep; they never do when confronted with facts which shatter their assumptions.

Since Shakspeare did not write the Plays, who did? That is easy to answer. In his magnificent work, *Shakespeare Identified*, J. T. Looney shows so clearly that none but Edward De Vere could have written them, that no professor seriously questions his findings. Dr. Gilbert Slater, in *Seven Shakespeares*, writes that Mr. Looney has never been answered with his case for Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Percy Allen, in many books; G. W. Phillips, in *Lord Burleigh in Shakespeare*; Mrs. Eva Turner Clark, Montagu Douglas, in *Lord Oxford was Shakespeare* (a book highly praised by the conservative Christian Science Monitor); and many other writers interested solely in the truth, have shown that De Vere was the man who wrote under the name, "William Shakespeare."

He was a scholar, musician, dramatist, and known to his contemporaries as a poet of high order whose serious writings were not published under his own name or title. He had studied law;

had visited foreign Courts; knew French, Italian and German; had spent nearly a year in Italy, the scene of six Shakespearean plays. He was a patron of literature and the stage, and maintained his own company of players. If the poet's identity had to be discovered from his works, as Nicholas Rowe and other early commentators stated it should be, there would be this general agreement:

Shakespeare was an aristocrat and familiar with Court life. His Lords and Ladies move to the manner born. He was cultured, a scholar, and had been trained in law. He was fluent in French and Italian,

and was acquainted with Northern Italy. Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford stands before us equipped with all these specific qualifications.

One could fill pages with incidents from the plays, which parallel events in Oxford's own career. Space forbids.

A perusal of the Oxfordian writers mentioned will satisfy an open minded reader that the professors have been deceiving their followers with their nonsense about Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon. As Hamlet said, "For 'tis the sport to have the engineer Hoist with his own petard."

George Frisbee

(Ed. Note. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Frisbee's division of the English Professors, in our country, into three classes, and his pungent description of each, was not an accurate assessment of the situation in the "30s" and early "40s", but, in our opinion, it is not fair to think it applies today. The most casual student of the "authorship controversy" will have little difficulty in identifying the "Tittlebat Toploftys". Most of them have long since passed on to their reward, but their influence still goes marching on. The three or four remaining ones, Emeriti for many years, while now too wary to wage open warfare on articulate heretics, have to content themselves with slipping in occasional snide remarks in encyclopedias and book reviews. The second class is now practically extinct. A notable few graduated into lower-case "tittlebat toploftys"; had their little day of adulation, and are now Emeriti, Rtd., or consultants. The third class, like the poor, is always with us. From personal contact and observation, this writer believes the vast majority of English, and English Literature, Professors are as decent, honest, honorable, and gentlemanly or lady-like, as any other group engaged in teaching the Humanities. They genuinely do not believe there is now any authorship question. They have a vague impression that at one time there were some cranks and fanatics who claimed Shakespeare did not write his own works, but they have long ago been proved wrong and discredited, and now no sane or literate person doubts the author was the man from Stratford. Shakespeare wrote his own works; this they know. How? Because "Authority" tells them so. Their proximate contact with authority was the teacher who taught them; and their texts. Those teachers, in turn, learned and passed on the torch from their professors; and so on, back to the ancestral and antecedent authority of all (Mr. "Ur" himself); Aubrey, John, circa 1681. The Shakespearean teacher is, of necessity, on the side of the angels and authority. He is part of the chain of command, for he represents authority to his pupils. Once authority is openly questioned or doubted, there is no stopping; it will spread like wild-fire. His pupils will begin to wonder about the extent and degree of his credulity and gullibility, and there, down the drain, goes his self-confidence, his peace of mind and, needless to say, his job. It seems morally wrong for you to intrude into this state of bliss and take away his belief; for by so doing, you have robbed him of that which not enriches you, and makes him poor indeed. Oxfordians should confine their evangelization and propagandizing to the laity; to the young who could bring in enthusiasm and work; or to their elders who could contribute research or support.)

