

**SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY**  
**NEWSLETTERS**

**1982**

# Newsletter *Shakespeare Oxford Society*

*Verò Nihil Verius*

FALL-WINTER, 1981-1982

Vol. 17, No. 4, Vol. 18, No. 1

## Poe on Shakespeare Worship

About a year ago, in the columns of the Newsletter, we traced the curious and pathetic history of the composition and publication of Delia Bacon's The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare Unfolded, that profound analysis of Shakespeare's plays which raised the topic of the Shakespeare authorship question from the level of a parlor joke to that of a serious cultural problem. It may be recalled that part of that history centered on Delia Bacon's attempts to interest Thomas Carlyle in her work. Though Delia Bacon approached Carlyle armed with a letter of introduction from Ralph Waldo Emerson, an enthusiastic supporter of her pursuits, Carlyle remained kind but cool, never showing any real understanding of or interest in the American scholar's work. Edgar Allan Poe would not have been surprised by this reaction on Carlyle's part. In fact, Poe all but predicted it.

Poe tersely took Carlyle's measure in an outspoken note which he included in his "Marginalia" for April, 1846--some years before Carlyle's acquaintance with Delia Bacon. Poe's consideration of Carlyle's Hero-Worship rapidly led him to a consideration of Shakespeare worshippers. Poe wrote:

The book about "Hero-Worship"--is it possible that it ever excited a feeling beyond contempt? No hero-worshipper can possess anything within himself. That man is no man who stands in awe of his fellow-man. Genius regards genius with respect--with even enthusiastic admiration--but there is nothing of worship in the admiration, for it springs from a thorough cognizance of the one admired--from a perfect sympathy,

the result of the cognizance; and it is needless to say, that sympathy and worship are antagonistic. Your hero-worshippers, for example--what do they know about Shakespeare? They worship him--rant about him--lecture about him--about him, him, and nothing else--for no other reason than that he is utterly beyond their comprehension. They have arrived at an idea of his greatness from the pertinacity with which men have called him great. As for their own opinion about him--they really have none at all. (from Eric W. Carlson, ed., Introduction To Poe, Glenview, IL, 1967, pp. 522-523. The emphasis is Poe's.)

Poe did have an opinion of his own about Shakespeare and he expressed that opinion in a review (1845) of William Hazlitt's The Characters of Shakespeare. Poe's opinion should be of particular interest to Oxfordians and all students of the authorship question because that opinion constitutes the psychological crowbar with which the locked treasure chest of the Shakespearean works has been forced open. Poe said in that review, in part:

In all commenting upon Shakespeare, there has been a radical error, never yet mentioned. It is the error of attempting to expound his characters--to account for their actions--to reconcile his inconsistencies--not as if they were the coinage of a human brain, but as if they had been actual existences upon earth. We talk of Hamlet the man, instead of Hamlet the dramatis persona--of Hamlet that God, in place of Hamlet that Shakespeare created. If Hamlet had really lived, and if the tragedy were an accurate record of his deeds, from this record (with some trouble) we

might, it is true, reconcile his inconsistencies and settle to our satisfaction his true character. But the task becomes the purest absurdity when we deal only with a phantom. It is not (then) the inconsistencies of the acting man which we have as a subject of discussion--although we proceed as if it were, and thus inevitably err, but the whims and vacillations--the conflicting energies and indolence of the poet. It seems to us little less than a miracle, that this obvious point should have been overlooked. (Carlson, p. 506)

Needless to say, it seems to us little less than miraculous that this obvious point should continue to be overlooked--particularly by Shakespeare worshippers, those multitudes who respond to the facts and arguments of the Oxford case with the empty tintinabulation, "What difference does it make who wrote the plays?"

W.H.

#### SOS Fifth National Conference

The fifth national conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society was held on Friday, October 16, and Saturday, October 17, 1981, at the Barclay Hotel on Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia. The conference was divided into a business meeting, which began on Friday evening and ran through part of the Saturday morning session, and a series of programs, which began mid-morning on Saturday and continued until the conference's close at 5 p.m. Saturday.

The conference was attended by Gordon Cyr, executive director of the Society; Helen Cyr, secretary/treasurer of the Society; Bronson Feldman, honorary research director of the Society; Jeanette Feldman; Charlton Ogburn, honorary president of the Society; Vera Ogburn; Morse Johnson; Rhoda Messner; Vern Messner; Elisabeth Sears; Michael Steinbach; and Warren Hope, editor of the Newsletter. Four guests from the Philadelphia area--Frances Cappriotti, Nancy Spellman, Frank Smith, and Paul Garabedian--attended the Saturday afternoon session.

Gordon Cyr called the conference to order and delivered greetings at 8 pm Friday. He requested that Warren Hope take the minutes of the meeting and prepare them for publication in the Newsletter. The conference opened with the reading of the minutes of the Fourth National Conference by Gordon Cyr. Those minutes read:

#### SOS FOURTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The weekend of October 17-18, 1980 was the occasion for the fourth national meeting of the Shakespeare Oxford Society at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capital Hill. The meeting was attended by Gordon and Helen Cyr, Executive Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer respectively; Warren Hope; Dr. A. Bronson and Jeanette Feldman; Elizabeth Taylor; Russell des Cognets; Morse Johnson; Morris Kaplan; Anne Lounsbury; Vern and Rhoda Messner; new member Elisabeth Sears; Honorary President Charlton Ogburn; and (on Saturday) Markley Roberts. A guest at the conference was Dr. Louis Marder, editor of The Shakespeare Newsletter and noted Shakespeare commentator (of "orthodox" persuasion).

#### FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 17, 7:00 P.M.

Helen Cyr talked about the Internal Revenue Service and current research grants. This expanded on previous announcements on this subject in the S.O.S. Newsletter and was an explanation of the rationale behind the S.O.S. policy: that contributions to the Society earmarked for research to be conducted by a particular member were tax-deductible only if the research results were the property of the Society. Such a policy entailed detailed reports on expenditures by the researcher.

Gordon Cyr then gave two reports: 1) Russell des Cognets' sponsorship of the S.O.S. column in Louis Marder's The Shakespeare Newsletter had already elicited some scholarly inquiries. Dr. Cyr mentioned that some of the news about the recent S.O.S.-sponsored investigation into Shakespeare's signatures and its relationship to the new stylometric study of Sir Thomas More (S.O.S. Newsletter, Summer 1980) would appear in the September SNL column. He emphasized the importance this column had for the Oxfordian cause in

the wider dissemination of the Society's views. 2) Dr. Cyr updated the position of the Folger Library's position in respect to the "Ashbourne" portrait, which was mainly one of referring inquiries to our Society. A letter by conservator Peter Michaels, who had cleaned the portrait (see S.O.S. Newsletter, Summer 1979), was read aloud. The only previously undisclosed information in this was some restoration and cleaning Mr. Michaels had also performed on the Felton portrait the Folger Library owned, but without the startling revelations yielded by the "Ashbourne."

Dr. Louis Marder talked briefly about his grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to establish a data bank containing all the information about Shakespeare, including evidence for "alternative" Shakespeares. He stressed his own desire to find out as much as possible about Shakespeare and the importance such a data bank would have for any bibliographical studies. Dr. Marder also talked about the forthcoming International Shakespeare Conference in Stratford-on-Avon.

A letter was read from Dr. O.B. Hardison, Director of the Folger Library, graciously offering the facilities of his institution the next time our conference was held in Washington, D.C., provided he was notified sufficiently in advance.

Elisabeth Sears talked about some of her own research about the Earl of Oxford's possible authorship of a wide variety of works, both literary and musical. This included her theories about De Vere's hand in Golding's Metamorphoses and Aesop's Fables, as well as the popular tune Greensleeves, "William Byrd's" Earl of Oxford's March, etc.

