

SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY
NEWSLETTERS

1975

The Shakespeare Oxford Society

NEWSLETTER
WINTER-SPRING, 1975



110 Glen Argyle Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21212

EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue of the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter is designated on its masthead as "Winter-Spring 1975". The last issue (edited by Mr. Horne) was listed as "Summer-Fall 1974". Between the two issues occurred the Harvard Magazine publication of Charlton Ogburn's article (see infra, "The Harvard Case"), a free copy of which was sent to members by the Society's president, Richard C. Horne, Jr. This gift served in lieu of the winter Newsletter. In the future the regular quarterly publication schedule will be resumed.

In the last Newsletter President Horne announced the transference of some of the Society's functions to Mrs. Cyr and myself. I, a Vice-President of the Society, was created President pro tem., and Mrs. Cyr, Secretary of the Shakespeare Oxford Society.

But since that issue, Mr. Horne, we are happy to say, has bounced back to his usual ebullience—largely thanks to a "pacemaker" implant. So many of the Society's executive functions still reside with Mr. Horne, whose address is 1791 S. Lanier Place, Washington, D.C. 20009.

As the new editor of the Newsletter I wish to call to your attention that my address is 110 Glen Argyle Road (not 110 Argyle Road, as appeared in the last Newsletter), Baltimore, Maryland 21212. This is the Shakespeare Oxford Society's official mailing address. Therefore, communications to the Society, such as articles for publication in the Newsletter, memberships and membership dues, requests for the Society's literature, etc. should be addressed here. The annual statement for membership dues will be sent to members soon under separate cover.

Gordon C. Cyr, Editor

HORNE'S TRIPS TO ENGLAND

Richard C. Horne, Jr., President of the Society, reports on events occurring during his two latest trips to England in 1973 and 1974.

Dear Fellow Members, Shakespeare Oxford Society:

Members of our Society may be interested in the state of Oxfordian research and activity as it appeared in England during my recent trips there. Dynamic it is not, but fortunately neither is it static or moribund. Somewhere in between.

In the annual visits I have made over the past nine years, I have scrupulously and sedulously avoided any personal publicity, feeling that should

go to our local members and supporters. Mr. Harold W. Patience of Braintree, Essex especially has earned a certain measure of fame or recognition in East Anglian magazines and newspapers through articles written and published by him, plus interviews in the Braintree and Witham Times, one nearly a page featuring a large picture of him taken in front of the Great Keep of Castle Hedingham.

In July 1973, one of the guests in the

hotel in Braintree where I had made my headquarters for several years, accosted me in the lounge, where we watched the "telly" and introduced himself as a photographer for the East Anglian Daily Times on assignment in Essex. He said he had asked the landlady who I was and what was I doing. When she told him, he recognized there was a story that would interest their readers. Could he take a picture of me? I declined politely, saying I was not looking for publicity, had nothing to sell, nor was I writing a book.

The photographer then said that what he had in mind was an action picture of me coming out of some building in Braintree where I had been looking for manuscripts, and he would have a reporter from Ipswich interviewing me. I laughed, told him that would be contrived, phony ballyhoo, as there was no such place in Braintree, else I would have been "out of it" long ago.

Showing a persistence worthy of a better cause, he proposed driving me out to Castle Hedingham as a background. I agreed that idea did have a certain pertinency but, unluckily for him, the Braintree Times had thought of it three or four years earlier, and illustrated their story with a picture of Mr. Patience in exactly the same setting. Nonplussed for less than a minute, the photographer rallied with "But it is a weekly local paper. We are a daily, with a circulation covering four counties. Besides nobody would know about the earlier picture." I became serious, told him Mr. Patience, my friend would know, and I would know, and besides I would feel it a dirty trick to play on my friend and the local paper, so let's forget it. He accepted this in good grace, though at several later occasions when we were sitting breakfast at the same time, he expressed the hope I would change my mind.

The last night before I was to start from the hotel at six the next morning (with four changes of transport) in or-

der to emplane for Washington), I was in the lounge again, bill paid, all packed, goodbyes said, waiting for the nine o'clock news. A nice looking young man came in with the landlady who pointed me out to him. He said he was a reporter from the Ipswich Daily, had hoped to do an interview with me, but his friend the photographer had told him it was not feasible. He explained that he had just found out that I was going back the next day so he wondered if I could tell him something about the Oxford authorship theory of which he knew nothing, though it sounded intriguing. I told him, all right, that I could hit some of the high spots, and answer any questions, that I thought it was high time East Anglian people and press looked into the strong possibility this was real Shakespeare Country, etc., etc., and that one of their sons was perhaps the greatest Englishman that ever lived.

We talked for over two hours, and he took a number of notes. I think I made a convert of him. That is not as unreasonable and egotistic as it may seem, for over the years I have converted five or six men I met as fellow guests to Oxfordianism, one of whom is now a V.P. of our Society and an active propagandist for the cause in Essex. The journalist then asked if I had any objections to his writing this up for his paper. I indicated there were none at all, that if he could start people to thinking, he would be doing them, me, and the cause of truth a favor. He thanked me profusely when we parted.

I learned later from Mr. Patience that the newspaperman did send in a story, which his editor blue-pencilled and condensed extensively, and then wrote a leader (editorial) in an attempt to patronize and belittle this eccentric American aberration. The editor showed he knew little of Shakespeare's text and less of history, so much so as to arouse speculation that he went to some local "Shakespeare Authority"—perhaps a teacher of English Lit. who consulted a concordance, and gave said

editor what is known over here as a "bum steer". The editorial contained such an egregious error that it caught the eye of Mr. Patience, who jumped on it, as Snuffy Smith would say, "like a hen on a Juney bug". He wrote a delightful letter to the Ipswich paper, pointing this out, which someone on the staff was naive, or ill-advised, enough to publish. Score this round: Oxford—I, Stratford Will—Nil, as they say in giving soccer football scores.

Other letters appeared in the Essex papers, pro and con. The pro from Mr. Patience, and the con (this can be taken in both senses of the word) from amateurs, all of whom seem to share an abysmal ignorance on the Authorship Question and an abiding faith that they were scotching or slaying an alien American aberration which could only proceed from, or be entertained by, persons either ignorant or insane—most likely both.

At this point one Essex editor wades in with a denunciation of the strange story that an American lawyer has come over with, viz., that Shakespeare did not write his own works, etc., but they were written by a nobleman in Castle Hedingham. References were made to "this Perry Mason" and "aristocracy-mad Americans," and "was Anne Hathaway's cottage really in Braintree," etc., etc. Mr. Patience battled these back effectively but soon found space was too scarce to print his corrections. This kind of activity continued for about a year.

In my latest trip to England during October and November 1974, the aforementioned photographer saw me again on my last Saturday night. A reporter from the London Telegraph was now with him. He wanted a story with pictures using for background an historic or old building, such as Col. Keelan's house (1630). The plan included an interview, if the Col. consented, on Sunday at noon in Little Dunmow. They spent several hours

interviewing us both, took many pictures, and followed up with a request for more detail from me by phone. They said they expected to get nationwide coverage for the story and pictures by selling them to a press association or wire service. I understand the material was published but I have not seen the clippings. (My fault, because I have fallen woefully behind in my correspondence.)

I should mention that on this windup or farewell trip to England, arrangements were made for others to carry on, or more strictly, to be on the look-out for possible MSS. in probable places, through the clue I had developed but had not had a chance to follow up. There has been some notice of this in the local press.

Our British Vice-President is Col. Ian Keelan, a retired Royal Engineer officer now on the staff of Wimpey Engineering Company, one of the world's largest construction organizations. His office is in Witham, and his home, where he resides with his wife and three children, is a house built in 1630 in Little Dunmow.

You might like to know that Col. Keelan was staying at the Wheatsheaf Hotel in Braintree, one summer, while his family was still in Darlington, awaiting his finding a suitable home to buy near a good school. I met him and we often shared early breakfast—he to get to his office in Witham, and I to catch an early train to London. He is a cultured man with a wide scope of interest in things outside of engineering and business. On the question of authorship of "Shakespeare" he soon became a true-believer, after posing some shrewd and probing questions.

Another person now working for the Society in Britain is Mr. George Quant, O.B.E., a retired Parliamentary official, now an antiquary and lecturer on historical subjects, including a series on the Vere family, has promised to keep his eyes open and me informed. Also, Col. George C. Probert (Ret.), C.B.E. of the Suffolk gentry, who lives in Bevilla, a

great 15th century house at Bures, Suffolk is doing what he can as far as his health permits. He introduced me to a friend of his, a senior fellow of Kings College, Cambridge University, a historical anthropologist who has promised to help and has already sent me one or two valuable tips.

Col. Probert's home, where I have enjoyed his hospitality and that of his lovely wife, has many historical portraits, including one of the 18th Earl of Oxford, superior to the one in the National Portrait Gallery. Col. Probert is not a Vere descendent but Earl's Colne was sold by the 17th Earl to one of his ancestors, and when the Probert family sold it a number of years ago, he collected the effigies of the ancient earls, overturned and scattered on the former priory grounds and housed them in a consecrated chapel (St. Mary's) at Bures where visitors can view them. Col. Probert has been a member of our Society for several years.

Note: The initials C.B.E., O.B.E., and H.B.E. used after the surnames are for the Order of the British Empire, Commander, Officer, and Member, respectively. Such a designation is given for valuable services rendered to the Empire, later the Commonwealth.

Sincerely yours for E. Ver.
Richard C. Horne, Jr.
President

[Editor's Note: Mr. Horne also made a visit to Stratford-on-Avon in 1974 and will report on interesting adventures there and on other matters in the next issue of the Newsletter. His activities on the Harvard Case have of necessity drawn his attention away from his report at this time. Examples of news stories referred to in this report appear on following pages of this issue.]

THE HARVARD CASE

The Oxfordian theory of Shakespearean Authorship received a tremendous boost in

the public prints with the near-simultaneous publication in both Harvard Magazine and the Washington Post of Charlton Ogburn articles on the subject. (The Post article--in its Sunday Outlook section--was essentially a digest of Harvard Magazine's more lavishly illustrated presentation.)

The Big Guns of Orthodoxy were subsequently trained on Mr. Ogburn in two contrasting forms of "rebuttal": 1) the gentlemanly though irrelevant reply by Dr. O. B. Hardison, Jr., director of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., which did not really address itself to Ogburn's main points, but rehashed most of the tired non sequiturs that have long served in place of arguments for most Stratfordians; and 2) the decidedly less gentlemanly and largely ad hominem screed penned by Harvard professors Gwynna Evans and Harry Levin, published in Harvard Magazine's February issue (along with several pro-Ogburn letters for which Mr. Ogburn and our Newsletter's editor are very grateful!)

The Newsletter must defer, until our next issue, further news of this continuing controversy. Both of the Stratfordian replies are easily demolished, you may rest assured, and we do hope soon to be able to gather all the arguments and publish them as a group, to be sent to our members as a Newsletter.

Meanwhile, attempts are underway to goad some of Mr. Ogburn's critics into a formal debate on the authorship. A letter to Harvard Magazine by Philip S. Weld of Gloucester, Massachusetts, published in that magazine's April 1975 issue, offers a sum of money to cover the costs of a "trial" between Stratford and Oxford--a challenge Mr. Ogburn himself laid down to the two professors in a letter published in the same issue.

But it has always proved extremely difficult, as anti-Stratfordians know too well, to get an orthodox academic mad enough to stand up and fight for his/her beliefs in any forum which provides for rebuttal. So, details of this must also await the next issue.

BRITISH OXFORDIAN DEVELOPS THEORY ON "DRAM OF EALE" PROBLEM

Editor's Note: One of our British members, Mr. Louis E. M. Alexis of Sevenoaks, Kent, submitted the following article to Harold Patience, Assistant Secretary of the British Chapter, S.O.S. Mr. Alexis teaches ancient Greek and Latin at Sevenoaks School, and his remarks on the problematic "dram of sale" passage in Hamlet are well taken.

Hamlet, Act I, Scene 4, lines 36 ff.

Ham. The dram of sale
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
To his own scandal.

Despite all the fuss about this passage, it is not really difficult. Most of the emendations--and at least 100 must have been printed at one time or another--focus on the word "eale", which is assumed to be a noun. But it is not a noun. It is the adjective "base." The b was written something like 6, and the s was the "long" form, ſ, often mistaken for l or f. Now the opposite of "base" is "noble," and this word does occur in the next line. But it is not used as a noun, as an antithesis would require. For example, a philosopher who had used the expression "the beautiful" would oppose to it "the ugly", not "ugliness." All we have to do then is to move the word "substance" away from the word "noble", which will then cease to be an adjective. Suppose we transpose it two places to the right, and suppose we accept what many scholars have postulated, namely that the word "doubt" conceals the verb "dout", i.e., "extinguish" or "do out", just as the verb "dup", which occurs in Ophelia's "mad song", means "do up" or "fasten" (which incidentally leads to a very interesting interpretation of the song, first published by Gerald Phillips). We then get:

Doth all the noble of The dram of base
a substance doubt, etc.

That is, a minute quantity of baseness renders null and void all the nobility in any substance, from wine to a man's nature. This use of adjectives for nouns can easily be paralleled in Vere: e.g., 2, measure 4, 170, "My false o'er weighs your true." It is a trick of ancient Greek, and Vere must have had at least an "O-level" knowledge of the language. (His illegitimate son by Ann Vavasor, Sir Edward Vere, was a fine Greek scholar, who was the first Englishman to translate the Greek historian Polybius.) In Greek "the base", i.e., "baseness" is τὸ αἰσχρὸν and "the noble" is τὸ καλόν, and a schoolboy does not have to read much Plato before he meets them. I can easily prove that Vere knew Plato's Symposium from the "Clown William" passage in As You Like It. In his extended tour in Italy he would certainly meet many fine Greek scholars, who were in great demand at that time in Europe.

Louis E. M. Alexis
Sevenoaks, Kent

SOLZHENITSYN USES ANTI-STRATFORDIANS' ARGUMENTS

Last year the New York Times published a story that Nobel Prize winner Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn—recently exiled from the Soviet Union and now

living in Switzerland--challenged the authorship of the modern Russian classic And Quiet Flows the Don. The putative author of this novel is Mikhail

Sholokhov, who has used his reputation ever since publication of "his" famous fictional masterwork to lend support to the repressive censorship of Soviet writers which still hangs over from the days of Stalin.