Modern Research Sheds New Light on Bard of Avon

Recent Discoveries Strengthen Oxford Theory Concerning Authorship of Plays and Sonnets

To the New York Herald Tribune:

As a member of the American branch of the Shakespeare Fellowship, I must protest against the flippancy and misstatements in your reporter's account of our annual meeting on May 29. It evidences a preconceived desire to ridicule and a complete misconception of the purpose and activity of a society engaged in an eminently scientific research concerning the personality of the author of Shakespeare's works.

The assemblage at that meeting was distinguished by the presence of at least twenty professional writers, two lawyers of international reputation, an ex-ambassador, members of the faculties of half a dozen universities and colleges and representatives of the British Broadcast Corporation. Its news value was considered of sufficient importance for a special writer to have been sent from Chicago.

The program included evidence never before made public in New York, derived from Charles Wisner Barrell's infra-red and X-ray analysis of the "Shakespeare" portrait at Hampton Court, and owned by the King of England, showing that it was an overpainted likeness of Edward De Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Besides the "long fingers," which alone your reporter mentioned, there were revealed in this and the Ashbourne and Jensen "Shakespeare" portraits details, such as the De Vere signet ring, the Oxford wild boar's head crest, the three griffins of his wife's escutcheon, the lace collar indicative of aristocracy and the ceremonial sword of state borne by Oxford as Lord Great Chamberlain—all obliterated to conceal the identity of the original sitter for the portrait.

There are many well known Americans in the Fellowship and a still greater number of influential scholars in England who have publicly endorsed the theory of the Oxford authorship of the bard's works. These include, besides John Galsworthy and the late Dr. Sigmund

Freud, Dr. Gilbert Slater, late professor of economics at Oxford University; Sir Geoffrey Callendar, late professor of English and Tudor naval history at Sandhurst; Dr. Gerald Rendall, canon of Chelmsford cathedral and famous translator of Marcus Aurelius, principal of Victoria College, University of Liverpool; Gladstone professor of the University of Manchester and headmaster of the Charterhouse School, who has himself written three books on the Oxford theory, and Dr. V. A. Demant, famous scholar, dean and chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral, London.

Doubts as to the authorship of Shakespeare's works have been held by scholars for at least 150 years. Among the well known men who have found it impossible to believe that the vague Stratford citizen could have proved himself to be a genius of immortal fame have been Ralph Waldo Emerson, Longfellow and Whittier, Walt Whitman, Henry James, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain.

The conception of Wm. Shakspear of Stratford (whose parents and favorite daughter couldn't write their names) as a poet of transcendent genius is a towering edifice of conjecture based solely upon dubious posthumous evidence; hardly half a dozen facts are definitely known of his life and none refer to literary affairs. Biographies of Shakespeare abound in such phrases as "one may think," "the chances are that," "It is natural to suppose." These are only three of more than fifty such guesses in the article on Shakespeare in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

But while so little is known of the Stratford man, and that little so little to his credit, and incompatible with the idea of his being the greatest literary figure of all time, an immense fund of new historical in-

formation regarding the Earl of Oxford has been discovered by the Fellowship, every new fact pointing inevitably to something greater than probability that he was the true author of the Plays and Sonnets.

De Vere was the first ranking earl and of one of the oldest families in England. He was a royal ward, brought up at the court of Queen Elizabeth, received degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge, traveled on the Continent, spending most of his time in Italy, had several companies of players, was a generous patron of the arts, with a knowledge of law gained at Gray's Inn, a renowned champion in the lists, a court actor and musician of exceptional talent and acknowledged by his contemporaries as their greatest poet and a dramatist of outstanding merit, though no plays bearing his name have ever been discovered.

As an example of the thoroughness of the Fellowship's research, experts were recently engaged to examine a batch of uncalendared English state papers which apparently had never been investigated since they were filed. They were not even indexed. The interpretation of sixteenth-century chirography (containing several characters now obsolete) was alone no mean task, but it enabled the life of De Vere's illegitimate son to be traced and his identity as the young man addressed in the sonnets to be clearly determined.