A letter from the Marlowe Society of America was read, in which the president, Dr. Jean Jofen, called for "uniting all who believed that Shakespeare did not write his own works (sic)." In spite of this unfortunate phraseology, Dr. Feldman made a motion to hold a joint conference sometime with the Marlowe Society, in order to

debate the authorship issue with their members. The motion was seconded by Morse Johnson and carried. Dr. Jofen's request in the letter to have reciprocal organizational membership of the two societies was also approved. (Helen Cyr reminded the S.O.S. members that the Francis Bacon Society of America was a member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society.)

SATURDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 18, 9:00 A.M.

In the morning meeting, Honorary President Charlton Ogburn took over the chair temporarily. Helen Cyr reported on the Dimick grant of \$2,000 to non-S.O.S. member Lisa Sergio for research of Oxford correspondence in Italy (see below). An election of officers of the Society was then held. Chairman pro tem. Ogburn read the slate of the previous election, held at the 1977 Second National Conference in Arlington, Virginia. Mr. Ogburn suggested that that slate be re-elected with one change: Warren Hope would replace Gordon Cyr and Charlton Ogburn as Editor of the S.O.S. Newsletter. Dr. Feldman asked that his title be changed to Honorary Director of Research. Dr. Cyr then made a series of three motions: 1) to re-elect Charlton Ogburn as Hon. President; 2) to retain the 1977 slate with the changes proposed by Mr. Ogburn and Dr. Feldman; 3) and to retain the British branch's slate as voted in 1977. All three motions were duly seconded and passed.

Helen Cyr then gave a Treasurer's Report. The expenditure in 1979 was \$4,071 because of the Dimick grant, and income from dues and contributions was \$2,147.78. (The Dimick grant was a \$2,000.00 contribution, from which the Society extracted \$100 as a processing fee. Therefore, \$1,900 of the \$4,071 figure for expenditures mentioned above was provided by an outside source.) A motion to change the collection of dues to once a year was withdrawn after some discussion.

SATURDAY MORNING 10:30 A.M.

After a coffee break, the meeting resumed with a report by Charlton Ogburn, "A Review of Research, Past and Present." Mr. Ogburn, who is currently writing a monumental treatise on the authorship issue, had high praise

for some of the early pioneers of Oxfordian research. Charles W. Barrell's 1937 article in Saturday Review was cited in particular, along with the work of Canon Gerald Rendall and, more recently, Gwynneth Bowen.

But Mr. Ogburn offered a mea culpa for the carelessness of some Oxfordians, not even sparing his own parents, Charlton Ogburn, Sr. and Dorothy Ogburn, and he was critical of Eva Turner Clark, who, despite her great abilities, "tended to run away with herself."

All of the Oxfordians' peccadilloes put together, however, were minute in comparison with those of the orthodox, who often indulged in deliberate misquotations and misrepresentations. Especial opprobrium was meted out to a Prof. Murphy in this regard, and to A.L. Rowse, whose statement that "Oxford died a pensioner of the Crown" Ogburn labelled a "blatantly false statement."

As to present research, Mr. Ogburn mentioned the vast file of materials collected by Ruth Loyd Miller, which has not been combed through yet. And he mentioned the need for stylistic analyses of certain works. For example, he believes that Golding's Metamorphoses cannot really be by him. Oxfordians should also look further into A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres than Ward did, Mr. Ogburn said. Certain poems in that curious anthology were addressed to a high-born lady with "colors of black and white," who may probably be Queen Elizabeth. (Dr. and Mrs. Cyr interjected at one point to mention the research left unfinished by the late S.O.S. president, Richard C. Horne, Jr., on a manuscript facsimile of "Golding's" Moral Fabletalk--with some highly interesting marginalia in a different hand. The Cyrs will turn over this material to Dr. Feldman when they can gather together all the correspondence involved.)

Mr. Ogburn turned over a microfilmed letter to the Society which had been discovered by Lisa Sergio in Italy. It was a letter from the Italian ambassador to England addressed to the Venetian Ducal Palace announcing the arrival in Italy of the 17th Earl of Oxford. Mr. Ogburn expressed the disappointment of the Society in this meager harvest, and he compared it unfavorably with the desultory discovery Warren Hope made about Oxford's

plan to purchase a home in Venice--a fact previously unacknowledged.

Mr. Ogburn talked also about the dispute in England over the authenticity of the St. Alban's portrait of the 17th Earl of Oxford (a letter from an official at the National Portrait Gallery wrote Mr. Ogburn, saying that the dress belonged to an earlier period and that in his belief it was not an authentic representation of the 17th earl). Mr. Ogburn said that his own investigation into other portraits did not support the Gallery official's opinion on the subject's dress, and he passed around some interesting closeups for comparison of the St. Alban's eyes and those in the "Janssen" portrait (owned by the Folger) of "Shakespeare."

#### SATURDAY AFTERNOON 2:00 P.M.

Helen Cyr, Secretary/Treasurer of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, gave a brief report on one of the Society's projects still underway, a stylistic word-study comparison of Oxford's poems and prose with that of Shakespeare. She emphasized that her "sampler" in 1977 came to no conclusions, because the sample was too small, and only one test was made. She said the criteria for such a comparison must include the good provenance of all texts, Shakespeare's and Oxford's. Oxford's poems must be authentic, and not the speculation of someone that certain anonymous or "mis-attributed" verse could be assigned to him. Of Oxford's letters, certainly the Bedingfield letter, those to Burleigh, even the Tin Mine letters could be used--the more the better, she said.

Dr. Louis Marder, the guest of the Society, then gave a talk about problems and issues of editing a newsletter on Shakespeare. The Shakespeare Newsletter was primarily interested in news, and that Dr. Marder was personally interested in knowing everything there was to know about Shakespeare--in the domains of biography, scholarship, interpretation, etc. He recited a long list of items about Shakespeare (whom he obviously identified as Shakspeare of Stratford) that were as-

pects Dr. Marder did not know about the man. This elicited a lively exchange with S.O.S. members who asked the guest that if he didn't know all these things about the Stratford man, how could he be certain that only the Stratford man could be the author. Dr. Marder cited the usual orthodox "evidence" of the First Folio, the Stratford Monument, etc. Certainly nobody's mind was changed, and more heat, perhaps, than light was generated. But our guest did graciously concede at one point that if anyone could convince him that the 17th Earl of Oxford was indeed the author of Shakespeare's works, he would change the name of his publication to The Shakespeare-Oxford Newsletter!

The final report was by Dr. A. Bronson Feldman, entitled "Early Shakespeare," it dealt with his forthcoming book of that title, which is also a pun: Earl E. Shakespeare. Dr. Feldman's book is to be published in 1982 and its author said that a fourth of the work is in galleys. In his presentation, Dr. Feldman referred frequently to the one preceding his own by Dr. Louis Marder. He characterized the latter's approach to the Stratfordian case as one of fragmentation, in which each link in the Oxfordian argument is attacked singly--without regard for the whole case. He contrasted this to the Oxfordian argument, which is one of synthesis. Feldman said that Marder and the Stratfordians do not come to grips with the question of what kind of man Shakespeare was. What we know about Shakspeare of Stratford is primarily that he was a money-lender. In addition to the other acknowledged evidence of this Shaksperian trait in the Stratford records, Dr. Feldman cited the first indication we have of Shakspeare in London is a loan he made in 1592 to one John Clayton. Eight years later the record shows that Shakspeare sues the latter to recover the debt. Such a man, Dr. Feldman asserted, is not in the great company of Keats and Shelley. Nor can the author of The Merchant of Venice be an encloser of commons and a hoarder of grain. The speaker mentioned J. Thomas Looney's list of the author's characteristics, which were both special and general,

and he has not seen Looney's argument from these characteristics refuted. No Stratfordian scholar has yet explained, said Dr. Feldman, how Shakespeare could have dared to present a prime official (Burlough) on the stage, kill him, and then speak contemptuously of his corpse.