Solzhenitsyn's challenge is not original with himself: he supports the research of an anonymous Soviet literary scholar, whom he identifies by the initial "D". In "D's" unfinished research, the scholar contends that "The Quiet Don", as the Sholokhov work was originally titled, was based on a chronicle about the Don Cossacks written by an anti-Bolshevik writer, Feodor Dmitrievich Krukov, who died during the Russian Civil War of 1920. "D" further argues that Krukov's work, completed by him before his death, had been used by a "co-author", that is, Sholokhov, who inserted new characters, "ideological" passages, and a "bridge" from the Krukov material to his own.

Of interest to Oxfordians (and, indeed, to all who are skeptical of the Stratford-Aubrey attribution of Shakespearean authorship) are the arguments that "D", as reported by Solzhenitsyn, has used in urging this astonishing but persuasive theory:

- a) Sholokhov's schooling. The putative author was 23 years old with four years of formal schooling at the time of "The Quiet Don's" publication in 1928.
- 2) Sholokhov's apprenticeship as a writer. Two or three years' worth in Moscow, with only a handful of sketches and short stories to his credit. The novel's level of mastery sorts oddly with a writer of such short-term experience.
- 3) Sholokhov's probable lack of acquaintance with many events described. When World War I ended, Sholokhov was only 14 years old. How was such a youth able to describe the battle scenes so realistically, Solzhenitsyn wonders?
- 4) The novel's untypical speed of production. Mr. Solzhenitsyn noted that

"The Quiet Don" was allegedly begun in 1926, submitted to the publisher in 1927, the first volume published in 1928, the second ready within the year, and the third less than a year later. Never again did Sholokhov attain this speed of production.

- 5) The post-Don period of Sholokhov's decline. Not only in his rapidity, but in the quality of his writing did Sholokhov deteriorate, Solzhenitsyn contends. Nothing from his pen since this famous trilogy has attained the heights for which its "Author" has become renowned.

Oxfordians and other anti-Stratfordians may be forgiven if they sense a bit of *déjà vu* in all this! The arguments Solzhenitsyn and "D" set forth bear an uncanny resemblance to those long applied to Stratford Will by such heretics as Sir George Greenwood, J. T. Looney, and Sigmund Freud. An essential difference, however, is that Sholokhov, at least, can be shown to have had some schooling, some experience at writing, and the Krukovian authorship theory does presuppose that portions of "The Quiet Don" are the undisputed work of its alleged author. Can as much be said for Stratford Will?

THE OXFORDIAN CASE IN THE ESSEX PRESS

Hamlet of Hedingham by the Bard of Braintree?
(Braintree & Witham Times, July 20, 1973)

Prolonged discussion, debate, speculation and argument, has arisen in the past on the little matter of the Bard. Did Shakespeare really come from Stratford upon Avon?

Essex County Newspaper's arts critic Ray Rushton, no mean literary man himself, looks at the transatlantic theories.

If "Shakespeare" really lived at Castle Hedingham, if Bottom spoke through closed teeth with an Essex accent, where did Ann Hathaway keep house? Could it have been Colchester, Long Melford or even Braintree?

Because according to American lawyer Richard C. Horne, who flew back home at

the weekend, both Melford and Colchester are referred to obliquely in the Bard's works.

But then, perhaps, there was no Ann really, but she was just an invention of a people who, while pretending to be phlegmatic, are notoriously suckers for a romantic attachment, because according to the redoubtable lawyer Shakespeare was not Shakespeare either. He was Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, writing "to be or not to be" from Hedingham Castle, which should improve his status with the aristocracy-mad Americans and settle his hash completely with the Soviet Union.

Although "significant progress had been made" to establish beyond reasonable doubt that Edward was William it would seem to be too early to re-christen The Bell, the Hamlet Arms, or the Mercury Theatre, the Globe. Nor should the souvenir merchants rush to Halstead.

No. To establish it beyond all shadow doubt, Mr. Horne now wants us to conduct attic searches for documents to prove this theory beyond shadow of doubt. In a statement which should hardly endear him to Warwickshire, this literary Perry Mason said: "There are the clearest indications that Shakespeare was an east country man and a scholar—not a Stratford yokel."

My own theory, with one eye on Women's Lib, is that Ann Hathaway was really Shakespeare and she lived at Wivenhoe.

R. R.

Only Oxford Could Have Written These Masterpieces (Braintree & Witham Times, July 27, 1973)

While realising the facetious tone of the writer of Hamlet of Hedingham, I should point out that Oxfordians have never denied the existence of Anne Hathaway. Nor have we denied the ex-

istence of her husband William, who—according to the Stratford-upon-Avon register of baptisms—spelled his name Shaksper, and never "Shake-speare" (with a hyphen) as the name appeared on twenty of the early quarto editions of the plays and on "Shake-speares Sonnets".

Undoubtedly Anns lived in a picturesque farmhouse which continues to furnish a rich source of income from gullible tourists. Our inquiry, however, is this: ... what has this to do with the creation of the greatest works in English literature? We question the assertion that her husband—the moneylender and land encloser—could have found the time for the vast amount of necessary study. The fact that "tradition" (whatever that means) tells us that he was also an actor makes the position much worse. Several Stratfordian scholars have informed us that it is "almost certain" that William attended the small school at Stratford. It seems strange that there is a question about the certainty of the education of a man who was destined to be "not of an Age, but for all time"! The vested interests would have us believe that our immortal playwright was a man who at the early age of twenty had to bear the burden of a wife and three children—ones who, in the small village in which he lived until manhood, would have been deprived of all advantages.

The real "Shakespeare" was widely read in Greek and Latin classics and Italian stories not yet translated when he was writing. He was familiar with the pastimes in nautical matters; a lover of music; steeped in law practice; well acquainted with the cities of northern Italy.

Falcon Square in Castle Hedingham derives its name from the place where the Earls of Oxford housed their hunting birds. Comparison of a verse from one of Edward de Vere's early poems with a passage from Othello shows a dominant idea finding expression in both examples, revealing absolute familiarity with the aristocratic sport of falconry:

"Unsettled still like haggards wild they range.

Those gentle birde that fly
 from man to man;
 Who would not scorn and
 shake them from the fist
 And let them fly, fair fools,
 which way they list."
 (Lord Oxford.)

"If I do find her haggard
 Though that her jesses were
 my dear heart strings,
 I'd whietls her off, and let
 her down the wind
 To play at fortune".
 ("Shakespeare.")

The statement of "R.R." that Anne Hathaway was really Shakespeare and she lived at Wivenhoe curiously contains (although made facetiously) a germ of truth. For Lord Oxford lived at Wivenhoe in the late 1570's, and that he was engaged in some sort of literary activity there appears evident from one of his letters which terminates with the remark: "From my new Country Mises of Wivenhose". (That he was a playwright is confirmed by Meres' remark in 1598 to the effect that Oxford was "the best for comedy among us". In 1622 Peacham put Oxford's name at the top of a list of writers who had made Elizabeth's reign a Golden Age of literature).

Verees written by the 17th Earl of Oxford are the unquestionable source of passages in the "Shakespeare" plays and poems; the plots of many of the plays, and incidents in them, correspond with events in his life; his enemies are caricatured. Therefore only Oxford, Lord Great Chamberlain and a member of the Privy Council, could have written these masterpieces.

H. W. Patience
 Assistant Secretary
 The Shakespeare Oxford Society
 (Washington, D.C.)
 Bailey Bridge Road
 Braintree.

American Seeks Aid Over Essex Theory on the Bard (East Anglian Daily Times, July 7, 1973)

An American lawyer has appealed to Essex people to help trace any documentary evidence which could restore Shakespeare to his proper setting — as "bard of Hedingham."

Mr. Richard C. Horne flew home to Washington yesterday at the end of his eighth literary pilgrimage to the "real Shakespeare country." He stayed at Braintree.

He said significant progress has already been made in the case for establishing beyond reasonable doubt that the works of the world's greatest playwright came from the pen of Edward de Vere, whose seat as 17th Earl of Oxford was at Hedingham Castle.

Attic searches

Mr. Horne, president of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, is hoping to prompt attic searches through family papers in East Anglia, which could yield evidence on the subject.

"There are the clearest of indications that Shakespeare was an east country man and a scholar — not a Stratford yokel," he said.

"The advantages which proving this would bring to the area in local pride, prestige and a one million-pound tourist industry overnight are obvious."

Mr. Horne has dug out from Shakespeare's works references to Colchester, Long Melford, and to the uniquely East Anglian saffron flowers and "cadec" or herring.

The peasants and clowns of the plays also talk the dialect of Essex, he said.

Poetry in Motion (East Anglian Daily Times, July 10, 1973)

An American enthusiast seeks to transfer the official "Shakespeare country" from Stratford to Castle Hedingham, together with a "million-pound tourist industry".

The Bard, he claims, was in reality Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, who enjoyed spattering the plays with references to local towns and villages, and had his clowns and peasants speaking Essex.

A hasty perusal of a book of quotations shows some splendid evidences for such a theorem. For example, Edward IV is given the lines "When Oxford had me down he rescued me, and said 'Dear brother live and be a king'."

Ostensibly this means that the Yorkist king owed both his life and his throne to the kindness of a dedicated Lancastrian foe. Since this is absurd, we must search for another interpretation.

Autobiographical

Manifestly it is an autobiographical note by Shakespeare; he tells us that when he was a down-and-out actor, he was saved from his poverty by the Earl of Oxford, who invited him down to his house, and made him a literary "king".

Again, "vere" suggests a Latin form of "true". Notice in Hamlet that the ghost is called "true-penny", undoubtedly referring to the name of Shakespeare's own ghost-writer.

Similarly, we may recognise the meaning of the lament "'tis true, 'tis pity; and pity 'tis, 'tis true", and the very significant "Thy speaking of my tongue, and I thine, most truly-false-ly, must needs be granted to be at one".

Before enthusiasm runs riot, however,

we should ponder a little the implications of the Stratford horass descending upon a quiet corner of East Anglia. It is not so long ago that strenuous efforts were needed to prevent the Americans discovering that the Mayflower sailed from Harwich during the centenary celebrations of the journey.

Inconsistent

After diverting one threatened invasion to the West Country, which seems to enjoy that sort of thing, it would seem inconsistent to invite another.

Perhaps, then, we should be wiser to point out that nine of Shakespeare's plays appeared after the death of the 17th Earl of Oxford, the last of them eight years later -- which is a fairly cogent argument against his authorship.

Shakespeare Country (East Anglian Daily Times, July 18, 1973)

Sir, -- May I be allowed a few comments on the portion of your leader of 10.7.73 entitled "Poetry in Motion"?

It is obvious from the context of the play (Richard III, II, i, 110-113) that when Edward IV makes the remark

"Who told me, in the field at
Tewkesbury
When Oxford had me down,
he rescued me
And said 'Dear Brother, live,
and be a king'"

he is relating to the Earl of Derby his rescue, by his brother Clarence, from the clutches of the Lancastrian Earl of Oxford.

In Richard III and Henry VI Part 3, the 17th Earl recalls the historic part played by his ancestors in defeating the Yorkists and restoring Lancastrians to power. In the latter play the following words are put into the mouth of the 13th Earl of Oxford:

"Call him my king, by whose
injuriose doom
My elder brother, the Lord
Aubrey Vere,
Was done to death? And more
than eo, my father.

....
No, Warwick no; while life
upholds this arm,
This arm upholds the house
of Lancaster."

From then on he is highly praised:

"And thou, brave Oxford
wondrous well-belov'd"
(IV.8.17)

"Sweet Oxford" (IV.8.30)

....

Triumphant at the battle of Tewkes-
bury, King Edward exclaims:

"Away with Oxford to Hames
Castle straight!"

"Shakespeare" here reveals his in-
tense reading of the chronicles, for it
is a matter of historical record that
the 13th Earl was committed to Hames
Castle (near Calais) as a prisoner. I
am unable to imagine the part-time ac-
tor from Stratford--the moneylender and
the land encloser--finding the time for
the vast amount of study necessary for
the creation of the Shakespearean canon.

The editorial asks us to "ponder a lit-
tle the implications of the Stratford
hordes descending upon a quiet corner of
East Anglia," but I am quite sure that
Essex people would rather ponder the e-
normous income which yearly accrues to
the coffere of the vested interests of
the Shakespeare industry at Stratford-
upon-Avon.

The editorial asks us to believe that
because "nine of Shakespeare's plays ap-
peared after the death of the 17th Earl
of Oxford, the last of them eight years
later" this constitutes "a fairly cogent
argument against his authorship."

By the same token, the fact that the
Stratford man apparently left 16 unpub-
lished plays behind him is a cogent argu-

ment against his authorship. No manu-
scripte were mentioned in William's de-
tailed will, and though it appears that
money-making was the main-spring of his
life, he made no effort of his own to get
his masterpieces into print.

In Camden's "Britannia" of 1605 there
was no mention of him who, according to
Ben Jonson, was not of an age, but for
all time. In his "Annals" for the year
1616 (the year of William's death) there
was still no mention of Shakespeare.

During his lifetime "Shakespeare" was
spoken of as a disembodied author, a name
connected with the plays and poems, with
no suggestion of an actual person attached
to that name.

....
The Sonnete of "Shakespeare" (printed
hyphenated, with no Christian name, as be-
fits a nom de plume) were printed in 1605.
The author clearly took no part in publica-
tion, for the text was not proofread and
the dedication was left to the publisher to
write and initial.

Thorpe refers to the author as "our ever-
living poet," which signifies an immortal
poet, no longer alive, in the sense employ-
ed by the playwright himself in Henry VI,
Part I with reference to the late Henry V:
"that everliving man of memory."