The Shakespeare Fellowship issues a quarterly with accounts of its research. This publication is subscribed to by more than one hundred leading universities, colleges and reference libraries. It is exact and authoritative, every statement being based on contemporary documentary evidence, and has offered an important contribution to modern knowledge of Elizabethan literature.

There have been many suggestions as to the authorship of Shakespeare's works, but the Fellowship is the only organization that has been able to authenticate its statements. Its members have published two scholarly biographies of De Vere and a score of books discussing the documentation with regard to authorship. But the article on De Vere in the Encyclopaedia Britannica cited by the Herald Tribune reporter is based upon no authorities available since 1876. It ignores the proved disclosures made by the Fellowship since 1920.

Edward De Vere was indubitably the most brilliant and gifted figure in the galaxy of talent that shone in Elizabethan times, and the most original, extravagant and romantic as well. No longer do we have to apologize for and attempt to explain the vague character of the butcher's apprentice of Stratford and endow him with the glory of impossible achievements. We have in Edward De Vere the consistent and enthralling image of a consummate literary genius, a gentleman of education and profound culture, a published poet, a philosopher, court official, traveler and dramatist worthy of our wonder and delight. It is known now that to his literary intimates he was known as the "gentle master William." He was indubitably Ben Jonson's "swan of Avon," for he had an estate on that classic river, the last one left to him after some fifty others in England were sold to pay for his dramatic ventures and social extravagance.

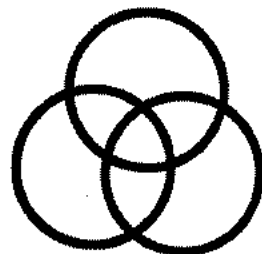
The Oxford claim to authorship of the plays and sonnets rests upon no hazardous fancies of starry-eyed fanatics. It is based upon no complicated and equivocal cryptograms or imagined symbolism. It derives from proof gained by an immense expenditure of time, money, patient study and endless correspondence by a group devoted to the logical and definite solution of the greatest literary mystery of all time.

GELETT BURGESS.

New York, June 5, 1947.



Stratford-upon-Avon Parish Church Restoration Fund



On 26th April 1564 "William, son of John Shakespear" was baptised in the Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity, Stratford-upon-Avon. Fifty-two years later, almost to the day, he was buried before the altar in the same church. From that day onwards, the Parish Church at Stratford has been an international shrine.

The church, however, is 900 years old, and the fabric is suffering from centuries of exposure to wind and weather. Decay is in an advanced stage throughout the church—in the chancel—in the parapets to the Nave Clerestory—in the buttresses in both the North and South Transepts—in the Transept roofs—in the porches.

£200,000

**is needed so that the urgent repairs that are
necessary to save this famous church for
posterity can be carried out.**

Please give your support. Contributions large and small will all be most gratefully received. For a gift of £10—or a covenant of £1 a year for 7 years—you can become a Friend of the church, receive a Friend's certificate on which your name will be inscribed, and have your name recorded in the Book of Friends which is permanently displayed in the church.

All enquiries should be made to the church itself, or to the Parish Hall, Old Town, Stratford-upon-Avon.

"Blest be the man that spares these stones"

AN "UNCONSIDERED TRIFLE" SNAPEED UP

This paper was first presented as a short interlude-with-music in a meeting of the New York chapter of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. At Mr. Horne's invitation I am expanding it for the Newsletter, in the hope that it may encourage others to look for excitement in unsuspected corners of the Elizabethan arts. That it may give an added Oxfordian fillip to the 1969 Christmas-New Year-Twelfth Night season is happily incidental.