In "Early Shakespeare," the author tries to establish the context of the sequence of events leading Shakespeare to write the plays the way he did. The book is a psychological, historical, and biographical study. Feldman had investigated several of the plays, starting with Eva Turner Clark's analyses (but correcting her at several points). One orthodox contention was neatly disposed of by Dr. Feldman when he cited reasons against the popular notion that Shakespeare wrote his plays as "pot-boilers." All of his plays "believe the stage" and "overflow the boundaries" of conventional stagecraft, Feldman said.

One new fact was claimed by the speaker. He had assumed, along with earlier Oxfordians, that Malvolio was the only representation of Christopher Hatton in Shakespeare. Was this the only play to portray Hatton? Feldman finds this official in the characters of Lucio in Measure for Measure (the Luce was Hatton's coat-of-arms, since he was a member of the Lucy family) and Angelo in the same play as representing Hatton's more "angelic" posture. Also the notorious hand-cutting scene in Titus is a reference to Hatton's having cut off John Stubbe's hand for the latter's pamphlet against the Queen. Dr. Feldman said that he was certain Stratfordians would have an answer for each single detail of his argument in his forthcoming book, but he would like them instead to answer to the case.

In an exchange with Dr. Marder following his presentation, Dr. Feldman mentioned an hypothesis presented by the late C.W. Barrell: Cyril Tourneur, a Jacobean playwright for whom no biography can be found, was apparently a soldier in Sir Francis Vere's army. Barrell contended that this Cyril Tourneur was really Sir Edward Vere, natural son of the 17th Earl of Oxford by Anne Vavasour.

The conference was then adjourned.

The minutes of the fourth national conference were approved as read.

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Helen Cyr, wearing her hat as treasurer of the Society, explained some of the difficulties in administering the Society's affairs which arise from the inconvenience of doing business with a New York-based bank (an obsolete vestige of the Society's original incorporation in the State of New York). The chronic inconvenience of dealing with a distant bank flared into an acute case of subdued hysterics when the Cyrs and, thus, the Society's headquarters, recently moved. Long distance phone calls, letters, and forms flew to and fro from Baltimore to New York and back again to resolve the problem. It was proposed that the Society change banks to eliminate the possibility of such confusion and difficulties in the future. Discussion followed which also drew attention to the fact that long-distance banking might cause the Society to lose potential revenue through advantageously shifting interest rates. Morse Johnson light-heartedly made a motion to approve the transfer of funds from the New York bank (Bankers Trust) to a bank or savings and loan selected by Helen Cyr by stating: "I move that the Cyrs see to it that the Society makes \$300.00 per annum." The motion was clarified, seconded, and approved.

Continuing in her role as treasurer, Helen Cyr raised the question of the Society's dues structure. Discussion of this topic centered on the wish to increase the Society's revenues in order to ward off the effects of increasing costs but tempered by the desire to prevent financial considerations from deterring individuals from joining the Society. A new dues structure, as follows, was proposed and approved:

Student member: \$5.00 per year  
Regular member: \$15.00 per year  
Sustaining member: \$50.00 per year

Doffing her treasurer's cap and donning her secretary's cap, Helen Cyr explained that the relocation of the Society's head-

quarters had presented the opportunity for an informal inventory of the Society's research files. As a result, Warren Hope was presented with a copy of Horace Vere's will for transcription and eventual publication in the Newsletter, Bronson Feldman is to receive a facsimile of Golding's Moral Fabletalk which contains marginalia in a different hand for study and interpretation, and the Cyrs will consider the marginalia in an edition of The Prince which was in the files.

Helen Cyr, drawing on her expertise as a librarian, proposed a new Society project which she volunteered to undertake: compiling an index to the complete file of the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter and also overseeing the microfilming of a complete set of the Society's publication. The motion to approve this new project was made, seconded, and carried, with the Society's thanks to Helen Cyr for taking on the additional labor involved in this valuable project, a project which will help preserve the Society's research efforts and should also increase the use of the results of our research by scholars.

Helen Cyr then took up the next subject of business, membership recruitment. A vote of thanks was offered by the Society to Russ des Cognets for his sponsorship of Oxfordian ads and columns in The Shakespeare Newsletter, edited by Louis Marder. Correspondence received from readers of The Shakespeare Newsletter reflects the value of these ads and columns to the Oxfordian cause. A vote of thanks was also offered to Gordon Cyr for the commendable way he presents the Oxfordian position through his preparation of the columns for The Shakespeare Newsletter. Gordon Cyr requested that other members who wish to prepare one or more of these Oxfordian columns send their copy to him so that he can continue as contact with Russ des Cognets and Louis Marder and coordinate the Society's educational efforts through The Shakespeare Newsletter.

The Cyrs proposed that the Society consider placing ads in other periodicals. A motion was made, seconded, and carried, which



authorized the Cyrs to explore the possibility of placing ads which would encourage membership in the Society in such publications as The New Yorker, Harper's, The Saturday Review, Inquiry, and The American Spectator. There was a widespread belief that the current level of interest in the Shakespeare authorship question in general and the Oxford case in particular is not reflected in the Society's membership rolls, which now consist of 91 souls.

Warren Hope proposed that, as part of its membership recruitment efforts, the Society consider sponsoring what he called VIES--the Vere Institute for Elizabethan Studies. As Hope envisioned it, the Institute would be an opportunity to train Oxfordian scholars and, simultaneously, to educate and agitate among Elizabethan scholars who hold the Stratfordian theory of Shakespearean authorship. He thought the Institute could be a two-to-three week series of interdisciplinary seminars, lectures, and workshops, combining study of Elizabethan literature, theater, history, religion, art, music, and so on. Hope hoped a U.S. college campus could be found to house the Institute for one week in the summer and that this session could be followed by a one or two week study period in England, in London and Essex. Academic sessions could be combined with visits to the Public Record Office, performances of Shakespearean plays, and Castle Hedingham. Some discussion followed but the scheme was tabled until Saturday when more attendees to the conference would be present. On Saturday, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to form a committee which would look into the possibility of establishing such an Institute. The committee is to be chaired by Warren Hope, with Elisabeth Sears, Dr. Bronson Feldman, Dr. Michael Steinbach and, pending her acceptance, Ruth Loyd Miller, serving as committee members. Dr. Gordon Cyr volunteered to serve on the committee as an ex officio member.

Gordon Cyr then reported on his correspondence with Wilson Harrison, the English handwriting expert who, at the Society's request, took part in what amounts to the most serious and thorough scrutiny and

analysis of the six surviving signatures by William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon to be performed in modern times. Wilson Harrison drew Gordon Cyr's attention to Eric Sam's claim that he, Sam, had "discovered" a letter by the Earl of Southampton which, Sam argued, had been dictated to the Stratford man, presumably when he served Southampton as a secretary. The identification of the letter's hand with that of "Shakespeare" was based on a comparison of the script with that of the 147 lines of the Sir Thomas More manuscript. Wilson Harrison expressed his skepticism of the "technique" used for this identification--a mere noting of similarities in the two hands. Gordon Cyr responded to Wilson Harrison and, eventually, prepared a sturdy and entertaining refutation of Eric Sam's claims in an Oxfordian column of The Shakespeare Newsletter. Members seeking light on this recent nonexistent link in the orthodox chain are encouraged to read Gordon Cyr's article, "The Latest Shakespearean Mare's Nest: Southampton's 'Secretary'."