Lord Oxford had died at Hackney in 1604,
but William of Stratford lived on until
1616. The Sonnets were therefore printed
during the lifetimes of William of Strat-
ford, Francis Bacon, William Stanley and
Roger Manners (men to whom it has been
sought to attribute their authorship) but
after the death of Edward de Vere, the
only possible candidate for Shakespearean
honours.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Here are some corrections to errata in our last issue (Winter-Spring 1975): 1) Mr. Horne's address on p. 1, line 5 should read: 1791 Lanier Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. 2) In H. W. Patience's letter ("Only Oxford Could Have Written These Masterpieces", Braintree and Withem Times, July 27, 1972), reproduced on pp. 7 and 8, some words were inadvertently omitted in the second column of page 7, lines 37 and 38. The passage should read: "He was familiar with the pastimes of the nobility; well informed in nautical matters," etc. The editor also wishes to state, in response to queries on this point, that it is the Newsletter's policy to exercise a minimum of editorial revision on letters and articles reproduced from other publications, and we disclaim responsibility for the content or the interpretations in such material.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society wishes to express its gratitude to member Russell des Cognets, Jr. of Lexington, Kentucky, for his generous gift to the Society of over two hundred copies of the Harvard Magazine issue of November 1974, containing the article by Charlton Ogburn, Jr., "The Man Who Shakespeare Was Not..."

Because of the size of this issue of the Newsletter (containing, among other items, the long-awaited editorial reply to Harvard's Professors Gwynne Evans and Harry Levin), President Richard C. Horne's report on his trip last year to Stratford-upon-Avon is deferred until our next issue. In compensation, we offer the fans of Mr. Horne's inimitable prose his review of Samuel Schoenbaum's latest tome. (Members may recall Mr. Horne's lively description of Prof. Schoenbaum's lecture at the Folger Library in the Newsletter, Winter 1972.)

Gordon C. Cyr, Editor

AN OXFORDIAN REPLY TO TWO HARVARD PROFESSORS

by Gordon Cyr, Editor

In the February 1975 issue of Harvard Magazine, Professors Gwynne Evans and Harry Levin (also editors of The Riverside Shakespeare) attempt to rebut Charlton Ogburn's article, "The Man Who Shakespeare Was Not..." (November 1974). Oxfordians will notice many familiar arguments and tactics in the professors' reply, most of which were dealt a masterly death blow by Sir George Greenwood over a half-century ago (The

Shakespeare Problem Restated, 1908; Is There a Shakespeare Problem? 1913), an author most Stratfordians, including the two professors, seem not to have read.

On succeeding pages, the Newsletter sets forth in the left-hand column the two professors' arguments appearing in their article, as complete in their context as is practical. Opposite each of these, in the right hand column, is the Newsletter

editor's reply, listing sources where applicable. It need only be added that the editor has full responsibility for the opinions expressed in his reply, which was not written in collaboration with Mr. Ogburn or with anyone else.

"We are confident, in submitting the case to our readers," claim the professors in their concluding statement, "that they will recognize on which side there has been a suppressio veritatis." The editor of the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter shares this sentiment in full.

EVANS AND LEVIN

The authors refer to anti-Stratfordians as "the small but pertinacious band of zealots who will forever argue that Shakespeare's works were written by someone else..." (p. 39)

"Academic pieties could scarcely vie with such devout familial commitments." (p. 40 — in referring to the dedication of This Star of England by Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, Sr. to the object of the professors' reply.)

"Nor is there the slightest recognition of the various other contenders for...the greatest title in literature: Bacon, Marlowe, the Earl of Derby, Queen Elizabeth, et cetera." (p. 40)

"The fact that the anti-Stratfordians seldom agree on a rival candidate is itself an argument in favor of the incumbent." (p. 40)

REPLY

Anti-Stratfordians are more than willing to acknowledge their minority status, but their "pertinacity" is a reflection of the meager evidence urged on behalf of Stratford Will's candidacy. Far from arguing that "Shakespeare's works were written by someone else", we only seek the identity of the author who called himself "Shakespeare".

An ad hominem irrelevance, unworthy of an educator.

Why should there be?

What does the word "seldom" mean in this context? That anti-Stratfordians sometimes agree on a rival candidate? In any event, what the professors seem to be arguing is that because Bacon, Oxford, Marlowe, etc. could not all have been the author, therefore none can be--an argument not worth serious consideration. The very plentitude of contenders for this single literary distinction might suggest to the uncommitted that a longstanding and widespread dissatisfaction with the "incumbent" still exists.

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"Moreover, though he [Justice Wilburforce] quoted and summarized a methodological caveat from Hugh Trevor-Roper, he made it clear that the Oxford historian was 'keeping his own position firmly in the ranks of the orthodox.' This is a significant distinction, which Mr. Ogburn blurs into a distortion by including Prof. Trevor-Roper on his list of anti-Shakespearean heretics." (p. 40)

"Additional injustice is done to Henry James by a truncated quotation which misses out on his irony." (p. 40)

REPLY

The professors conveniently omit the remainder of Justice Wilburforce's citation: "... and stating that he [Prof. Trevor-Roper] definitely does not believe that the works of Shakespeare could have been written by Francis Bacon, he also considers that the case for William Shakespeare [of Stratford] rests on a narrow balance of avoidance and that new material could upset it." Justice Wilburforce further quotes the historian: "... a settled scholarly tradition can inhibit free thought, that heretics are not necessarily wrong. His conclusion is that the question of the authorship cannot be considered as closed." (All England Law Reports, 1964. Vol. 3, p. 46.) It is quite clear from this more complete context that the judge's reference to Trevor-Roper's "orthodoxy" extended only to the Baconian theory -- an orthodoxy shared by Mr. Ogburn. Stratfordians cannot claim Trevor-Roper's allegiance here. (And just who is more guilty of "distortion" in this instance?)

How James's "irony" will help the professors' case is difficult to fathom! Here is the entire passage: "I am 'a sort of' haunted by the conviction that the divine William is the biggest and most successful fraud ever practiced on a patient world. The more I turn him round and round the more he so affects me. But that is all-- I am not pretending to treat the question or to carry it further. It bristles with difficulties, and I can only express my general sense by saying that I find it almost as impossible to conceive that Bacon wrote the plays as to conceive that the man from Stratford, as we know the man from Stratford, did." (Letter to Violet Hunt, Aug. 26, 1903. Emphasis in the original. Cited in Shakespeare and His Rivals, George McMichael and Edgar Glenn, eds. Odyssey, 1962, pp. 61-62.) Leon Edel says that James spoke of "the lout from Stratford" and felt that the "facts of Stratford did not 'square' with the plays of genius." (Leon Edel: Henry James; The Master: 1901-

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"Looney's method; follows the exploded assumption that Shakespeare's plays, most of them based on pre-existing narratives and adapted to the conventions of the theatrical medium, can be treated as chapters of an autobiography." (p. 40)

"Drama is traditionally as objective as a literary form can be ..." (p. 40 -- in arguing against any autobiographical inferences for Oxford in Hamlet.)

"...and social snobbery is an unspoken shibboleth among the anti-Stratfordians." (p. 40)

"Quoting Ogburn, 'The characters he considers worthy of his genius are almost without exception of the nobility.' Such overwhelming exceptions as Shylock and Falstaff spring to mind at once, together with a host of lesser figures--tapsters, whores, foot-soldiers, sailors, peddlers, rustics--who do not seem unworthy of his genius." (p. 40)

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1916. Lippincott, 1972, p. 145.) Once again, Evans and Levin can only claim orthodoxy for James on the matter of Bacon, and the novelist's entire statement shows his dissatisfaction with the Stratfordian argument.

The professors are shooting down a straw man here, for this is not Ogburn's argument. Evans's and Levin's point ignores the changes Shakespeare made in the "pre-existing narratives" and the new characters he added which form the basis for most Oxfordian arguments about any personal clues Shakespeare may have left in his plays or poems.

This is an assertion certain to be disputed by some commentators, and ignores the example of Strindberg (ironically termed by G.B. Shaw as "the only genuinely Shakespearean modern dramatist"--quoted in The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare. Crowell, 1966, p. 828) and does not account for the Sonnets, whose subjectivity is attested to by Coleridge, among others (Ibid., p. 807). If Coleridge is correct, how do Profs. Evans and Levin 'square the facts of Stratford' (to paraphrase Edel on James) with the personae of these remarkable poems? (Not, it is to be hoped, with the ingenious but far from universally accepted theories of Hotson, Rowse, et al.!)

Would that the "Poet of Democracy", Walt Whitman, and that Mark Twain were alive to hear themselves called "social snobs"!

The professors impeach one of their own witnesses, Prof. Trevor-Roper, whose professional reputation they had been at some pains to defend earlier. Ogburn cites the historian's views on p. 23 and these seem to be at considerable variance from those of the Riverside Shakespeare editors: "The independent, sub-noble world of artisans and craftsmen, if it exists for Shakespeare, exists only as his butt. Bottom, Quince, Snug, Dogberry and Verges, Dull ----

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"Literature affords no parallel for what we are asked to believe of Shaksper [sic]," Mr. Ogburn declares: that a country-born commoner could write plays that delighted monarchs. Mr. Ogburn should be informed that Terence, an African slave, charmed the high Roman circle of the Scipios with the refinements of his style and wit." (p. 41)

"The evidence is against Will Shaksper's ever having attended school." There is no direct evidence one way or another, the school records not having survived from those years. But the Stratford Grammar School was a good one, and it was free for inhabitants of the town. What was he doing from seven to thirteen, at a time when his father was a leading citizen, if not going to school? There is a fairly well authenticated tradition that he was briefly employed as a schoolmaster. ... Careful assessments of the curriculum and the ex-

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these poor imbeciles are used to amuse the nobility by their clumsiness." One can add many more instances, notably the gravedigger in Hamlet, to whom the hero condescends outrageously, even referring to him as a "knave." And even Falstaff is a knight, whom many Oxfordians see as a self-caricature of one aspect of his author's personality.

A blatant misrepresentation of what Mr. Ogburn said. The sentence which follows the full colon in Profs. Evans' and Levin's version is not the parallel referred to by Ogburn. And the professors should be informed that their example, Terence Afer, is fatal to their case! For Terence was regarded even by the Romans themselves as a pseudonymous author who allowed his name to be used by two noblemen widely regarded as the real authors: Scipio and Laelius. Cicero writes: "Terentium cujus fabellae propter elegantiam sermonis putabantur a C. Laelio scribi" (Ad. Att. vii. 3), and more recently, Montaigne, as translated by John Florio: "If the perfection of well-speaking might bring any glorie suitable unto a great personage, Scipio and Laelius would never have resigned the honour of their Comedies, and the elegancies and smooth-sportfull conceits of the Latine tongue, unto an African servant: For to prove this labour to be theirs, the exquisite eloquence and excellent invention thereof doth sufficiently declare it." (Florio's Montaigne, Book I, Chap. xxxix.) Montaigne's argument here is basically the same one anti-Stratfordians apply to the Shakespeare controversy.

That the Stratford school was a "good one" is a characteristic orthodox assertion founded upon fond guesswork. If the Stratford school were like the best schools found in more populous parts of England, as the orthodox argue, and if Shaksper went to that school, then he could have learned enough Latin, etc., etc. But there is no evidence that such a provincial school was at all in the running with the best of such schools, and the skeptical are certainly entitled (even conceding Stratford Will's attendance for the entire

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tent of his learning have been worked out by T. W. Baldwin and V. K. Whitaker." (p. 41)

"In any case, most of his source material was available in translation." (p. 41)

"Mr. Ogburn speaks of Shakspeare as a 'near illiterate.' He goes on to reveal his own ignorance of the 'secretary hand' by speaking of 'incomplete' signatures, not recognizing abbreviated forms which are standard in that hand. Far from six signatures being 'all we know that he wrote,' an intensive study of Shakespeare's handwriting would identify his holograph in a scene from the Sir Thomas More manuscript, which has been accepted into the canon of two recent editions. Could it be imagined that the Earl of Oxford would have been called in, as Shakespeare apparently was,

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time claimed for him by the orthodox) to dispute whether such attendance would endow the author of Shakespeare's Works with the necessary qualifications. Another Stratfordian exaggeration is the assumption that John Shakspeare was a "leading citizen" on the strength of his having been for a time the town's bailiff. As the minutes from Halliwell-Phillips' Council Book of Stratford-on-Avon (Book A, p. 2., Sept. 1557) make clear, everyone had the duty -- on pain of a heavy fine -- to serve time for this "honor", at least in Stratford. As for the "schoolmaster" story, this, in the words of Sir George Greenwood, "is caught at by the Stratfordians as drowning men catch at a straw." (The Shakespeare Problem Restated. John Lane, London, 1908, p. 105n.) Its sole source is John Aubrey (about whom see below). It all seems a pity that no one from this "country school" has spoken up to claim Stratford Will as their most eminent pedagogue. Finally, Baldwin's and Whitaker's assessments are not evidence but hypotheses which assume the point at issue.

But by no means all. The professors omit mention of Fasti of Ovid, Menechmae of Plautus, and several untranslated passages of Seneca, Juvenal, Cicero, and Vergil which Churton Collins (Studies in Shakespeare, cited in Greenwood, op. cit., pp. 84ff) ably demonstrates left their traces in the poems and plays. Collins also argues persuasively for the poet's knowledge of Greek (See also Shakespeare Oxford Soc. Newsletter, Winter-Spring 1975, p. 5)

The illiteracy of which Ogburn speaks was first applied to Stratford Will's signatures, not by one of the dread heretics, but by Mellen Chamberlain, Librarian of the Boston Public Library, who, in 1889 published a pamphlet stating that "Shakespeare's" signatures "show such a lack of facility in handwriting as would almost preclude the possibility of Shakespeare's having written the dramas attributed to him, so great is the apparent illiteracy of his signatures." (Editor's emphasis.) It is not the "incompleteness" of these scrawls that commends the epithet to ei-

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to doctor so ill-starred a dramatic venture?" (p. 41)

"Mr. Ogburn seems baffled by the earliest allusion to him in Robert Greene's Groatworth of Wit, which is clearly a protest against a mere actor who has presumed to become a dramatist." (pp. 41 and 42)

REPLY

ther Ogburn or Dr. Chamberlain (and to many other commentators as well), but the obvious painfulness in the formation of what letters there are. As Mr. Ogburn says, the reader can see all of this for himself (See Reader's Enc. of Shake., op. cit., p. 301). As to the identification of Shakspeare's holograph in Sir Thomas More, the professors' confident assertion of such is not shared by all scholars (notably Tannenbaum, who also made an "intensive study"). The acceptance of this fragment into the Shakespearean canon has nothing to do with the handwriting, but has been made on considerations of style. It is quite possible that the Earl of Oxford could have contributed to this aborted production: most scholars acknowledge the principal author to have been Anthony Munday (Ibid., p. 570), who was an employee of the Earl, as were John Lyly, Thomas Watson, and other literary figures of the 70's and 80's. The manuscript is obviously the collaboration of several hands, many of whom have been supposed to be scribes.