In my early days as an Oxfordian, I began to acquire - along with the Ogburns' This Star of England, Ward's Seventeenth Earl of Oxford and Looney's Shakespeare Identified - a collection of recordings of Elizabethan music. Among these was Dowland and His Contemporaries (EMS #11), a collection of eleven songs and ten instrumental pieces by Dowland and four other musicians. It is commonly accepted by scholars in the field that most of the lyrics used by these composers were not their own; the writer's name was rarely given in the song-books. Hebel and Hudson's Poetry of the English Renaissance remarks:

"The only composer known to have written his own words is Campion, and although other composers may have written a few of the lyrics which they set to music...their usual practice evidently was to draw on the great store of poetry already printed or circulating in manuscript." (*Italics mine.*)

The third song in this collection is Fine Knacks for Ladies, from Dowland's Second Book of Ayres (1597). It has been reprinted in several anthologies of English verse, always as an anonymous poem, and runs as follows:

Fine knacks for ladies, cheap, choice, brave and new!
Good pennyworths, but money cannot move.
I keep a fair but for the fair to view,
A beggar may be liberal of love.
Though all my wares be trash, the heart is true.

Great gifts are guile, and look for gifts again,
My trifles come as treasures from my mind.
It is a precious jewel to be plain,
Sometimes in shell the orient'st pearl we find.
Of others take a sheaf, of me a grain!

Within this pack pins, points, laces and gloves,
And divers toys fitting a country fair,
But in my heart, where duty serves and love,
Turtles and twine, court'se brood, a heavenly pair.
Happy the heart that thinks of no remove!

The tune is lively and attractive, with catchy repetition beloved of the Elizabethans in the last line of each stanza.

I played this record many times before I began to think about what this song was saying. From the beginning I had been vaguely haunted by the device of the peddler's pack, and suddenly one day it hit me: Autolycus' song in A Winter's Tale! Then I really began to listen!

"Fine knacks for ladies..."

Much of what Oxford wrote was for Elizabeth, and her ladies-in-waiting accompanied her everywhere. Is this by chance a court festivity?

"Good pennyworths, but money cannot move,
I keep a fair but for the fair to view."

A penny is the price of admission to the public theater, but here he is not asking for money. This is something only for the ladies' eyes.

"A beggar may be liberal of love."

Oxford has already been sneered at many times as a "beggar." His unsuccessful suits to Elizabeth for the financial favors awarded to other courtiers are notorious at court; there will later be an allusion in John Day's Humor Out of Breath (1607) to "the lord who gave away all to his followers and then begged more for himself."

"Though all my wares be trash..."

This may be literary convention or a genuine dichotomy of feeling toward his work, but is typical of the Elizabethan author. It is not far-fetched to see it as a lighter version of the Shakespearean "I am shamed by that which I bring forth, And so should you to love things nothing worth."

"...the heart is true."

Typically Elizabethan, but also very typically Oxford - Vere - where both the Queen and his great name were concerned. It looks as though this is the introduction to a play to be performed before Elizabeth and the ladies in waiting, and it bears Oxford's cachet.

"Great gifts are guiles, and look for gifts again,
My trifles come as treasures from my mind."

John Nichols' Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth gives the priceless record of Elizabeth's New Year's gift system, by which she received, from her courtiers who could afford them, elaborately and symbolically designed pieces of jewelry, for which she gave them "again" (i.e. in return) sums of money more or less suited to their position and the value of the gifts received; both transactions noted carefully by a secretary with names and descriptions and sums. Apparently these lines come from a giver out of the running financially, whose gifts are fashioned from a brimming mind. And the reference to gifts sets the song - and the play - in the Christmas-New Year-Twelfth Night season, when Elizabeth always commanded plays for the court's diversion!

"It is a precious jewel to be plain,
Sometimes in shell the orient'st pearl we find."

Beginning with the royal entertainments of the 1570's, Oxford has been concealing metaphoric "orient pearls" ("orient" being here an adjective meaning "exceptionally fine and lustrous") in "shell" for Elizabeth to discover. And the treasure has grown richer with time, though the "plainness" of its expression has sometimes been sharp indeed. One calls to mind the occasion of his reconciliation

with Elizabeth in 1583, following his three years of banishment: "After some bitter worde and speeches, in the end all sins are forgiven, and he may repair to the Court at his pleasure."

"Of others take a sheaf; of me a grain."

This line seemed a simple enough pair of metaphors at first, but again suddenly I had a "wild surmise." By studying the detailed descriptions of the New Year "jussls" given the Queen over a period of years, could I locate one in the form of a "sheaf" from a donor significant enough in Oxford's life to make a link between Oxford and this particular New Year's song?