As the Friday evening session drew to a close, Elisabeth Sears inquired concerning the current status of Castle Hedingham. Discussion of the Castle and its fate were tabled until Saturday morning when more members would be present. Elisabeth Sears also said that she continues her research into the music of Shakespeare and Oxford and expressed the wish to hear from other members with similar interests. The Friday evening session was adjourned.

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The Saturday session unofficially began for some Society members over breakfast in the dining room of the Barclay or on early-morning strolls through Rittenhouse Square. But the conference officially reconvened when Gordon Cyr called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. The conclusion of the business meeting of the conference was then underway.

Helen Cyr read the treasurer's report. The report stated that the current balance of the Society's treasury stood at \$2,125.55. A motion to approve and accept the report as read was made, seconded, and carried. Election of officers was temporarily post-



poned to allow for the arrival of some out-of-town attendees. Eventually, Charlton Ogburn made a motion to retain the current slate of officers (see the minutes of the fourth national conference which are incorporated in these minutes for the slate). The motion was seconded and carried. Gordon Cyr moved to retain Charlton Ogburn as honorary president of the Society. This motion, too, was seconded and carried. It was also decided that Charlton Ogburn and Gordon Cyr, as representatives of the Society, should investigate the current status of Castle Hedingham through members of the English branch of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and other interested parties in England. It is hoped that information on the Castle will be supplied to members in a future issue of the Newsletter.

Gordon Cyr proceeded with unfinished business from the Friday evening session by reading and discussing an exchange of correspondence between himself and Professor Scouten, a professor of literature at the University of Pennsylvania. Professor Scouten is a specialist in 18th century English literature who read and objected to Gordon Cyr's article, "Oxford's 1604 Death Is No Bar To His Authorship," which appeared in The Shakespeare Newsletter for November, 1980. Professor Scouten did not only object to Cyr's arguments but also delivered himself of the opinion that the author of Shakespeare's plays and poems was "a comparative ignoramus." Cyr responded by showing that Scouten confused conjecture and fact. The overall result was a lively exchange which centered on the historical accuracy of literary works.

Warren Hope then read a statement which was addressed to the conference by Ruth Loyd Miller on the Society's research files and facilities. The statement follows:

"COME AND TAKE CHOICE OF ALL MY LIBRARY"  
Titus Andronicus IV, i.

As members of the Shakespeare-Oxford Society are aware, the Internal Revenue Service has insisted that research materials generated through tax-exempt donations to the Society be deposited at the Society's "headquarters." The rationale of this requirement is that such materials will then be accessible to members of the Society and to the public.

"Headquarters" for the S-O-S, as members know, has been either the business or home address of the President or Chairman of the Society. This developed as an accommodation-of-necessity, there being little in the way of funds, and less in the way of interest by libraries, for providing space and services to an organization with the scope and purposes of the S-O-S. Housed in personal quarters, whatever we have in the way of materials, books, and reference resources are de facto inaccessible.

The Shakespeare Authorship Society in England suffers from this same malady. Its collection also has been housed in the personal or business quarters of an officer or member of the Society, dramatically reducing accessibility to the collection. Regardless of how accommodating and hospitable the host-custodian may be, one using the books and materials in another's living quarters feels, at best, an intruder.

Additionally, the lack of a central, permanent depository discourages donations of books, materials, and research files. Consequently we find de Vere materials that have been collected at great cost in time, effort, and funds widely dispersed. Katherine Eggar's materials are at the University of London Library; Canon Rendall's in Liverpool. Tragically, the research files of others--Barrell, the Wards and Allens, and even Looney, appear permanently lost.

But before we can adequately address the question of a permanent depository, we must determine what the Society has in the way of a "collection." The Richard III and Marlowe Societies, to which I belong, furnish lists to members of their library holdings, and members may borrow works from the Societies' Librarian, or secure, for a fee, copies of materials.

Perhaps an inventory should be made, with a brief description or abstract of items, of the S-O-S books and research files passed down from Mr. Horne, our veritable Palladian-Paladin. As he noted in corre-

spondence to several members, his travels-research in the cause were financed largely with funds contributed to the S-O-S, and he apparently made a number of discoveries which it was his intention to publish in the Newsletter.

A list of books/research materials of the S-O-S should be printed at least once annually in the Newsletter. This might be in the form of an order blank, showing the cost of reproducing copies of items from the original, with a price list for postage and insurance for mailing items that can be loaned.

Ruth Loyd Miller

Discussion on this statement showed that some of the problems raised by it would be alleviated to some extent by the microfilmed version of the complete set of the Newsletter and by the preparation of an index to the Newsletter. Further, it was pointed out that the only unfinished research projects left by the late president Richard Horne had now been distributed for completion. All present agreed wholeheartedly with the wish to have a permanent depository for Society materials. Helen Cyr moved for approval to try and arrange for the Folger Shakespeare Library to act as such a depository. The motion was seconded and carried. It was also mentioned that copies of the results produced by research grants awarded through the Society in the past have not yet been furnished to the Society or reported on in the Newsletter. It was decided that an effort should be made to account for all outstanding research during 1982.

Just before the close of the business meeting, arising from a recapitulation of the Society's membership recruitment activities, Dr. Michael Steinbach moved that, as part of those activities, a pamphlet be prepared which would exhaustively survey the opinions of famous people on the Shakespeare authorship question. Bronson Feldman stated that Orson Welles had once publicly announced his belief that the Earl of Oxford was the true Shakespeare. Dr. Steinbach's motion was seconded and

carried, authorizing Charlton Ogburn, Bronson Feldman, and Michael Steinbach to collaborate on the preparation of such a pamphlet--a pamphlet which should be an effective tool for arousing interest in the Oxford cause.

The business meeting ended with a break for coffee and danish pastry, perhaps an unintentional culinary tribute to Hamlet, the melancholy Dane, who proved to be central to the first part of the conference's Program Session, Gordon Cyr's report on Louis Halle's book, The Search for an Eternal Norm.

Gordon Cyr reported on two recent publications which are of interest to Oxfordians, Louis Halle's The Search for an Eternal Norm and Steven W. May's edition of "The Poems of Edward de Vere," issued in Studies in Philology. (See also Charlton Ogburn's review of Professor May's edition of Oxford's poems in this issue of the Newsletter. These two works are complementary in that Louis Halle raises doubts concerning the traditional theory of Shakespearean authorship and Steven May legitimizes the study of Oxford as poet for orthodox scholars.

According to Cyr, Louis Halle in his book proves himself to be thoroughly familiar with a wide range of subjects--literature, history, and current political affairs, particularly. Charlton Ogburn, who knows Halle personally, told of Halle's background, stating that Halle had worked in the U.S. State Department until the 1950's. Halle then became an academician, affiliated with the Institute of International Affairs in Geneva. An author of other books, including Out of Chaos, Halle now continues to write in retirement. His interest in the Shakespeare authorship question dates from the 1930's, when he was convinced by the Oxford case as presented by Charles Wisner Barrell in his "Elizabethan Mystery Man" and by J. Thomas Looney in Shakespeare Identified.

Cyr reported that Halle's Search is made up of three essays, the bulkiest of which is entitled "The World and Hamlet." Cyr felt that the book's main point for Oxfordians is that it deals with the ability to deduce

an author's character from that author's work. "Halle's book clears up," Cyr said, "in what ways a work is autobiographical" and, hence, provides a "good rebuttal to academicians" who dismiss the work of Oxfordians on this basis. Cyr also said the book was thought-provoking throughout and should interest all readers who pursue questions of a philosophical nature.