Readers will be delighted to learn that this famous reference -- the subject of contention for two centuries -- is to be interpreted as "clearly" as the professors claim. But a careful reading of this passage does not support the professors' inferences. (It should be added that Evans and Levin assume Greene to be the author and ignore the recent computer studies of Warren Austin Mr. Ogburn mentions on page 26, which argue persuasively that Greene's so-called letter is in reality a forgery by Chettle. See also Shakespeare Newsletter, Dec. 1970 and Dec. 1974.) Groatworth's author addresses three "play makers", as Chettle calls them, and warns them against the actors: "those puppets that speake from our mouths, those anticks garnished in our colours ... Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide,

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supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is in his own conceit the onely Shake-scene in a country." The only thing in this passage that clearly relates to Shakespeare is the parody of a line from 3 Henry VI. But if the author is attacking Shakespeare as both actor and as author of this line, why does he say "beautified with our feathers"? The professors have fastened on the line about "bumbasting" (padding) out a blank verse, supposing this to mean that the complaint is against an actor presuming to become a dramatist. But this ignores the image of the feathers, plainly derived from Aesop's fable of the jackdaw who put other birds' feathers on his own back to appear more beautiful than he was, until the birds each reclaimed their own, angrily plucking them from the jackdaw's back. So the charge in Groatsworth appears to be plagiarism — putting forward the lines of other playwrights as his own. (This, at least, seems to be the contemporary view of "R.B. Gent", who, in Greene's Funeralls, 1594, writes of Robert Greene: "... the men who so eclipt his fame,/Purloynde his Plumes, can they deny the same?") If such is to be applied to Stratford Will, then this interpretation alone is nearly fatal to the orthodox case! And, if George Peele is one of the playwrights addressed (as a great number of orthodox Shakespeare scholars seem to hold), why should the author complain about a "mere actor who has presumed to become a dramatist"? For Peele was himself an actor as well as a playwright. It is interesting in this connection to compare the complaint in Groatsworth with that in Ben Jonson's epigram, "On Poet-Ape": "Poor Poet-ape, that would be thought our chief,/Whose works are e'en the frippery of wit,/From brokage is become so bold a thief,/As we, the robb'd, leave rage, and pity it./At first he made low shifts, would pick and glean,/Buy the reversion i.e., revision, of old plays, now grown/To a little wealth, and credit in the scene,"

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"The important reference from the Parnassus Plays (1598 - 1602), where Shakespeare is specifically saluted in both roles *i.e.*, as playwright and actor, is conveniently ignored." (p. 42)

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etc. (Cited in Greenwood, *op. cit.*, p. 455.) Is this how Stratford Will had "grown to a little wealth" in the theater -- as a "play broker" who bought old plays and later plagiarized them ("become so bold a thief")? And if Shakspeare is not meant in this epigram, shouldn't the orthodox be interested in finding out just who is?

What the professors "conveniently ignore" is the passage itself, and we leave to the unprejudiced reader how much of a "salute" to Shakespeare is intended by the anonymous author of these plays. The three plays were written for an audience of students at St. John's College, Cambridge, and in one scene in the third play (The Return from Parnassus, Part II, Act IV), two characters playing the parts of the actors Richard Burbage and Will Kempe converse about the university students and their abilities as players and as writers. Kempe at one point is made to say: "Few of the University men pen plaies well; they smell too much of that writer Ovid and that writer Metamorphosis, and talk too much of Proserpina and Jupiter. Why here's our fellow Shakespeare puts them all downe, aye and Ben Jonson too ..." (Parnassus, Three Elizabethan Comedies, 1599 - 1601. ed. W.D. Macray. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1886.) Remember, this is a university author writing for a university audience. If anything is clear from this passage, it is that the two actors, from a class generally held in low esteem in those times, are being held up to ridicule, that the author considers players to be ignorant "rude groomes" (in the words of Groatsworth of Wit) who think that Metamorphosis was an author along with Ovid, and who foolishly bestow praise on "our fellow Shakespeare", blissfully unaware that he, of all people, can most be charged with the faults Kempe finds in the university playwrights! Kempe's "salute" to Shakespeare and his criticism of Ben Jonson are to be read the other way around. Obviously, such lampooned mouthings are

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"We are told instead: 'Shakespeare's contemporaries made it quite plain that they did not consider the Stratford man as author.' Plain? Where?" (p. 42)

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not to be taken as "evidence", much less as a "salute" in "both roles" of playwright and actor, as Evans and Levin would have us believe.

Two instances may serve: 1) The great William Camden, in his Remaines of a Greater Work Concerning Britaine, 1605, ii, 8, writes of several authors, such as Sidney, Spenser, etc., and ends with "...William Shakespeare, and other pregnant witts of these our times, whom succeeding ages may justly admire." Yet Camden, who also was acquainted with Shakspeare in his own position in the College of Heralds and passed on Shakspeare's coat-of-arms application, makes no mention of a "Shakespeare" among his "Worthies of Stratford" in Britannia (1605) -- although William was living there at the time. Nor does Camden see fit to mention in his Annals for the year 1616 the death of this "most pregnant witt". A substantial inference remains that Camden never thought to connect the two. (Other contemporaries "made it plain" by their similar silence about "Shakespeare's" passing, and this in an age when poetic eulogies abound! The first memorial verse does not appear until the First Folio, published seven years later, and except for Ben Jonson's, the contributions are from relatively obscure pens.) 2) Another example is to be found in John Marston's Pigmalion's Image (1598) and Bishop Hall's Virgidemiae, Books II and IV, of the same year. In these two satires, in which Marston and Hall are inveighing against each other, references are made to a writer "Labeo", who is unidentified, but is arguably the author of Venus and Adonis, judging by the style of Marston's work, his paraphrases from Venus, and the criticisms leveled by Hall, which remind us that Shakespeare's poem was regarded in some circles as lascivious. Hall says, in the first Satire of Book II: "For shame! write better, Labeo, or write none." And in the first Satire of Book IV, we have this suggestive passage: "Labeo is whipp'd and laughs me in the face:/ Why? for I smite and hide the galled place... Long as the crafty Cuttle lieth

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"Typical is the paraphrase of a line from the 'author of Wit's Recreation.' The book is entitled Wit's Recreations; being an anthology, it has no author." (p. 42)

"Yet there remains a substantial and more interesting series of literary allusions and testimonials, which Mr. Ogburn snatches away from Shakespeare and bestows upon Oxford, thereby making good the bare-faced assertion: 'No word of commendation of him has come down to us.'" (p. 42)

"The spelling in the marriage license is 'Shaxpere' -- not, as Mr. Ogburn would have it, 'Shaxper.' (The final e makes a phonetic difference; the substitution of x for ks does not.)" (p. 42)

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sure/ In the black cloud of his thick vomiture;/ Who list complain of wronged faith or fame/ When he may shift it to another's name?" It seems likely that both Marston and Hall, since their satires are addressed to each other, mean the same person when they refer to "Labeo" --and, if the author of Venus and Adonis is meant (which also seems quite likely), then Hall "made it plain" he did not think the poem was written by anyone with the real name of William Shakespeare.

If the professors wish to nitpick over the omission of a letter, it should be pointed out that there are two t's in the word "wit" of the original title. Evans and Levin are really straining for a point in stating that anthologies have "no author". Common usage recognizes the term, especially when the compiler composes original material, as is the case here. Ogburn has unimpeachable precedent for this wording from the dedication to Witts Recreations itself, headed "the Stationers to the Reader: ...and you will by your dislike, censure the Author's skill." (Editor's emphasis.)

Mr. Ogburn means here that no word of commendation of the man (as opposed to the writings) has come down to us. The professors here beg the question of these "literary allusions and testimonials", and assume that they must apply to the Stratford man, forgetting that this is the point at issue. Not one of these references identifies its subject, which leads us to restate the kernel of the Shakespearian biographical problem: the only documentation that clearly points to the man from Stratford is nonliterary.

A far greater phonetic difference is made when the e is omitted from the first syllable, after the k. Such omission shortens the a in that syllable. While no one should draw, in the professors' words, any "far-reaching implications" from such matters, it remains curious that Shakespeare, if the author and the Stratford man are the same person, would consistently sign his name without this e,

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"Alleging that Jonson expressed contempt for 'Shaksper,' he shores up that dubious allegation with a satirical line about a parvenu Jonsonian character; Jonson's editors do not accept the conjecture that the satire was aimed at Shakespeare." (p. 42--in referring to a description Jonson gives of Sogliardo, a character in Every Man Out of His Humour, cited by Ogburn in his article, page 23.)

"Mr. Ogburn is unwilling to concede a decent role to his 'Shaksper' even on the stage. He has searched for him vainly in the records of Philip Henslowe and the memoirs of Edward Alleyn "--the manager and the leading actor of the rival company to the troupe at the Globe." (p. 42)

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when the poems and plays give the name, equally consistently, as "Shake" in the first syllable.

This is perhaps to be explained by the reference not properly belonging within the purview of Jonson scholars. Again, as with the case of the Parnassus plays, we invite unprejudiced readers to judge for themselves whether Ben is referring to Stratford Will (as two Shakespearean scholars--Prof. G. B. Harrison of the University of Michigan, and Philip Burton, former president of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy--seem to think). In 1596, William Dethick, garter king-of-arms, submitted a draft of a coat-of-arms to the College of Heralds in the name of John Shaksper (William's father). On this draft appear the words, "Non sans Droict" (Not without right). It is far from certain whether this grant was actually given. In Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humour, III, 1, there is a conversation between Sogliardo (the one so described by Jonson and quoted by Ogburn), Carlo Buffone (the jester), and Sir Puntarvolo: Sogliardo:...By this parchment, gentlemen, I have so toiled among the harrots, Heralds; yonder, you will not believe; they do speak i' the strangest language and give a man the hardest terms for his money, that ever you knew. Carlo: But ha' you the arms? ha' you the arms. Sog: I' faith, I thank God, I can write myself a gentleman now; here's my patent, it cost me thirty pound, by this breath. [After some dialogue in which Carlo, in an aside to Puntarvolo, makes merry about the crest, Sogliardo asks:] Sog: How you like 'hem, signior? Punt: Let the word motto be, "Not, without mustard:" Your crest is very rare, sir.

It is, indeed, one of the strangest phenomena in the Shakespeare biography that neither of these two copious record-keepers from the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods sees fit to mention a Shakespeare, either as a dramatic writer or as an actor, when the name of every other prominent play-

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wright and actor appears! The explanation usually given for this fatal lacuna is that Shakespeare did not write plays for any of Henslowe's theaters. But why did not Henslowe invite Shakespeare to do so, as he did Drayton, Chapman, Dekker, Chettle, Jonson, Marston, Wilson, Munday, Heywood, Middleton, Porter, Hathaway, Day, Rowley, Haughton, Rankins, and Watson? And why do we find Shakespearean titles making their frequent appearance in Henslowe's Diary, but no mention of a payment made, at least not to "Shakespeare"? Alleyn similarly refers in his numerous memoranda to every prominent actor of his day, rivals or no, but never to Shakspeare.

Of course, if "Shakespeare" was, as anti-Stratfordians contend, a concealed writer who never wrote to anyone's order, and if the "top" of the Stratford man's performance was the "ghost in his own Hamlet" as Rowe says, then the pregnant silences of Henslowe and Alleyn cease to be strange at all.

"As for the Quartos, it is stated that the first six of them 'all pirated—appeared with no author named.' ...Due recourse to the bibliographical facts, however, informs us that the first six would include a good text of Titus Andronicus and another of Love's Labor's Lost with Shakespeare's name on the title page." (p. 42)

Really! We do wish these Shakespeare scholars would come to some sort of agreement on the chronology. Here is The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare's version (op. cit., p. 668):

- 1594: 2 Henry VI, Q1 (bad; "The First Part of the Contention...")
Shrew, Q1 (bad)
Titus, Q1
 1595: 3 Henry VI (bad; really in octavo; "The True Tragedie...")
 1596: Shrew, Q2 (bad)
 1597: Richard II, Q1
Richard III, Q1
Romeo, Q1 (bad)

Now here are eight, five of which are admitted by E. K. Chambers to be "bad quartos", none of which have Shakespeare's name on the title page. The L.L.L. Quarto, cited by the professors, was not issued until the following year (1598). Ogburn's statement still stands.

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"As a matter of fact, Shakespeare is mentioned among the cast of Jonson's Sejanus in 1603, and there is legal evidence for his presence in London on several occasions during his later years." (p. 43--in contesting Ogburn's proposed date for "bundling" Shaksper back to Stratford.)

"Yet Caroline Spurgeon's study of Shakespeare's imagery has shown how such poetic sensibilities could have been nourished by the Warwickshire countryside, matching the very eddies under Clopton Bridge with those that swirl in The Rape of Lucrece; and there are local traditions, such as the deer-stealing incident, which may well have been reflected in the plays." (p. 43)

"We cannot but express a certain admiration when a writer in Mr. Ogburn's position is courageous enough to echo such phrases as these Wood's characterization

REPLY

Stratfordians rely heavily on Jonson's testimony for a number of things, despite his numerous contradictions. But since there is no one else who says so much about his famous contemporary, the epithet "honest Ben" is applied literally. Carping criticism and fulsome praise alternate throughout Jonson's career, and for the orthodox to pray in aid any one of his utterances, they must ignore others (such as the rather nasty Sogliardo scene cited above). The appearance of Shakespeare's name in the 1603 cast of Sejanus is suspect, on the grounds that it does not appear until Jonson's own First Folio is published in 1616, the year of Shakspeare's death. (For the same reason, the posthumous listings of "William Shakespeare" heading the 1623 First Folio cast lists in Shakespeare's plays are equally unreliable.) The orthodox, incidentally, are unable to show a record of any part played by a "Shakespeare", and his name is conspicuously absent as actor in any contemporary municipal record.