On my next trip to New York, I went to the Public Library (that dear, impartial alma mater of both orthodoxy and heresy in the Shakespeare field) asked for the three volumes of Nichols' Progresses, and started through the long gift-lists. An hour later, on page 426 of Volume II, under "Juelles geven to her Majestie at Newyer's-lyde, 1584-5" (i.e. 1585, new style) I found the following:

"Item, a juell of golde, lyke a syckle and a wheateshsafe, the sickle garnished on thone side with smale sparckes of rubyes and dymondes. Geven by the Lorde Windsor."

Lord Windsor was Oxford's nephew, son of the half-sister who had tried in 1563 to have Oxford declared a bastard, so that she could recover his share in their late father's estate. During the years since, Oxford and the young man had been in a tournament together, and the nephew had acted (albeit unskillfully) in at least one court entertainment with his uncle. Now the two felt toward each other in 1585 is not on record, but Oxford could certainly have talked with him about the "sheaf" in preparation at the goldsmith's.

The last stanza begins with another echo of Autolycus,

"Within this pack pins, points, laces and gloves,..."

and then goes on:

"But in my heart, where duty serves and loves,
Turtles and twins, court's brood, a heavenly pair."

"Turtles" ers turtle-doves, of course, symbols to the Elizabethans of loving companions. And the Oxford English Dictionary gives, among others, the following definitions of "twin":

"In early use, something closely connected with or resembling the other thing mentioned; a fellow, counterpart. 1540: "A woman...with whom he shall live a twin."

"Forming a pair or couple; two closely associated, connected or related, and (usually) alike or equal."

We are given here is what the writer was saying to Elizabeth herself - what Shakespeare said later in his mourning song, The Phoenix and the Turtle. In their tastes and in their sympathies, in their long mutual devotion to each other and to the theater, "either was the other's mine." In 1585 Oxford was back in the Queen's

favor, and using his straitened resources to provide the holiday entertainments she loved. During the next year she was to grant him - as the grant called him, "her right trusty and well-beloved cousin" - the £1000 annuity that we believe made him her master of dramatic activities at the court and her loyal propagandist in the public theater. He closes with

"Happy the heart that thinks of no removes!"

echoing the closing couplet of Sonnet 25:

"Then happy I, that love and am beloved
Where I may not remove nor be removed."

Margaret E. Manwell
Plattsburgh, New York
December 1, 1969

(Ed. Note. For the benefit of those few of our readers who may not recall, off-hand, the words of Autolycus' song, we are appending it herewith for easy comparison. Incidentally*and Shakespeare were acquainted. See *Passionate Pilgrim*; No.VIII. The song is in T.W.T. Act IV Sc.3, v.220 to 232; and v.324 to 332.

* Dowland

Lawn as white as driven snow;
Cyprus black as e'er was crow;
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;
Masks for faces and for noses;
Bugle-bracelet, necklace amber,
Perfume for a lady's chamber;
Golden quoifs and stomachers,
For my lads to give their dears;
Pins and poking sticks of steel;
What maids lack from head to heel:
Come buy of me, come; come buy, come buy;
Buy, lads, or else your lassies cry;
Come buy.

Will you buy any tape,
Or lace for your cape,
My dainty duck, my dear-a?
Any silk, any thread,
Any toys for your head,
Of the new'st and fin'st, fin'st
wear-a?
Come to the pedlar:
Money's a meddler,
That doth utter all men's ware-a.

Now, to any reader with an open mind, however unskilled in poetic appreciation, the conclusion¹ inescapable that here is a significant similarity, suggesting a common source. To those of you who are contemplating taking this to your nearest "Shakespearean Authority" for his comment on the obvious (to you) poetic parallelisms, we offer a word of advice as our contribution to Christmas cheer. Save your steps and breath. We already know what the party-line reaction will be: "Bah! Humbug! Mere conventional commonplaces of Elizabethan verse!")

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