With regard to the work of Steven May, Cyr said that, though May's approach is orthodox, Cyr thought May would listen to reason on the question of Shakespearean authorship and Cyr felt that May had used his scholarly assumptions fairly. Cyr argued that the significance of the appearance of this work rests on the fact that it represents a serious attempt by an orthodox Elizabethan scholar to deal with Oxford as a poet. Cyr showed that there were errors in the work, not merely disagreements over interpretation, citing particularly the fact that Professor May seems to be unaware that Oxford was a member of the privy council under Elizabeth, a fact brought to light by the late Richard Horne and published in the Newsletter (30 June 1970--the fact is embodied in a letter to Buckhurst from "the Lords and gentlemen of the privy council" dated April 8, 1603). Cyr concluded that while Oxfordians could of course argue with the De Vere cannon as established by May and with May's biographical view of Oxford, Oxfordians and the Oxford movement were, by and large, very well treated by Professor May. (The editor of the Newsletter has since corresponded with Professor May and found him indeed to be gentlemanly and serious in his approach to Elizabethan poetry. It is to be hoped that, while Professor May remains orthodox in his view of Shakespearean authorship, notes by Professor May on Oxford's life and poetry will eventually appear in the columns of the Newsletter.)

Bronson Feldman compared Steven May's edition of Oxford's poems to one Feldman had prepared in the 1930's and which remains in manuscript. Feldman stated that he was struck by how closely May's work paralleled his own, though he noted that Professor May missed an acrostic by Oxford to his second wife (the first letter in each line of the poem spells her maiden name, TRENTAM).

Feldman also noted that May, of course, did not include many lyrics which Feldman and others attribute to Oxford which are traditionally considered to be anonymous works or which have been attributed to other Elizabethan writers. He said that Professor May too readily and easily dismissed Looney's hypothesis that Oxford had composed the songs which were eventually published in John Lyly's plays. Professor May does not take up at all the lengthy scholarly doubt concerning the attribution of these songs to Lyly. In general, Feldman argued that May's apparently "scientific" and "textual" method had led Professor May astray. "Any attribution made in manuscript by anybody to anyone counts without question for him," Feldman concluded, noting that textual evidence must be tempered with the known characteristics of an author's work. The greatest problem raised by May's edition, Feldman felt, was that it does not account for the evidence we have concerning the prolific quality of Oxford's verse, the testimony of Gabriel Harvey and others. Nonetheless, Feldman praised May's edition and hoped that it would indeed constitute a breakthrough, leading other academics to quarry the De Vere field. Feldman stated his intention of preparing an article and submitting it to Studies in Philology in an attempt to expand the De Vere cannon to include the songs in Lyly's plays and other works, without raising the Shakespeare authorship question. Feldman prepared such an article and sent it to the editors of Studies in Philology. It was rapidly rejected on the ground that the article was too brief. Feldman rewrote and expanded the article and resubmitted it. That revised version was rapidly rejected with no reason for the rejection given. (This treatment perhaps suggests the limits of the "breakthrough" for Oxfordians achieved by Professor May's work.)

The Saturday morning session closed with a presentation by Helen Cyr, "Stylistic Discrimination: Shakespeare and Oxford--The Textual Problems." Basically, Helen reported on a long-standing project with which she has been conscientiously invol-

for some years--the attempt to analyze and compare, through the use of a computer, Shakespeare's linguistic style and that of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

Helen Cyr noted that the textual problems posed by such a project center on two points, the quantity and quality of the textual samples used to represent the authors. Even traditional scholars, she pointed out, disagree on exactly which works and which sections of works they are willing to accept as the work of the master, as by "Shakespeare." On the other hand, while there is next to no disagreement concerning the authorship of some of Oxford's poems and all of his letters, the total amount of Vere text available is relatively slight. (Gordon Cyr noted that Steven May's work would help determine those Oxford poems which traditional scholars and Oxfordians alike could agree are from Oxford's hand.)

Helen stated that she planned to work with Hamlet, either Julius Caesar or Coriolanus, The Sonnets, "The Rape of Lucrece," A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Henry IV, as the representative sample of Shakespeare's work--a total of some 132,000 words. The amount of Oxfordian text readily available, though, totals only a little more than 12,200 words. This disparity in the amount of sample text used could cause some critics, Helen noted, to question the validity of the analysis and its results. More Oxfordian text may become available, however--perhaps Oxford's tin mining letters which have been discovered and collected by Ruth Loyd Miller and which Mrs. Miller is editing and transcribing with Mr. Fowler, another S-O-S member.

Warren Hope suggested that, since the aim is to use texts which have unanimous agreement with regard to authorship, "The Rape of Lucrece" be dropped from the "Shakespearean" sample. Even Oxfordians, Hope said, notably Gerald Phillips, the English Oxfordian scholar, have made a strong case against "The Rape" and "Venus and Adonis" as Shakespearean works. This statement surprised some attendees of the conference and led to discussion.

Morse Johnson asked Hope to summarize Phillips's case. Hope said that Phillips argued that "The Rape" and "Venus and Adonis" reflected a very different mind from that of the author of the sonnets and Othello. "Different in what way?" Morse Johnson asked. Bronson Feldman stated that, specifically, Phillips thought "The Rape" and "Venus and Adonis" were the work of "a cynical parodist" of Shakespeare, a cynical parodist of the author of the sonnets in particular. Elisabeth Sears said that, for her, "Venus and Adonis" and its dedication were central to the Oxford case and must be the work of Shakespeare. Helen Cyr said that some of the best Shakespearean parallels with Oxford's writing are from "The Rape." Gordon Cyr wisely noted that there clearly is disagreement concerning the authorship of "The Rape" and that, for purposes of the computer study, it was imperative that only texts on which there is little or no disagreement be used. Further, Cyr pointed out that, particularly since doubts concerning the authorship of "The Rape" were raised by Oxfordians, it would be unwise to use the poem in a "stylometric" study, giving potential critics a weapon with which to attack the study's conclusions. Bronson Feldman agreed with Gordon Cyr's view and said that he had gathered evidence which suggests that Matthew Roydon, the friend of Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman, a man known as the author of comic works, is the author of "Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece."

The meeting adjourned for lunch. Some attendees no doubt found food for thought in the notions that reasonable Oxfordians of goodwill can disagree on many points and that the Oxford case is the beginning, not the end, of Shakespearean study.

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The afternoon program consisted of two presentations, one by Charlton Ogburn, "Current Oxfordian Research," and one by Bronson Feldman, "Early Shakespeare--A Report." Both Ogburn and Feldman have written books touching the Oxford case which are due to appear in 1982. Ogburn's

book promises to be an exhaustive though entertaining and illuminating, not exhausting, survey and restatement of the case against William Shakspeare of Stratford as the author of Shakespeare's plays and poems. Feldman's book is an analysis of Shakespeare's earliest plays and poems as they are illuminated by the searchlight of the Oxfordian solution to the Shakespeare authorship problem. These books should work in tandem, Ogburn's book clearing the Shakespearean ground of the Stratford fraud, and Feldman's book laying a foundation for, and raising the first story of, the Oxfordian structure.

Charlton Ogburn spoke first, stating that he had been at work on his book for some years and that he hoped it would appear in the Spring of 1982. Ogburn's purpose at the conference was not to discuss his book, though, but rather to survey and raise some questions which had turned up as a result of his researches. Some of these questions and problems show that Ogburn has been willing to question some Oxfordian assumptions as well as those of orthodox scholars.

Ogburn again raised the question of whether or not we actually know what Oxford looked like, circulating reproductions of portraits and quoting the skeptical opinions of authorities on aspects of the paintings. Some of those present felt that the likenesses displayed in the portraits argued for the identity of the sitters for the portraits; others felt the likenesses were dissimilar enough to raise doubts. No definite conclusion was sought or reached, of course, but all present agreed with Bronson Feldman that Oxfordians should try to obtain reproductions of the portraits of Oxford's parents which are owned by the Duke of Portland and the Hollis family. Charlton Ogburn said that he would write to England in an attempt to obtain reproductions of those paintings.