As to the "several occasions" of Shakspeare's legal presence in London after Ogburn's date, Ogburn mentions some of these in his article. (p. 25)

The answer to Ms. Spurgeon is, "Yes, it could have been, but by no means necessarily has been." Myriad eddies under as many bridges behave as the poet describes them. That the professors accept the "deer-stealing" story only shows the desperate state of their case, since two centuries ago, Malone, himself a lawyer, argued this fable's implausibility on legal grounds. It is quite clear that this "tradition" is a result of Merry Wives, and not the other way around. (See also Greenwood, op. cit., pp. 24-30.)

Another snide ad hominem remark, which Evans and Levin should have reconsidered before publication.

E. & L.

of John Aubrey as a "roving and maggoty-pated man..." (p. 43)

"At all events, Wood, who relied on Aubrey for biographical field work, has weathered less well than his research assistant. The notes on Shakespeare have the relative authority of coming from the son of a fellow actor." (p. 43)

REPLY

The attempt to clean up Aubrey's reputation for unreliability must have been born and bred among Shakespeare scholars—for the sole purpose of conferring respectability on the schoolmaster story, for which Aubrey is the sole source. The reader need not rely on Anthony Wood's derogatory statement, but need only see for himself some of Aubrey's other biographical efforts. Halliwell-Phillips, the great nineteenth century biographer of "Shakespeare", calls him "one of those foolish and detestable gossips who record everything that they hear and misinterpret," and says that "he must have been in the habit of compiling from imperfect notes of conversations, or, no doubt in many instances, from his own recollections of them." In Phillips' Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare (Longmans, Green, 1882), he documents some of Aubrey's more serious blunders (pp. 141-142, 124, 263, inter alia).

Here is a recent description of Aubrey's methodology, from the impeccably orthodox The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare (op. cit., p. 49): "Aubrey's method... was to visit one of his cronies at his country seat, there to spend an evening in gossip and conviviality. Early the next morning he would get up...his head not completely clear, would write down what he hazily remembered of the last night's talk ... He left blanks for dates and many other facts and inserted fresh material at random. Thus while Aubrey's biographical notes are always interesting and frequently hilarious, their authority is something less than unimpeachable." With such a track record, it matters not a whit about the "relative authority" of the contemporary actor's son (dreadfully second-hand at best), and the schoolmaster story must be dismissed as improbable--especially in the face of the deadly fact that no school has come forward to boast of Stratford Will's tenure as "country pedagogue".

E. & L.

"Mr. Ogburn cites Ward on the question of Shakespeare's income, which he thereupon transfers to Oxford. But how could Ward, who has just previously borne witness to Shakespeare's artlessness, have become acquainted with the minutiae of Oxford's finances?" (p. 43)

"Mr. Ogburn's arithmetical theory as to how Oxford was subsidized, play by play under the Privy Seal, hardly squares with his basic reason for Oxford's anonymity: the political danger in acknowledging the authorship of so highly placed a personage." (p. 43)

"It is very wise of Mr. Ogburn not to quote from Oxford's extant poetry. The little that we have gives no indication of either an especially large vocabulary

REPLY

Who says anything about financial minutiae? All that Ward says is that Shakespeare "spent at the rate of 1000 pounds a year, as I have heard." No details here about either the source or the expenditures. Ogburn has ample warrant for transferring this figure to Oxford: The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare (op. cit., p. 936) states: "Ward's estimate of Shakespeare's income must be greatly exaggerated. His entire cash estate was not more than 350 pounds." And, as Ogburn points out, we know that Oxford in 1585 did receive this amount for the remainder of his life. It is quite possible that Ward, who was born over 30 years after the Stratford man's death, mixed up facts about Shaksper with those of the real author.

The danger Ogburn speaks of is not whether the Queen would find out that Oxford was the author, a fact she could easily discover with very little trouble. After Southampton had caused Richard II to be played, in sympathy with the Earl of Essex's rebellion, Elizabeth made no move against the author, as she well might have done if he had been a commoner, like Shaksper—and especially if she suspected the author was protected by the treasonous Southampton (as Stratfordians would have us believe), whom she did arrest. Undoubtedly, Elizabeth, who was a fine scholar herself, fully realized the literary value of the Shakespeare plays ("That so did take Eliza ...", as Ben Jonson says). The danger to Oxford lay in any possible public knowledge that these published plays were composed by a courtier, close to the Queen's confidence, and could therefore be taken as containing clues to court gossip and possibly even state secrets. If the public perception were that the author was merely a man in Stratford Will's social position, such clues would go unnoticed.

The professors neglect to state that all of this verse dates from before 1578—Oxford's twenty-eighth year—some of it having been written in the author's teens.

E. & L.

or of any way with language above the conventional range of court wit. His sonnet in Shakespearean form is markedly inferior to almost any of Shakespeare's." (p. 43)

"Oxford's association with the theater has been misleadingly set forth. He was patron of the child actors at the First Blackfriars between 1583 and 1584...Francis Meres, in his critical survey, did not call Oxford 'the best author of comedy in his time.'" (p. 43)

"Even more damaging is the date of Oxford's death, 1604. Given the general consensus on dating, this would not account for a dozen of Shakespeare's best plays, and would leave out his late collaboration with John Fletcher." (p. 43)

REPLY

We are confronted by two halves of a fascinating conundrum: a poet and playwright of a high quality acknowledged by his contemporaries, but whose mature verse and all of his plays are apparently lost. And another poet and playwright, known to succeeding ages as among the greatest, but who seems to have sprung "full grown" with no juvenilia.

Other associations with the theater the professors omit are the earl's known and documented employment of playwrights, such as Lyly, Munday, and Watson, as mentioned above; the citation in The Arte of English Poesie (1589) of Oxford and Master Edwards as deserving of the highest praise "for Comedy and Enterlude." And Francis Peck, in his Desiderata Curiosa, describes a play he had seen: "a pleasant conceit of Vere, disappointed at the rising of a mean gentleman in the English court, circa 1580." Ogburn does not claim in his article that Francis Meres said Oxford was "the best author of comedy in his time." This remark is a translation from the French of Feuillerat, summarizing the views of Oxford's contemporaries.

If anything is less "given" in this entire controversy, it is this so-called "general consensus" in the dating of Shakespeare's works. In fact, it is challenged at almost every point, and not only by Oxfordians. The authority most Stratfordians cite in this regard is E.K. Chambers, who admitted the dating process was conjectural at best. Indeed, orthodox commentators are forever finding earlier dates for almost the entire canon, thereby straining the possibility the Stratford man could have been the author in any pre-Londonian cultural environment. The orthodox Dr. A.S. Cairncross (in The Problem of Hamlet; a Solution, 1930) gave persuasive reasons for a date of Hamlet in the 1580's, and for his pains his brethren in Stratford's camp have "sent him to Coventry", as his name is not mentioned in Shakespearean reference books.

As for the "collaboration" with Fletcher, Oxford's death date does not rule out the possibility that Fletcher and others finished off incomplete plays of Oxford.

E. & L.

"It is said that once a Harvard alumnus (who was, like many anti-Stratfordians, an unfulfilled man of letters)..." (p. 43)

"It is true that the Earl had a stepfather, Leicester ..." (p. 43)

"It would have to be taken for granted that Jonson and other literary men, along with Shakespeare's fellow actors and editors, and all who were aware of the glamorous mystery, had to be bribed or browbeaten into covering it up." (p. 43)

REPLY

However, anti-Stratfordians can claim a rather distinguished roster of "fulfilled men of letters": Henry James, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, John Galsworthy, and John Buchan!

This single blooper calls into question the professors' qualifications to animadvert on either Oxford or the Oxfordian theory. (Oxford's stepfather was Charles Tyrrell.) This remark puts us in mind of A.L. Rowse's famous howler (London Times, April 24, 1971), in which he consistently styled Capt. Bernard M. Ward, Oxford's biographer, as "Miss Ward", using the third person singular feminine pronoun!

This would be true only if pseudonymous or anonymous authorship were a crime, which was no more the case in Elizabeth's time than it is in ours (unless, of course, it was a political matter, such as the Martin Mar-prelate tracts). As Ogburn points out, it was a social obligation in certain circles to conceal one's authorship of verse or drama. Moreover, it is doubtful Ben Jonson would have considered his own cooperation in keeping the secret a "lie", or even a venial sin. Nothing illustrates the Stratfordian's isolation from that cultural climate they claim as their specialty than their insistence that we must swallow Jonson and the First Folio testimony whole, or convict both of heinous perjury. Anti-Stratfordians stand confident that "honest Ben" would have regarded any nobleman's wish to conceal his authorship as nobody's business but said nobleman's own. That no one much cared, one way or another, who wrote what is evident from the publication of so many works (Shakespeare's included) with no author named, and conversely, the publication of several non-Shakespearean works attributed to Shakespeare.

FINAL THOUGHTS: The editor apologizes for the length of his reply to Professors Evans and Levin -- a length made necessary because almost every statement the professors make demands a response. And the editor hopes the Newsletter's readers will find that these replies have "subjected" the professors' arguments to the same "technical scrutiny" they wished for Charlton Ogburn's (p. 43). A few remarks should be addressed to what

Evans and Levin do not say in their article. For instance, they do not come to grips with the portrait evidence Mr. Ogburn describes on p. 28, even to deny its relevance, as do many Stratfordians. It has been the editor's experience that conversions to Oxford's cause among the uncommitted become more frequent with the knowledge good evidence exists that not one, but three putative portraits of "Shakespeare" can be shown to be overpaintings of the illustrious Poet-Earl -- a coincidence of staggering implications -- and that this evidence did not appear until other kinds of evidence for Oxford had been accumulating for twenty years.

PLATO AND CLOWN WILLIAM

Editor's Note: As a result of the interest expressed in Mr. Louis Alexis's "Dram of Eale" article in our last issue, the editor asked Mr. Alexis for a sequel developing his hypothesis that Edward de Vere was acquainted with Plato's Symposium. It gives us great pleasure to publish his article below. Readers will note that Mr. Alexis assumes an argument, first put forward by Percy Allen and later developed by Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn, Sr. in This Star of England, concerning the possible parentage of the Third Earl of Southampton. Although not all Oxfordians subscribe to this theory, the editor feels that Mr. Alexis's arguments are not dependent on such acceptance, and are therefore of interest to all our members.

Touchstone. To have is to have; for it is a figure in rhetoric that drink, being poured out of a cup into a glass, by filling the one doth empty the other; for all your writers do consent that ipse is he; now you are not ipse, for I am he.

William. Which he, sir?

Touchstone. He, sir, that must marry this woman [Audrey].

AS YOU LIKE IT, V, 1.

Socrates, then, sitting down, observed "It would be well, Agathon, if wisdom were a thing of such a kind as to flow from the party filled with it to the one who is less so, when they touch each other; like water in vessels flowing along a thread of wool glit. "by threadlike wool" *ἄνθεω ἐρίω* from the fuller one to the emptier."

Plato, SYMPOSIUM, 175 d.

Touchstone, the "noble fool that hath been a courtier," is Oxford, Elizabeth's "allowed fool" or jester, in exile from her court, which dates this particular stratum to 1582. The last word of Nashe's

"Master Apis Lapis"² also means "touchstone" (Apis = sacred bull, and we remember that Vere was "Oxe" to his admiring friends). Oxford was that against which the "mettle" of other writers was

tested.

Clown William is Shaxper of Stratford whom Oxford discovered to be pirating his plays. Date: about 1589, if William's age as given by himself is accurate--Shaxper was born in 1564. It was a million-to-one chance against, but it came off: the baptismal name of Shaxper closely resembled Oxford's theatreland pseudonym "William Shake-speare" and, egged on by fellow Stratfordian Richard Field, the printer, the mean and mercenary provincial, completely illiterate, could pose as the author of the plays, memorized texts by actors, etc., could flow to the printers, and the veritable author could only fume: "I cannot hold" says Touchstone.

When the Clown names himself as "William", Touchstone comments "A fair name", i.e., a Ver name (f and v were phonetically interchangeable), just as Oxford's son by his secret wife Queen Elizabeth, known to the historians as the Third Earl of Southampton, was called the Fair Youth (youth, iuvēnis = filius in Latin poetry)! Compare The Winter's Tale, IV, 3:

Autolycus: O, that ever I was born.

Clown: I, the name of me--

Autolycus (note Greek αὐτός = Latin ipse³) means "Alas, that I was born E. Vere, Oxford (this value of the interjection O!, as also of "nothing" and "naught", can easily be paralleled in the Plays) and the Clown's exclamation, thus cunningly juxtaposed, means, to the cognoscenti, "Born in theatreland in my name, William Shakespeare", the words "O!" and "ever" now resuming their ordinary meanings.

Audrey = the Plays; her character as a "foul slut" reminds us of Meres' description of Oxford (for once undisguised) as among the "best for comedy". Touchstone, to whom Audrey truly (Latin vere) belongs, is Vere as author of these plays; whence Audrey's remark about the Clown--"he hath no interest in me in the world"--takes on a new signifi-

cance. The very name Audrey exemplifies the Earl's "art within art unparalleled as yet"; for not only is it a rough anagram of Du Vray, Vere's name when he was a hostage for Alençon in France, but also short for Etheldreda, Old English AETHELTHRYTH, "noble power", a not inept description of the influence wielded by the Great Chamberlain through his popular plays.

The "heathen philosopher", mentioned just before our passage, turns our minds towards Plato; for the emphasis is on design in our bodies, and Plato's Ti-maeus has much on this theme (e.g., "we were next provided by those who formed us with the organs of the mouth, teeth, tongue and lips, arranged as they are now, for purposes both necessary and the best": chap. 52). His learned readers thus prepared, Vere-Touchstone goes on to hint at the Symposium passage where the scientific phenomenon of "capillary attraction"--i.e., if a woollen thread is placed so that one end lies in a glass full of water and the other end, lower down, in an empty receptacle, then the water will rise up along the wool and distil into the container--is used by Socrates to illustrate the possibility of wisdom being transferred from a "full" man to an "empty" man by physical contact alone. But Socrates as usual is being ironical: he does not say that it actually happens, only that it would be a fine thing for Shaxper if, by mere proximity in London, the Earl's brains--and the mention of "writers" cunningly indicates the type of brains meant--could pass into the empty-headed Stratford clown. But such a thing cannot be: all that is happening is that the superabundant wisdom of Vere is being siphoned away, to make an empty fool seem like an author. An almost identical simile is used by Nashe in the much-discussed "English Seneca" passage (Works, ed. McKerrow III, 315) referring to early pirating of Hamlet

...English Seneca read by Candle-

light yeelds many good sentences...hee will afford you whole Hamlets, I should say handfulls, of Tragicall speeches. But O grieffe! Tempus edax rerum, what's that will last alwayes? The Sea exhaled by droppes will in continuance bee drie, and Seneca, let blood line by line and page by page, at length must needes die to our Stage.