Another area of investigation surveyed by Ogburn was the inheritance of lands and manors received by the Earl of Oxford and the way those inheritances were disposed of by the Earl. Ogburn argued, for instance, that the legend that Oxford destroyed buildings at Hedingham, in Essex, in 1592, seems to spring from rumors spread in the 18th century. It

is possible, Ogburn suggested, that these rumors and the legend grew from Camden's statement that the Earl "overthrew and wasted his patrimony."

He also questioned the dating and interpretation of Shakespeare's sonnets by orthodox scholars and Oxfordians. He argued that sonnets 3 and 16 do not represent the way "a father would address a prospective son-in-law." This led to some discussion of Oxford's possible relationship with the Earl of Southampton. Elisabeth Sears said that part of her Oxfordian research takes the form of looking into the paternity of the Earl of Southampton. Rhoda Messner argued that she did not have difficulty reading the sonnets as from a father to a prospective son-in-law. Bronson Feldman expressed the view that problems in the sonnets are connected to the authorship of "Venus and Adonis," stating that he agrees with Gerald Phillips that the dedication of the "Venus and Adonis" represents an attempt to publicly mock Oxford as the author of privately-circulated sonnets to Southampton. Ogburn pointed out that his purpose was to draw attention to problems and questions and convincingly argued that the discussion showed that his purpose had been served.

He went on to consider other problems, including 18th century sources for the "Shakespeare" biography, the 1,000 pounds per annum Oxford received from Elizabeth, the difficulty involved in tracking the work of our Oxfordian predecessors, and the potential disappointment of finding that sources have been misused by Oxfordians—he said that Charles Wisner Barrell, for instance, had misleadingly used King James's reference to "Great Oxford" and he told of the efforts required to find that source which had been left undocumented by Barrell. In the end, Ogburn noted that, by and large, Oxfordians have been more careful as scholars than their Stratfordian adversaries, but stressed the need for documentation and sound scholarship.

Bronson Feldman then reported on his book Early Shakespeare. Feldman stated that the Table of Contents of his book constitutes a list of Shakespeare's earliest plays in the order of their composition. The text of the book converts the list into a chronology, with the arguments for the chronology of the plays tied at every point to events in the life and times of the Earl of Oxford. He explained that his method was biographical and psychoanalytic (Feldman is a trained analyst, having studied with Theodore Reik, and a Ph.D. in Tudor drama) as well as historical. He said that though he admires and in large measure follows the work of Eva Turner Clark, his method and outlook leads him away from political and historical events to personal crises in Oxford's life when he goes in search of Shakespeare's reason for writing a specific work, thus causing him to depart from, or augment, at times, Mrs. Clark's pioneering book, Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays, which has been newly edited and reissued by Ruth Loyd Miller.

Feldman went on to present a brief resume of each of the book's chapters, stating that, while each chapter can stand alone, their sequence, their arrangement, makes of the work a whole. The plays analyzed in the book include The Comedy of Errors, Pericles, Cymbeline, The Taming of the Shrew, Two Gentlemen of Verona, All's Well That Ends Well, Love's Labors Lost, The Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, and Titus Andronicus. One chapter is also devoted to Oxford's earliest poetic efforts and their culmination in his sponsorship of The Paradise of Dainty Devices, an anthology issued in 1576, the year in which, Feldman contends, Shakespeare wrote the first version of his first comedy, The Comedy of Errors.

Most of the discussion generated by Feldman's talk revolved around his analyses of the characters of two of the women in Oxford's life, Ann Cecil and Ann Vavasor. But there was general agreement, no doubt, that both presentations were thought-provoking, and that the meeting as a whole, with its discussion, achieve-

ments, and aspirations, was a sign of vitality in the Society, when Gordon Cyr adjourned the fifth national conference.

So do our minutes hasten to their end.  
Sonnet 55

### A New Edition of Oxford's Poems

by  
Charlton Ogburn

Thanks to the thoughtfulness of Dr. O. B. Hardison, Director of the Folger Library, I have been sent a copy of a study which is essential reading for Oxfordians and must be taken very much into account by anyone who hereafter addresses himself to the subject of the Earl of Oxford's verse. This is "The Poems of Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, and of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex," an edition with commentary by Steven W. May. It is published as the Early Winter number (Vol. LXXVII, no. 5) of the publication, Studies in Philology, put out by the University of North Carolina Press at Chapel Hill.

Professor May's imposing research has led him to accept sixteen known poems as by Oxford and four others as possibly by him. The latter comprise three in J. Thomas Looney's "Poems of Edward de Vere"---"Woman's Changeableness," the "Echo Verses" and "The Shepherd's Slumber"---and one not in Looney's collection. May brands as "Poems Wrongly Attributed to Oxford" those included by Looney under the titles "What is Desire?", "Love is a Discord," "Doth Sorrow Fret Thy Soul," "Grief of Mind," "Verses Ascribed to Queen Elizabeth" (correctly, in May's opinion) and "Fortune and Love." The thirteen lyrics from Lyly's plays assigned to Oxford by Looney are ignored by May as are all but one ("The Shepherd's Slumber") of the eleven poems in "England's Helicon" signed "Ignoto" and also assigned by Looney to Oxford.

It will not escape the reader's notice that May questions or denies Oxford's authorship of poems that played a significant role in Looney's identification of Oxford as Shakespeare. Indeed, May does not let it escape his notice or fail to point out that other



Oxfordians have followed Looney in this. "This on-going confusion of Oxford's genuine verse with that of at least three other poets illustrates the wholesale failure of the Oxfordian methodology." Those are big words. Oxfordians will, of course, wish to scrutinize the reasoning on which May's reassignment of the poems in question is based. Suffice it to say here that stylistic analysis has nothing to do with it.

Should further examination of sources support Professor May's determinations, Oxfordians shall, certainly, suffer embarrassment. However, I should judge it rather less than the embarrassment occasioned Stratfordians by their inability to distinguish lines by Shakespeare from lines by Oxford in the mélange of verses assembled by Louis P. Benezet in 1942 and reprinted in Ruth Loyd Miller's felicitous edition of Looney's "'Shakespeare' Identified," Vol. I, pages 645-6 (a book to which May refers). May attempts to disqualify Benezet's handiwork on the grounds that two lines are from a poem by Greene, but this will hardly suffice, especially with those acquainted with Greene's relationship with Oxford. Indeed, where May assigns "Love is a Discord," signed "E. O." in "England's Parnassus" (1600) to Greene on the grounds that the first sixteen lines, as Joseph Q. Adams pointed out, appeared in Greene's "What thing is Love?" from "Menaphon" (1589), we may wonder if possibly the lines were not originally from a composition of Oxford's of earlier date. May, incidentally, can hardly be expected to point out that Greene called Oxford, elliptically but, in my opinion, unmistakably, the outstanding writer of them all. I know of no one who has brought that out.