"English Seneca" is a marvelous description of Oxford when we know his role in Elizabeth's court, and compare what Seneca did for Nero, but amid the acres of "respectable" comment the researched will be lucky to find the identification even hinted at; proving how thoroughly the author of Hamlet "died to our Stage", as he himself prophesied:

But I, once dead, to all the world must die.

Touchstone insultingly garbles these philosophical allusions--his "figure of rhetoric", for example, has wandered from a different educational area--but to William it is all the same, he is not educated⁵ at all, and so Vere underlines the absurdity of regarding him as a writer.

The "thread of wool", which gives the Platonic simile its whole point, is not mentioned by Touchstone, but Vere meant his intelligent readers to think of it. Wool in fact symbolized the Shaxpers, father and son. Wool was a lucrative by-product of the butcher's trade, and we know that Shaxper's father John was a butcher. Attached to Shaxper's house in Stratford was a wool-shop. Long ago Percy Allen ferreted out an entry in Common Pleas proving that in 1599 one John Walford was sued by Shaxper's father for 21 pounds, "the price of 21 tods of wool". At once our minds go to WT IV, 3:

Clown. Let me see: every 'leven wether tods *i.e.*, 11 weth-

ers yield 28 pounds of wool; every tod yields pounds and odd shilling; fifteen hundred shorn; what comes the wool to?

The Clown's need of the "counters" to solve this problem once more indicates Shaxper's pathetic lack of education.

Perdita, the child⁶ of Autolycus in this play--Audrey whose "true man" (Vere) Touchstone is in AYL--the dog of Sir Puntarvolo (note how the final four letters suggest "will" = wyll = well = spring = Ver; this resonance of "wyll" guided Vere to the first name of his ill-fated pseudonym) in Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humour--all three stand for the Shakespearean works, and those boorish and mercenary characters, the Clown and the Shepherd in WT, Clown William in AYL, and the appalling Sordido and Sogliardo of Jonson, these are the Shaxpers stealing the works and using them to make money. Jonson, Nashe, and Vere himself, sent us many signals which, like light from distant stars, left them in the 1590's and are only now beginning to impinge on our senses. It is up to us to interpret them correctly, or poor Vere will die the death more surely than Christopher Marlowe at Deptford⁷; does not Touchstone himself tell us so?

When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child Understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room.

AYL, III, 3.

NOTES

1. The word ipse means "the master" as in the Irish expression, "himself's away" for "the master is absent". In accepting the translation "he" William again reveals his ignorance.

2. See my article in the Shakespearean

Authorship Review (no. 23) for summer 1970.

3. The word ipse is isopsephic i.e., equal in numerical value; with Vere in the three commonest Elizabethan ciphers. A 24-letter alphabet was used, with IJ and UV the same. The S system numbered A-Z 1-24, the R system Z-A 1-24, the K system A-IJ 27-35 and K-Z 10-24. Thus, respectively, ipse and Vere number 47, 53, and 99. Whether this mattered much to Vere I doubt; my Vere was more interested in developing names like "Audrey", in which the kind of "wit" needed was far above mere tinkering with ciphers. Nevertheless his "cousin" Francis Bacon may have communicated to him this particular isopsephism and, perhaps as a compliment, the Earl played around with the word "ipse".

4. Cf. Hamlet, III, 2 For O! for O! the hobby-horse is forgot (another bitter reference to Elizabeth's exiling of her jester); ibid. I, 5:

The time is out of joint; O, cursed
spite,
That ever I was born to set it right...

where he likens his efforts to restore Catholic England to the (equally futile) efforts of his friend Dr. Dee to reform the calendar on Gregorian lines.

5. After his first enraged reaction Vere decided to use Shaxper as a mask whereby his policy (basically continuance of the Catholic succession through Elizabeth's son Southampton--Hamlet's "cause") could be recommended to the public via the stage, as in the Rome of 180 B.C. Gaius Laelius and Scipio Aemilianus had used the negro slave "Terence"; hence the famous epigram of John Davies of Hereford "To our English Terence, Mr. Will. Shake-speare". For this purpose Shaxper had to be given some kind of education. Tradition has it that he was lodged at Castle Hedingham to take lessons at Earl Colne Grammar School of which the Earls of Oxford were trustees. An amusing glimpse of William in the classroom occurs at Merry Wives,

IV, 1. Sir Hugh Evans was in real life Henry Evans, a Welshman who trained boy-actors for Vere; note the play made with the words "fair" and "lapis". When it became obvious that Shaxper was uneducable, Vere gave him £1000 (through Southampton) and packed him off about 1596 to Stratford where, as Rowe's witty informant was later to phrase it, he played the ghost (phantom-author) in his own hamlet (Stratford).

6. When at WT, III, 3 the Shepherd finds Perdita, he exclaims:

Mercy on, 's, a barne: a very pretty
barne! A boy or a child, I wonder.

We expect "girl" of course; the word "child" arrests us, and is meant to arrest us. Perdita is something more than a lost infant, she is a lost brainchild (there are many parallels in the Elizabethans for this use) and the close proximity of the word very enables us to identify this particular creation: Perdita, like Audrey, is Vere's Plays.

Marlowe's death at the house of Eleanor Bull at Deptford Strand was faked to throw King Philip's counter-espionage men off the scent. The body at the inquest was that of a plague-victim; Marlowe probably landed in France hoping to repeat his earlier success as a spy, but this time he perished either by accident or at the hands of Philip's quite efficient agents. For patriotic reasons Vere publicizes the official version but, no friend of Walsingham, cannot resist lifting a corner of the veil; for if X is "more dead" than Y, then Y is not completely dead and, in the context of that "little room", this points to something very like the hoax I postulate.

Louis E. M. Alexis
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England

A DOCUMENTARY LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

or

S. Schoenbaum Rides Again

by

Richard C. Horne, Jr.

Editor's Note: When Professor Samuel Schoenbaum's new book of documents allegedly pertaining to the "life of Shakespeare" was published recently, the Editor of the Newsletter asked our principal "Schoenbaum Watcher", President Richard C. Horne, Jr., to write a review for this issue, which we are pleased to publish below. Mr. Horne's qualifications for this task are impeccable, inasmuch as he reviewed Prof. Schoenbaum's earlier opus, Shakespeare's Lives, in the March 31, 1971 issue of the Newsletter.

William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life. By Samuel Schoenbaum. Oxford Press, 1975. \$50.

Page 249. "There, in July 1643, the Queen kept her court at Stratford for three days. It was presumably on this occasion that Susanna Hall presented a member of the Queen's entourage, Colonel Richard Grace (he was chamberlain to the Duke of York) with a copy of Henri Estienne's Mervaylous Discourse upon the lyfe of Katherine de Medicis — if one may accept the title page inscription in a seventeenth century hand (not Susanna's): 'Liber R: Gracei ex dono amicae D. Susanne Hall.' Possibly the book originally formed part of her father's library." Below this is a reproduction of the book's title page: "Mervaylous Discourse upon the lyfe, deedes and behaiours of Katherine de Medicis, Queene mother: vvherein are displayed the meanes vvhich she hath practiced to attayne unto the usurping of the Kingdome of France, and to the bringing of the estate of the same vnto vtter ruine and destruction. At Heydelberge 1575." At the bottom of this title page is written in a fine clear script, "Gratia Dei sum quod sum." (By God's Grace I am what I am.) Note: the parenthesized matter is supplied by the reviewer for the information of younger readers, who apparently no longer study Latin. In the "ex dono amicae D. Susanne Hall", the handwriting is neat and unshaded, but no more to be identified with the seventeenth century than with eighteenth, nineteenth, or even twentieth. This is at the top of the title page. When and by whom this was written is a matter of conjecture. A good guess would be: by a vendor. The plate of page 249 is numbered 203. At the bottom of the page, in smaller print, is a note, which reads: "SUSANNA HALL AND THE MERVAYLOUS DISCOURSE, 1643 (?). Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Library; shelfmark: SR93.2 STC10550. This item, from the collection of Sir Thomas Philipps, was No. 2511 in the Sotheby catalogue for the sale held on 26 and 27 November 1973."

Members of our Society and readers of our Newsletters may recall that we had occasion to review Dr. S. Schoenbaum's Shakespeare's Lives (1970) in the Newsletter of March 31, 1971, in which we paid our respect to the learned Dr., his disregard of facts, his "scholarly style", etc., especially his snide slandering and belittling of his betters. We also discussed his snidery on Col. Joseph C. Hart (circa 1845), of whom he knew practically

nothing, except for the publication of Hart's The Romance of Yachting, the first book to devote a chapter or so to skepticism and ridiculing of the Aubrey-Stratford Attribution of Authorship of "Shakespeare's Works." That, however, was sufficient grounds for S.S.'s attack on Col. Hart and his memory. In a later issue of the Newsletter (Jan. 1972), we gave a running account of Doctor

Schoenbaum's lecture at the Folger Library on January 11 of that year, which we shall have occasion to mention further on.

In the preface of S.S.'s A Documentary Life of S. (?), the author tells us on page xii, "...were I to claim any novelty for my narrative, that claim would have to rest on its lack of novelty. Although I can offer a recently discovered titbit or two (for example) the little book conceivably once in Shakespeare's library, with an inscription naming his daughter Susanna ...)" [See quotation in the introduction to this review.] Let's take a look at this, which our author with becoming modesty admits is his only "new" contribution. He calls it a "titbit"; I call it a "mare's nest" and will tell you why.

1. The idea of Queen Henrietta Maria being "entertained" by Shakespeare's daughter is a "vain thing fondly invented" by professional Stratfordians -- a deliberate suggestio falsi to implant in the minds of credulous readers the inference that Susanna and the Queen were on terms of intimacy, etc. and to furnish a spurious speculation that Stratford Will was recognized by royalty in 1643 as the author of Shakespeare's Works. S.S. uses this fiction here to slip over on the unwary a conclusion that Shaxper had a library (no traces of which have turned up in over 400 years), that Susanna had this library and her father's books, that she could read, and that she would give something away to a stranger instead of bargaining for the best price she could get (as she did with Dr. Cook, who was interested in her husband's MSS, which, incidentally, were not hers, but left in Dr. Hall's will to his son-in-law Nashe.)

2. There is absolutely no basis for the assertion that Col. Richard Grace was a member of the Queen's entourage at Stratford in July 1643. The least investigation into available history, such as I have troubled to make, squarely negates this false assumption S.S. states as fact.

Col. Richard Grace (1620 - 1691) was a brave and distinguished Irish soldier and a gallant gentleman, a scion of the oldest nobility, a lineal descendant of Raymond le Grosse Fitzgerald, whose entire career, whether in fortune or in adversity, stands out like a beacon. When Charles I had his headquarters at Oxford enjoying, in late 1643 and early 1644, his army successes in the West, Ormonde recommended Col. Grace, among others, to His Majesty. The Colonel joined the King at Oxford and was in the besieged garrison there when it fell to Parliamentary forces. The Royalists were given good terms, and Col. Grace went back to Ireland, raised a regiment of followers, and fought for the royal cause against Cromwell's generals until, after being surrounded in a swamp and losing over half his troops, he had to surrender, but again with honor. He then took his soldiers (over a thousand men) to France, where he served with and under the Duke of York (later James II). At the Restoration in 1660, he returned with the Stuarts to England, had his estates and titles in Ireland restored to him, and lived the rest of his life there, fighting gloriously and dying for his King (1691).

No record or book about Queen Henrietta Maria available in the Library of Congress mentions a Col. Richard Grace in her retinue on her way from Oxford to York, though all others about her in July 1643 are noted. A chamberlain to the Duke of York (who at that time was a child of ten years residing with his brother under a governess and tutors in Oxford) was certainly not in her entourage, nor was the child Duke. Col. Grace most likely met the tragic Queen when she and her sons were living in exile at the French Court, with her brother the King, in the 1650's, but he was then a soldier commanding a regiment in the French employ and, for a time, serving with the Duke in the Spanish Army. There is a bare possibility that Col. Grace, who accompanied the royal party at the time of the "Restoration", may have been on some

list as "chamberlain to the Duke of York" when Charles and his brother left Breda with no need for regiments, but this man (Grace) was a soldier, not a household functionary. But this "bare possibility" in no way affects the argument.