Assuming that all Professor May's deductions are correct, the case for Oxford as Shakespeare will not be shaken by the re-assignment of six poems believed to have been by Oxford. The case is much too broadly based for that, as is its "methodology." May writes of Oxford's role in Elizabeth's reign: "He is her first truly prestigious courtier poet"—and would it be unkind to interject that "prestigious" is properly the adjectival form not of "prestige" but of "prestidigitation"?—and while we cannot

know to what extent his example spurred on those who followed, his precedent did at least confer genuine respectability upon the later efforts of such poets as Sidney, Greville, and Raleigh." He then speaks of how much "the work of these poets overshadows Oxford's." Yet he has earlier recognized that "Both Webbe (1586) and Puttenham (1589) rank him [Oxford] first among the courtier poets, an eminence he probably would not have been granted, despite his reputation as a patron, by virtue of a mere handful of lyrics." In fact, Gabriel Harvey makes clear, as we believe Thomas Nashe does, too, that the verse attributed to Oxford today can amount to but a small fraction of his output. Thus Webbe and Puttenham (or Lumley), on the strength of a much broader basis of comparison than that available to May, as May himself acknowledges, rank Oxford ahead of all other courtier poets—Sidney, Greville, Raleigh and the rest—to which it might be added, to refresh Professor May's memory, that Peacham in citing the poets who had made Elizabeth's "a golden age" (1622) named Oxford but no "Shakespeare." Clearly Peacham knew under another name the Shakespeare to whom Ben Jonson the next year was to pay the most exalted tribute any writer apart from Shakespeare has probably ever received from the pen of another.

May writes of "the Oxfordian movement" that "its leaders are educated men and women" whose "arguments for De Vere are entertained as at least plausible by hosts of intellectually respectable persons," while "the general interest in the 'Oxfordian' movement is undoubtedly more widespread now than ever before." After the poison-pen treatment to which we are accustomed at the hands of such character-assassins as Louis B. Wright and Samuel Schoenbaum, such recognition from a scholar who is also a gentleman is welcome indeed. Moreover, May's tribute to Oxford's devotion to learning and patronage of literature, and his summation of the dedications Oxford received, is the most impressive brief statement of the matter we have ever seen.



On the other hand, the selection and handling of the material of Oxford's biography as we are given it is scandalously slanted. We would call it venomous even while recognizing that the life of any creative genius must present a spectacle of wasted talents and wasted resources and probably of behavior difficult to excuse if it is divested of the products of his genius. Certainly May divests Oxford of what he calls "the untenable Shakespearean trappings." Why they are untenable he does not undertake to tell us. But we are as used to being told that the case for Oxford is untenable as we are accustomed to the inability of its opponents to cite one circumstance that renders it so.

What we should like to tell Steven W. May and other unquestioning--and mostly much less gracious--adherents of orthodoxy is this:

1. Face up to the overwhelming evidence against the Stratford Shakspere as Shakespeare.
2. Recognize what is demonstrably the fact, that the case for the Stratford man rests upon a consistent and unconscionable disregard of the plain English of the pertinent record combined with the fantastic notion that the work of a literary genius need bear no relationship to his background, experience, or demonstrated character, may in fact be diametrically opposed to them.
3. Then come back and we'll talk about Oxford.

Meanwhile, Professor May has given us a textual analysis of the poems of Oxford that must be unparalleled in its thoroughness in a study of the question of attributions that deserves the most respectful and close attention. We urge our members to give it that.

#### SOS Bulletin Board

\* Celeste Ashley, of Palo Alto, continues to dig diligently for facts concerning the Oxford case. She recently struck

gold in a book entitled Essex Worthies by William Addison and published by Phillimore & Co., Ltd., of London, in 1973. We will give here two samples of the material in this work, but promise to publish more of Celeste Ashley's finds in future issues:

Thomas Gent (d. 1593), judge, represented Maldon in parliament from 1572, was appointed serjeant-at-law in 1584, and a baron of the Exchequer in 1586. His rise to affluence appears to have been substantially due to his holding of the lucrative office of steward of all the courts of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (q.v.). Notwithstanding the prohibition in the Statute of 33 Henry VIII c.24., he acted in his own county as a judge of assize. His first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Swallow of Bocking, by whom he had a large family. He was buried at Steeple Bumpstead.

(p. 84)

Canon G. H. Rendall, who died at Dedham in 1945 aged 93, came to Essex after being headmaster of Charterhouse, 1897 to 1911; principal of University College, 1890 to 1897; vice-chancellor of Victoria University, 1890-1894. He will be remembered in the county for his Dedham in History and Dedham Described and Deciphered. He will also be remembered for his conviction that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (q.v.) was the author of the sonnets, classical poems, and certain plays attributed to Shakespeare. His reasons for this belief are propounded in Shakespeare's Sonnets and Edward de Vere, and Personal Clues in Shakespeare's Poems and Sonnets. Among his pamphlets on the subject are Shakespeare in Essex and East Anglia, and Shakespeare's Handwriting and Spelling.

(p. 154)

\* Brad Fisher, a new member from Springfield, Pa., writes:

Max Perkins's enthusiasm for Alden Brooks's Will Shakespeare and the Dyer's Hand (SOS Newsletter, Winter-Spring 1981, p. 1) was shared by another American literary giant, as Carlos Baker's compilation, Ernest Hemingway, Selected Letters, 1917-1961, published in 1981, has brought to light, albeit somewhat obscurely.

In a letter to Perkins, dated July 8, 1942, Hemingway notes (Baker, p. 534):

"I am awfully happy that you are going to publish Alden Brooks's book. It sounded very good to me when he told me about it in Tucson."

What Baker fails to add in his footnote to this passage is that Brooks appears to have been instrumental in converting Hemingway from an unquestioning Stratfordian to a sympathizer in efforts to separate truth from falsehood in the matter of the Shakespeare authorship.

- \* Bronson Feldman, another Pennsylvania-based Oxfordian, points out that while Brooks's privately-published Will Shakspeare: Agent and Factotum, the bulk of which Brooks re-issued in Will Shakespeare and the Dyer's Hand, provides the best description of the Stratford man that we have, the weaknesses in Brooks's theory that Sir Edward Dyer was "Shakespeare" have caused that theory to attract few adherents and to produce neither books nor organizations which uphold the view. Feldman believes that Charles Wisner Barrell's penetrating critique of Brooks's second book (see Barrell's "King of Shreds and Patches" in The Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter, April, 1943) literally demolished Brooks's hypothesis.

- \* Mrs. Vern Messner, of Cleveland, sent us copies of articles from past periodicals which represent contributions to the history of the Oxford case in America. We will feature these articles in future issues of the Newsletter. We are happy to report, too, that Mrs. Messner is considering writing a sketch of the life of Ann Vavasor and we hope Oxfordians will encourage her to fill this important gap in our scholarship.

#### SOS Wants You

The Shakespeare Oxford Society  
P.O. Box 16254  
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

- \* Ruth Miller, of Jennings, La., will address The Heraldry Society of London on Wednesday, March 24, at 6:30 p.m., at The Society of Antiquaries in Burlington House, on the subject: "The Shields and Achievements of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford, and the de Veres, through some 300 years of English history, and the Arms of the families with whom they were aligned through marriage, once depicted in stained glass in the clere-story windows of the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Lavenham, Suffolk." The talk, to be repeated for The Heraldry Society of Suffolk, will be illustrated with 108 transparencies of the Shields and Achievements of Arms. Mrs. Miller, with the help of Captain Cooper, of England, and a Louisiana artist, reconstructed the designs from descriptions of them in the collections of The Society of Antiquaries. Mrs. Miller will be accompanied on this trip to England by Judge Miller, John and Barbara Crowley and Richard and Jane Roe, Oxfordians from Pasadena, and Dr. George Karam of Birmingham, Alabama. While in England, the Millers and their party will attend "An Evening of Poetry, Prose, and Music" by Mrs. Olga Ironsidedwood, an Oxfordian in Suffolk, and Ronald Blythe, a Suffolk-based critic and writer. The "Evening," to be held in the chapel which now houses the de Vere tombs, is to honor Colonel and Mrs. Probert and Judge and Mrs. Miller. Poems by the Earl of Surrey (Oxford's uncle), the Earl of Oxford, and William Shakespeare are to be read.