That the Mervaylous Discourse was ever in Susanna's possession and given by her to Col. Grace and so noted by him has so many inherent improbabilities as to place it almost in the realm of the impossible:

a) Susanna was evicted from New Place when Royal soldiers took it over for the Queen's accomodation in July 1643. Whether this was done by the staff officer or by Prince Rupert with whose troops she made a rendezvous makes no difference. The Council of Stratford paid for the Queen's entertainment.

b) From the description given us, the book in question was an anti-Roman Catholic, anti-Papist denunciation of Katherine de Medicis, the Queen Mother and real ruler of France in the latter part of the 1500's until the accession of Queen Henrietta's father, Henry IV. Her mother was Queen Mary de Medicis. Queen Henrietta Maria was a tragic figure, loyal to her husband and Holy Church, though her political judgment was usually faulty. She was regarded and feared by the vast majority of English people as a dangerous Papist; an evil influence on their King.

c) Without an army at her back, Queen Henrietta Maria could not have traveled safely in eastern or midland England, and would be under constant danger of capture and assassination. Her staff would not have allowed Protestants, or at least Puritans, to come near her, certainly not the widow of the Puritan Dr. John Hall, who later had -- as we are told -- an inscription on her tomb, "Wise to Salvation (a Puritan phrase) was Mistress Hall." I think we can safely assume she was not in the house

to give Col. Grace (who was not there either) anything of value, or to send to anyone of the "occupying forces" a "gracious gift" in appreciation of her expulsion.

d) If Susanna could not have given the book to Col. Grace, how then did he acquire it from New Place? Did he "liberate" it from the mythical and apocryphal library (?), as some of our soldiers are said to have done in Allied territories in W.W. II? His character as shown by history should preclude that explanation. Col. Grace was a devout Catholic all his life and highly respected even by the Protestants he had governed in Ireland.

e) Ruling out Susanna of Stratford, which has been child's play, can we assume Col. Grace acquired this book in France where he spent about ten years? Perhaps, but not likely! "Ex dono amicae D. Susanne Hall" does suggest a French Connection. Susanne is the French form of the famous Biblical namesake, she of the Elders. The English form is Susanna or Susan. Susanne is not an uncommon name in France, nor is Hall so far as I know. This entry (assuming it was made by the Colonel) is in Latin. Ex dono is of course easy, D. can stand for Dame or Demoiselle, but amicae is another matter. The large Latin Dictionary tells us that amica means "girl friend" or "mistress", quoting Cicero! Have we here an indication of a romance or amour between a gallant Irish gentleman officer in his early 20's and an illiterate 60-year-old country woman conducted in three days or less, in time of war, and under extremely difficult circumstances, and of such an intensity that gifts were exchanged and the young lover made a sentimental note in the book to preserve forever the remembrance of that sweet parting and such sweet pleasure? Credat Judeus!

In a comparatively recent issue of Doctor Louis M. Marder's Shakespeare Newsletter

(Vol. XXIV, No. 4), the front page headlines two (two-column) articles, "New Discoveries in 16th Century Books and Manuscripts. Shakespeare Trust Acquires Rare Books -- One Possibly from Shakespeare's Library." The other -- taking up the rest of the page -- "New Documentary Biography of Shakespeare." Both have the initials L.M. (Louis Marder) at the end.

In "New Discoveries", etc., Dr. Marder describes the Mervaylous Discourse, translates "Liber R: Gracei ex dono amicie sic, D. Susanne Hall, i.e. The book of R. Grace the gift of gracious Dame Susanna Hall. The evidence (?) indicated by the inscription is that Col. Richard Grace (1620 - 1691) was in the retinue of Queen Henrietta Maria when she stayed at New Place for three days beginning on June 23, 1643 sic. ... She may (?) have given the Colonel this book, possibly from the books presumably bequeathed to her by William Shakespeare. Col. Grace was Chamberlain to the Duke of York who became Charles II sic in 1685. Col. Grace was important enough to have his portrait in armor engraved and sold in London in 1652." (?s and sics supplied by reviewer.)

"New Documentary Biography of Shakespeare" starts off: "A new kind of biography of Shakespeare destined to be a standard work read and consulted for many years to come, has been produced by Professor S. Schoenbaum of Northwestern University. It will be published by the Oxford University Press in association with the Scholar Press on April 23, 1975 ...". Further down in this rave review or "blurb", L.M. says, "Professor Schoenbaum traveled thousands of miles, to Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, for example, to compare a facsimile of a reputed 'portrait' of Anne Hathaway on a fly-leaf which had been inserted into Colgate's copy of the third Folio ...". "Professor Schoenbaum scrupulously", etc., "Included are items discovered as recently as the presumed gift of Susanna Hall to Richard Grace (see adjacent column).

and documents concerning Shakespeare's daughter Susanna and son-in-law Thomas Quiney first reported by H.A. Hanley in 1964..." "The Ireland and Collier forgeries, the conjectured signature of Shakespeare in William Lambard's Archaeionomia, and other tangential material will be provided in a supplementary volume (?)." (Reviewer's note: "Son of William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life"? S.S. has published three "Lives", etc., and may be trying for nine. May we express the hope he will make a 180-degree turn when he gets to No. 9, and break new ground with a true and factual "Life of Shakespeare" from all available evidence to date, which could be covered on one page and would have nothing to suggest that he (Shaksper) had the slightest connection with poems and plays or even literacy?)

Further down L.M. says, "with characteristic self-effacement sic, sick!", Professor Schoenbaum says in his Preface that 'the principal appeal of this book will not reside in my prose but in the facsimiles,' but his past performance in the recent Shakespeare's Lives (Oxford, 1970) leads one to expect that the prose will be very readable." This reviewer has read several of S. Schoenbaum's books, heard him lecture, but must confess that in characterizing his style and M.O., the adverb "scrupulous" has never come to his mind, nor has he encountered the "characteristic self-effacement".

Not long ago, I was glancing over the Folger Library Newsletter for June 1975. The headline on the front page caught my eye and interest: "Elizabethan Manuscript Presented by Friends." "Much of the material in the manuscript relates to Queen Elizabeth I, here sic, marriage, and foreign affairs ... Another long piece is an account by Edward Waterhouse of the death of Elizabeth's last great favorite, Walter Devereaux, Earl of Essex in 1576 sic." Having been under the impression for many years that "Elizabeth's last great favorite" was Robert Devereux who lost his head (literally) in 1601, and that 1576 hardly left room for Leicester, Hatton, Oxford,

and Raleigh, I read it again carefully to see if that remarkable statement could be the result of a "typo", or printer's error, as the here instead of her undoubtedly was. Even three or four "typos" would not explain why whoever edited the Newsletter and proof-read it had not caught this startling statement. I was tempted to "kid" some of my friends there about this, and ask if it was a case of "But Knowledge to their eyes and ample page/ Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll." But then I reflected it was neither good taste nor manners to look a gift horse in the mouth: the Folger Newsletter is sent to me and others as a courtesy. I wiped the anticipatory smirk off my mouth and turned the page (FNL's, not "ample"), and my eyes popped: "Shakespeare's Birthday Festivities. Shakespeare's 411th birthday was celebrated at the Folger on April 23 with a reception honoring S. Schoenbaum, a trustee of the Library and the author of the newly-published biography William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life. The birthday party was sponsored by Oxford University Press. Earlier in the day, Dr. Schoenbaum presented a specially bound copy of his book to Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller for the White House Library in a ceremony at the Executive Office Building. Copies were presented at the Folger ceremony to James G. McManaway, Folger staff member emeritus and scholar, to whom the book is dedicated; to George Sanderson of the British Embassy for presentation to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; and to the Folger Library. William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life brings together over 200 highly accurate facsimiles of the records and documents of the bard, together with the narrative summary. The originals of many are in the Folger collection. Dr. Schoenbaum, City University Distinguished Professor, Queens College (New York), is also the author of Shakespeare's Lives." (End of excerpt from page 2.) At the top of the page is a good picture, "Vice President Rockefeller (left) and author S. Schoenbaum." The U.S.V.P. has precedence in the caption, but the picture itself is about one-fourth "Rocky" and three-fourths S. Schoenbaum.

Some of the readers of our Jan. 1972 Newsletter may remember an account we gave of a lecture by S.S. at the Folger on "Shakespeare and the Problem of Biography", in which he ducked the customary hour of discussion with and questions from the audience. Some Oxfordians, including our Society's members, were in the audience "rarin'" to pose questions to him. I felt they were more than adequate for the occasion and had determined to keep my mouth shut. If there had been a lag, however, I toyed with the idea of getting up and saying that Dr. S.S. and I shared the distinction of being the only two people in that room who had read every word in his book. That Dr. Louis B. Wright had been Director of the Folger Library for 20 years, was the author of Shakespeare for Everyman and a man with such a high international reputation that National Geographic had proclaimed the world's greatest Shakespearean Authority, etc., etc. Why is it, sir, that in a book of over 800 pages the name of Louis B. Wright can not be found in the preface, the acknowledgements, the body of the book, or in the index? Was this to be attributed to accident or to design? (Note: This question was never asked, of course, owing to the smart defensive measure of begging off -- pleading "travel fatigue" -- that S.S. had taken before his lecture.) My motive, had I been able to ask this question, was to see if the Folger staff members who were present could keep a straight face at the incongruity of the President of the Shakespeare Oxford Society -- a group of people who had been called every name Dr. Wright could think up: "insane", "ignorant", "unfit for polite society", etc. -- rising in public to protest an apparent slight to Louis B. Wright. My other motive was to puncture S.S.'s smugness and witness his floundering on the platform, since he was bound to be disconcerted, no matter what answer he gave. In view of later developments, I am not so sure Schoenbaum's omission was not by design. One of our current American philosophers, the great Satchell Page, has advised, "Never look back, 'cause somebody may be gaining on you." Unless he chooses to ignore this sage advice, I fear

the good Doctor will not get a good view at all of our hero, for his form will be obscured by a cloud of dust disappearing ahead. Could it be that, in years to come, a reference made to Wright in the Groves of Academe would be greeted with a blank stare, or, "of whom are you talking, Orville or Wilbur?"

A book review that barely mentions the book, does not describe or assess it, but takes off on the alleged shortcomings of its author is something of an anomaly and hardly worthy of the word "review". Let me make haste to remedy this. This reviewer was not presented with a copy by the publisher, as is customary, and owes nothing to the publisher or publishers but such as a sense of fair play and objectivity would dictate. It is possible and probable that this book is a joint venture of the Sclar Press of Yorkshire and Oxford University Press to reproduce some 220 numbered facsimiles related, more or less (plus some "padding"), to "evidence" connecting the man from Stratford with the authorship of "Shakespeare's Works", and S.S. was employed either on someone's commendation or on his own solicitation to write a running commentary explaining and/or interpreting the maps, signatures, MSS, parish and court entries, etc. They have done a magnificent job. It is a folio of 300 pages on heavy expensive paper and the reproductions and letter press are a credit to the printer's art. It is what is known in the trade as a "coffee-table book", to be seen and admired, browsed through a little, and designed to radiate a slight aura of culture on the owner, an ambience of scholarship as it were. As such, it is well worth the \$50 plus tax C.P.M. (that is, of Other People's Money, not mine) of those who have that kind of money to spend on display, like buying a set of specially struck medals commemorating each of the bard's plays which the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (with Louis Marder as the U.S. sales agent) has been pushing on the faithful for the last few years. The text by S.S. is of a pleasantly readable

style, for he does have a certain degree of wit, largely expressed in depreciatory remarks about others -- feline, rather than felicitous, cute but catty. That despite a facsimile of an entry may plainly read Shagsper, Schacksper, Shaxpere, or Shakspe, it always comes out "William Shakespeare" in Schoenbaum's text below should not surprise us, for it is an honored custom in the scholarly world, long before S.S. burst like a meteor upon said s.w. Nine out of ten readers, or leafers, will never notice the discrepancy, and the tenth will forget it by the time he has turned the page. These are reproductions of documents most researchers have seen in the original, or reproduced in separate books. This may well be, as claimed, the first time they can all be seen in one volume.

But if you are looking for anything, new or old, that furnishes the slightest evidence that any of Will of Stratford's contemporaries that knew him considered him a poet and playwright, forget it! Dr. Marder says that a first large printing of 12,500 copies has been ordered exclusive of the additional Book of the Month Club distribution. Considering the evidence that has surfaced so far of the widespread and diverse elements behind the book's promotion, we can safely predict it will be a financial success, and a second printing is possible. The only thing that could militate against this is for the recession to get worse, inflation to speed up, resulting in the sort of people who have that kind of money to spend on "show" getting scared, battenning down the hatches, and deciding to ride out the storm.

The Newsletter is published quarterly to provide information about thought and activities in the Shakespearean authorship. Dues do not constitute a subscription but further the Society's research. Material for publication is accepted from members only. The Society has no official canon, so all points of view are welcome.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue of the Newsletter, the first since last summer's reply to the Evans and Levin articles in Harvard Magazine, contains a miscellany of new items, many of which fall welcome on Oxfordian ears. We are enclosing separately an order form for the long-awaited re-issues of three Oxfordian classics (J. T. Looney: Shakespeare Identified; B. M. Ward: A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres; Ewa Turner Clark: Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays) published by Kennikat Press in new editions by Shakespeare Oxford Society member Ruth Loyd Miller. An article in this issue is devoted to the historical significance of these valuable works, and reviews of them will appear in subsequent editions of the Newsletter.

A communication dated October 6, 1975 on the Folger Shakespeare Library letterhead, addressed to President Richard C. Horne, Jr. and signed Betty Ann Kane, Head of the Public Programs Division, was received here shortly after publication of our last Newsletter. Members will recall that Mr. Horne, in his review of S. Schoenbaum's A Documentary Life of Shakespeare, mentioned an error in the June 1975 issue of the Folger Library Newsletter: "...Another long piece is an account by Edward Waterhouse of the death of Elizabeth's last great favorite, Walter Devereaux, Earl of Essex, in 1576 ..." Ms. Kane informs us in her letter that this error "is the result of a typographical error in which the phrase 'the fether of' was inadvertently left out. Walter Devereaux was the first Earl of Essex, and his son, Robert, Elizabeth's companion, was the second Earl of Essex. It is the father's death that is reported in the manuscript presented to the Folger." The Shakespeare Oxford Society is happy to print the Folger Library's correction, as requested, and even more gratified of this evidence that the staff of that great institution peruses our material so thoroughly.

Other news that is not so welcome refers to the recent illness and hospitalization of the Society's president, Mr. Horne. It is a pleasure to report that Mr. Horne was released last month and is now at home and resting comfortably. For this issue Mr. Horne has submitted a very informative article on an eighteenth century doubter of the Stratford mythos, James Wilmot.

Gordon C. Cyr, Editor

JAMES WILMOT, AN EARLY DOUBTER

by Richard C. Morns, Jr.

Born at Warwick in 1726, Wilmot was a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, before cutting a figure in the glittering political and literary society of London. Noted Parliamentarians became his friends; he knew Johnson, Sterne, and Warton. According to his niece, Olivia Serres, he was the Junius whose letters then had England astir. Wilmot retired about 1781 to the Warwickshire of his origins, becoming Rector of Barton-on-the-Heath, a little village on the Avon about six miles north of Stratford. There he amused himself with his friends and books, especially the writings of his great favorite, Shakespeare and Bacon. At the invitation of a London bookseller, Wilmot undertook a life of Shakespeare, and in the Stratford environs set out in quest of information respecting his subject. What he found disconcerted him, for he learned that Shakespeare, the son of a butcher who could neither read nor write was "at best a Country clown at the time he went to seek his fortune in London, that he could never have had any school learning, and that fact would have rendered it impossible that he could be received as an equal and friend by those of culture and breeding who alone by their intercourse make up for the deficiencies of his youth." (James Corton Cowell, "Some Reflections on the Life of William Shakespeare", a paper read before the Ipswich Philosophical Society, MS. 294 in University of London Library, pp. 67-8.)

Yet Shakespeare's writings testify to the training of a scholar and traveler and to an intimate acquaintance with the great and learned. It was all very puzzling. Wilmot examined many private collections of letters and documents, and discovered that none of the local gentry of Shakespeare's day seemed to have heard of the great man. Thus the good divine's consternation grew. Wilmot also searched diligently for Shakespeare's books; surely

his next of kin, poor illiterate that they were, would have sold them to the neighborhood gentry who alone assembled libraries? In vain, however, Wilmot covered himself with the dust of every private bookcase within a radius of fifty miles. And why could not even a page or two of the many sheets in the poet's hand—over a quarter of a million, he calculated—be produced? Had the plays perhaps been the work of someone who wished, for good reason, to conceal his connection with them? The pieces began to fit together.

In the plays Wilmot tracked down additional clues. They revealed an acute knowledge of the law. Coriolanus contains an allusion to the circulation of the blood, though Harvey did not publish his discovery until 1619; Wilmot assumed that a scientist would be more likely to incorporate such a reference than a mere actor. Furthermore, the designations of three characters in Love's Labour's Lost—Biron, Dumain, and Longaville—coincide with the names of three ministers at the Court of Navarre, where Anthony Bacon resided, and whence he sent his famous brother letters. These hints, no less than the missed opportunities in the works and the disappearance without trace of the dramatist's books and papers (MSS), led Wilmot around the year 1785 to the astonishing conclusion that Bacon wrote Shakespeare. The former had destroyed the manuscripts in order to conceal the fact that so exalted a personage had descended to the base art of playwriting. For this hypothesis, arrived at diffidently but firmly held, Wilmot found additional confirmation in the numerous extraordinary likenesses of style between the two Elizabethans.

Favored visitors enjoying the bucolic hospitality of Barton-on-the-Heath heard

the novel theory, but Wilmot published nothing; he did not wish to offend his Stratford neighbors, who prided themselves fiercely on Shakespeare's association with the town. When he was almost eighty, Wilmot summoned before him his housekeeper and the school master of Long Compton. "Take them, my keys" he commanded, "and burn on the platform before the house all the bags and boxes of writings you can discover in the cabinets in my bedroom." Thus were Wilmot's papers, with their records of local traditions and the Baconian heresy, committed to the flames.

His claim to notice might have gone up in smoke with them had not James Corton Cowell, a Quaker of Ipswich, visited Warwickshire in 1805 in quest of data on Shakespeare's life for a paper to be read before his local Philosophic Society. "Everywhere," he sadly recalls, "was I met by a strange and perplexing silence." His expedition might have ended in total frustration had he not been entertained in Wilmot's house, where, after the last of the guests—local gentry—had departed near four o'clock, he was informed of the Baconian theory. "Dr. Wilmot does not venture so far as to say definitely that Sir Francis Bacon was the author," Cowell would afterwards report, "but through his great knowledge of the works of that writer he is able to prepare a cap that fits him amazingly." On February 7, 1805 Cowell appeared before the Ipswich Philosophic Society and declared himself "a pervert, nay a renegade to the faith I have proclaimed and avowed before you all." Without naming the Rector of Barton-on-the Heath, he then proceeded to unfold his "strange and surprising story." Cowell expected it to be greeted with shouts of disapproval and execration, and he was not disappointed. The following April he again faced the Society and this time sought to bolster his position by identifying his informant, after first extracting a solemn vow of secrecy from the gathering. The secret was well guarded. It did not come to light until the manuscript of Cowell's two addresses before the Ipswich Philosophic Society passed into the possession of the Univer-

sity of London Library and was there discovered by Professor Allardyce Nicoll. In "The First Baconian", an article published in 1932 in the Times Literary Supplement, he gave Wilmot his due.

THREE OXFORDIAN CLASSICS

ARE RE-ISSUED

A communication, dated December 14, 1975, from Shakespeare Oxford Society member Ruth Loyd Miller contains the very welcome news that Kennikat Press's new editions of J. T. Looney's Shakespeare Identified, B. M. Ward's A Hundredth Sundrie Flowres, and Eva Turner Clark's Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays are now available. A fourth seminal publication of Oxfordian lore is in preparation as well: Bernard M. Ward's masterly biography, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. For Oxfordians who may already possess earlier editions of any of these and who, consequently, may be tempted to ignore this announcement, Kennikat's new publications are not mere reprints! Much new material has been added, as well as material from previously published sources not generally available today, such as the Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter and Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly, as well as from the Shakespearean Authorship Review—a British publication of anti-Stratfordian scholarship.

Society members owe a great debt of gratitude to Mrs. Miller, whose herculean labors in editing these invaluable volumes have taken about five years in an extremely busy schedule. Ruth Loyd Miller is an attorney and is wife of Judge Myles D. Miller, Jr. of the Louisiana Court of Appeals. She has served as a member of the Louisiana Mineral Board, as a vice-chairman of the Louisiana Constitutional Convention, and is a member of the Louisiana State University System.

J. Thomas Looney, as Oxfordians know, is

the "inventor" of the Oxfordian hypothesis of Shakespearean authorship. The steps which led this Gateshead schoolmaster and scholar to his devastating conclusion that only Edward de Vere could have been the true "Shakespeare" are laid out in a fascinating and exciting narrative in Looney's initial work on this subject, Shakespeare Identified—a book which profoundly influenced Sigmund Freud and caused him to repudiate some earlier psychoanalytic inferences he had made about the character of Shakespeare's Hamlet. A second edition (now out of print) was published in the U.S.A. in 1949 by Duell, Sloan & Pearce. Kennikat's new third edition expands this masterpiece into two volumes and includes J. T. Looney's later volume on the Poems of Edward de Vere. In addition, discoveries about Oxford and his connection with the works of "Shakespeare" which had appeared in abundance after Looney's volume had been published are now brought together by Mrs. Miller into one handy place of reference. The portrait evidence, as developed by the late Charles Wisner Barrell, is laid out here, handsomely illustrated in color reproductions of the Ashbourne, Janssen, and Hampton Court portraits of "Shakespeare." Many of the beautiful color portraits of Oxford and members of his family appear in the Kennikat Oxford books for the first time in print.

In the fall of 1972, the Millers acquired the rights to all the literary properties of Colonel Bernard Rowlings Ward and his son, Captain Bernard Mordaunt Ward—two early converts to Looney's discovery. Most of the printing plates of the Wards' Oxfordian volumes were lost or destroyed in World War II. B. M. Ward's edition of the anonymous 1573 poetic anthology, A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres, advanced his own theory that the original anthologizer (and principal contributor) was Edward de Vere. To this new edition, Ruth Miller has added several later commentaries on Flowres by Captain Ward himself and many others, as well as further documentation on the mysterious figure of George Gas-

coigne. Again, as in the case of the Looney book, many new illustrations grace this latest issuance of an extremely valuable and scholarly work.

Eva Turner Clark's Hidden Allusions is the first work to make an extended analysis of the possible relationship between court plays of the 1570's and 80's with those later published as works of "Shakespeare." Mrs. Clark, an important Oxfordian of the two decades before the Second World War, finds several suggestive titles in these old court plays linking them with Shakespeare's. She has also found many references in Shakespeare's known plays to events that could only have taken place in the decades before the Stratford maltster could have reasonably been expected to have penned these masterworks. Several later books by Mrs. Clark have been incorporated into the Kennikat edition as well, such as The Satirical Comedy: Love's Labour's Lost and Axiophilus. New illustrations include portrait reproductions of important personages from the courts of England and France whose personalities and lives, as Eva Turner Clark convincingly shows, have left their traces in Shakespeare's drama.

The admittedly high price of these volumes is an effect of the lavishly produced color plates and considerably expanded written materials mentioned above. If Society members know of local libraries interested in purchasing these books, such libraries, of course, enjoy a 10% discount. Also, members can take a charitable gifts' deduction on their income tax if they donate copies to a library. For our British members, the Kennikat editions are being distributed in England by Bailey Brothers at Folketone.

G. C.

IN MEMORIAM

The foremost scholar of Oxfordian research in the United States, CHARLES WISNER BARRELL, died last July in New York. For many years an art and photography consultant for the Western Electric Company and Associated Bell Telephone Laboratories, as well as a writer, documentary film director and producer, and public relations expert for numerous corporations, Barrell came into national prominence with his January 1940 Scientific American article which conclusively demonstrated that the "Ashbourne" portrait of "Shakespeare," owned and displayed by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., was an overpainting of the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford. In his article, Barrell alleged evidence of a similar nature for the "Janssen" Shakespeare portrait, also owned by the Folger, and for the "Hampton Court" portrait, once in the possession of England's Royal Family. The article created a sensation and was given world-wide attention in the press, even with the distractions of war news then occupying everyone's attention. A Folger-based attempt to discredit Barrell's findings was launched in 1947 and resulted in a lawsuit for libel and slander by Barrell against Dr. Giles Dawson, an official of the Library. Dr. Dawson issued a public apology to Barrell, and the suit never came to court. (In his deposition, Dr. Dawson admitted that he had not seen the evidence Mr. Barrell had provided and that he could not point to a single fact in the well-documented biography of the Stratford Shakespeare that showed the latter was ever an author.) Mr. Barrell was responsible for many other important findings in Oxfordian research as well, many of which are brought together in Ruth Loyd Miller's third edition of Shakespeare Identified, described elsewhere in this issue.

STANLEY P. LOVELL, an Oxfordian and S.O.S. member of long standing and author of the pamphlet A Mystery Beyond Words, died on January 4 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

CAPTAIN EVELYN BROADWOOD, former President of the Shakespearean Authorship Society in England, died last June at Wellington Hospital. In addition to his many activities in behalf of the Oxfordian cause, Capt. Broadwood is also famous for the "Broadwood pianos."

FILM SERIES ON "SHAKESPEARE"

The perennial Stratford Myth rears its ugly head again in a proposed series of ten half-hour films, produced jointly by the National Geographic Society and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and projected for showing in schools and on public television (WQED in Pittsburgh) on both sides of the Atlantic. Stratford scene which "might" have influenced the local maltster in his "works" will be featured! Society members in the United States and England are urged to apply pressure on their local schools and public television stations to allow the right of rebuttal to the Oxford side if these films are shown! One of the National Geographic Society's officials, Dr. Louis B. Wright, is among those behind this maneuver. Could it be an effort to counteract the growing public dissatisfaction with the Stratford candidate as a result of Charlton Ogburn's Harvard Magazine article in 1974? Dr. Wright has, on many occasions, used his position as former director of the Folger Library to cast ridicule and contempt upon anti-Stratfordians of all persuasions.

QUIPS AND QUIDDITIES

Speaking of the "Harvard Case," the Newsletter Editor's reply to Evans and Levin, published in the last issue, has been made into a separate reprint, and its availability advertised in a forthcoming issue of Harvard Magazine... The Assistant Secretary of our Society's English branch,

Mr. H. W. PATIENCE, has published an article in the Halstead Advertiser, Nov. 16, 1975, entitled "The Continuing Story of Our Great Bard...Is It Too Much of a Coincidence?" Mr. Patience has also forwarded a letter to the editor of the same paper from one E. C. Jackson, expressing support of Mr. Patience's views and giving further evidence in the Oxfordian cause... Mr. LOUIS E. N. ALEXIS, another of our English members, has published an article in ISIS, Oxford University's student journal, entitled "Every Word Doth Almost Sell His Name," a lengthy argument with much startling new evidence. Let us hope our American members will emulate all this English activity!

A REVIEW OF

Sperack, Marvin. THE HARVARD CONCORDANCE TO SHAKESPEARE. Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1973. 1,600 pp.

by

Helen Cyr

As its book jacket attests, this book is the "first complete and reliable one-volume concordance to the works of the greatest writer in the English language." It is designed to help scholars and others locate lines or phrases used in the Shakespeare canon, and as this reviewer can verify, can be used even if only one word can be recalled. Furthermore, this is one of the better examples of computer technology applied to scholarship. German computer experts working with an IBM 360/50 computer helped the author and did the programming.

By the way, the author, Marvin Spevack, is not a faculty member of Harvard University. He received his Ph. D. there but, although an American citizen, resides in Germany where he is a professor of English at the University of Münster—a status that might provide him some "psychological

distance" from Harvard orthodoxy.

Magnetic tapes used in the production of the author's earlier six-volume work (A Complete and Systematic Concordance to the Works of Shakespeare) were used in the preparation of his present volume. All of Shakespeare's different 29,066 words—excepting the first 43 in order of frequency ("the", "and", "I", etc.)—are listed in alphabetical order. Following each word entry (and before the citation of each known example in which the word is used) is a line stating the absolute frequency of the word (based on the grand total of 884,647 words for all Shakespeare's works), the relative frequency of the word (with 1.0000 representing 1 percent, for example) and the number of occurrences in verse passages and in prose.

Along with the many good features of this work—including three appendices of (1) hyphenated words, (2) homographs, and (3) a conversion table to Through Line Numbering (based on lineation of the First Folio)—there is the disturbing fact that the author used the new Riverside Shakespeares edited by professor Gwynne Evans of Harvard University, one of the two professors who demonstrated rather shaky scholarship in last year's controversy, as the basis for the concordance since "it exemplifies the latest thinking on what may be called 'the true text' of Shakespeare." Fortunately for Oxfordiana, the concordance works equally well with other Shakespeare editions in hand. Just take care when studying certain problem phrases such as the "dram of sale" passage in Hamlet (discussed by L.E.N. Alexis in the Winter-Spring 1975 Newsletter) which comes up "dram of ev'l" in Evans' hands and is accordingly picked up by Spevack's programmers. However, Alexis' hypothesis about "noble" and "base" is ably supported by numerous examples in the concordance, and Oxfordians engaged in word study should find this work invaluable. Also, imagine how Spevack's computer tapes could be put to use in Oxfordian research!