- \* Harold Patience, our veritable propagandist in Essex, reports that a regional magazine, Essex Countryside, has reprinted an article of his on the Earl of Oxford under the title, "Castle Hedingham Was His Ancestral Home," in its issue for December, 1981. Mr. Patience writes that he hopes that Essex Countryside will publish an article by Mrs. Messner and, also, that he is trying to locate an English publisher for Mrs. Messner's fine Oxfordian novel, Absent Thee From Felicity.

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# Newsletter *Shakespeare Oxford Society*

*Vero Nihil Verius*

SPRING, 1982

Vol. 18, No. 2

Abraham Bronson Feldman

1914-1982

Dr. Bronson Feldman died of a heart attack in Elkins Park, Pa. on February 19, 1982. He was 68 years old. He had been a convinced Oxfordian for more than 50 of those years, having been persuaded by the arguments of J. Thomas Looney's Shakespeare Identified while still attending Central High School in Philadelphia. He was then ambitious to become a poet and playwright and, in fact, a tragedy he wrote as a teenager, a tragedy with the U.S. Civil War as its background, was produced in the South Philadelphia neighborhood where he had been born and raised by his Russian-Jewish parents. Later, he published poems in Poet Lore, The American Poet, and other literary periodicals.

It is not surprising that, with these youthful ambitions, he fell under the spell of Shakespeare. But it was his extraordinary analytic intelligence which led him early to doubt the Stratford fraud, as he always called it, and to go in search of the true author. It was characteristic of him that he pursued this search by devouring all the available literature on the Shakespeare authorship question. It is a tribute to Looney that this keen and skeptical intellect was satisfied by the arguments for Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford. Feldman's conviction that Looney was right never wavered in those more than 50 years, though he willingly listened to the opposition and publicly debated various pundits on the question, demolishing all challengers with his learning, wit, and integrity.

His first published contribution to the Oxford case was "Shakespeare's Jester--Oxford's Servant" in The Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly for Autumn, 1947 (reprinted in this issue of the Newsletter). He devoted much time and energy to the

cause by forming a Philadelphia branch of The Shakespeare Fellowship. He also arranged for Charles Wisner Barrell to lecture on Oxford and the Shakespeare authorship question in Philadelphia. He cherished fond memories of that lecture, telling me years later of how much he enjoyed watching Barrell dazzle the professional Stratfordians in the audience with facts, while Gelett Burgess, the humorist, who had accompanied Barrell from New York for the lecture, took swigs of whiskey from a flask and silenced the local professors with barbs of sarcasm and hoots of laughter. When, in 1977, Feldman came to send his most thorough Oxfordian study yet published, Hamlet Himself, to the printer, he set this dedicatory seal on it: "To remembrance of Gelett Burgess, Whose immortality was thrust upon him by admirers of 'The Purple Cow,' Bromides and Blurbs, but who wanted to be known as the merriest of American champions of the Shakespeare-Oxford doctrine, and Charles Wisner Barrell, The greatest American scholar, researcher and discoverer in the dramatic empire of Shakespeare." It should be noted that Feldman paid a high price for his devotion to these men and the cause he shared with them: after Barrell's lecture, Temple University chose not to renew Feldman's teaching contract and the "letters of recommendation" which circulated from Temple ridiculed and attacked Feldman as an Oxfordian, a follower of Looney, and a "trouble-maker." Feldman never found another teaching post with any English department, though he had earned the Ph.D. in Tudor Drama from the University of Pennsylvania, then one of the most demanding and prestigious English faculties in the country. This blow fell when he was a young instructor, beginning his career, married to his wife, Jeanette, and with a growing family

At about the time when The Shakespeare Fellowship dissolved and its organ ceased publication, Feldman was training to become a psychoanalyst, studying with Théodore Reik, a disciple of Freud. Eventually, Feldman wrote psychoanalytic studies of Shakespeare, studies which identified "Shakespeare" with Edward de Vere, and published these studies in such highly respected journals as the International Journal of Psychoanalysis, The Psychoanalytic Review, and The American Imago. There are those Oxfordians who object to the psychoanalytic method, but it should be realized that when the Oxford movement had seemingly come to a standstill, Feldman was preaching the Oxfordian gospel to a highly literate, if specialized, audience. And if some Oxfordians object to Freudianism, there were Freudians, anxious to become respectable and profitable, who did not relish hearing psychoanalysis linked to the Oxfordian heresy, despite Freud's leaning in Looney's direction. Worse, Stratfordian critics who had found in Freud a tool for analyzing literary works and forwarding their own careers, used that tool as a weapon against Feldman, arguing--without troubling about the facts--that Feldman slavishly followed his master, Freud, where wiser Freudians feared to tread. (For samples of the low level of these attacks see Professor Norman N. Holland's Psychoanalysis & Shakespeare.) These attacks hurt Feldman, not because they presented any real challenge to his position, but because they constituted evidence of the cowardly and opportunistic nature of the academic mind in our time. His attempts to answer these attacks and set the record straight, of course, went unpublished.

Feldman worked as an English instructor at Temple University, as the first curator of the Dearborn (Michigan) Historical Museum, as archivist for the City of Philadelphia (where he gathered evidence of the cowardly and opportunistic nature of the bureaucratic mind in our time), and then as a psychoanalyst with a private practice. I have had the pleasure of knowing some of Feldman's former patients and they attest to the good he did as a healer, using only words and wit, his sense of humor and his sense of honor, to lead patients to heal themselves. I may add that he had this same healing effect in personal relationships; the world seemed a better place to be because he was in it. He was always an

outspoken opponent of the barbarity of treating mentally ill patients with drugs, knives, and electrodes. He also outspokenly opposed those fellow members of his profession who sold their services to the State in any of its multitudinous and malicious forms, from the Pentagon to Madison Avenue. He held that psychoanalysis was a way for men and women to become free and therefore should not be used to help those who would bamboozle or enslave the race.

When the Community College of Philadelphia opened in 1965, Feldman joined the faculty as a member of the history department. He taught World Civilization, American History, and a course of his own devising, Democracy and Revolution. (The way he taught World Civilization, that course, too, was a course of his own devising. He assigned no textbooks, but supplemented H.G. Wells's Outline of History with a wide range of readings from the library. His purpose, always, was to train and encourage serious researchers.) It was as a student at Community College of Philadelphia that I met Dr. Feldman, soon known to me, and innumerable others, simply as "Doc," and it was through him that Looney's book came into my hands.

I wish I could make you see him as he was when we first met. I remember a full classroom, the students growing restless because the teacher was a little late. Suddenly, the door burst open. A man who looked older than his years entered and strode briskly to a chair and sat down. He was bald. The fringe of hair circling his impressive head was graying. He wore a goatee which came to a point in the Elizabethan style. The goatee, too, was graying. A black bow tie, sent askew in the rush to get to class, peeped around from either side of the goatee. A gray sharkskin suit hung loosely from his slightly awkward but powerful frame. His gray Hushpuppies formed a large V on the floor beneath his table. The long and white fingers of his left hand curled around his chin, his broad shoulders hunched, and he surveyed his new students as if he were amused, the warm and alert eyes smiling through his bifocals, the

eyebrows arched. "You have before you a drop-out," he said, "who is paid to tell you horror stories which we call history." He sighed audibly and rose from his chair. "We all just love horror stories, don't we?" he queried, spreading his arms out wide and turning his palms up as if checking for rain. "Of course we do," he answered his own question. "If we didn't, they'd stop." I hope this gives you some idea of his spirit. It was the same spirit which rang out at the fourth national conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society when Feldman told Louis Marder, the orthodox Shakespearean scholar, "Louie, I hate to see intelligent men like yourself waste their talents on service to a corrupt cause." He struck some people as fierce and harsh, but he was a gentle man, so gentle that his love of justice and his devotion to humanity at times drove him to what appeared to be harshness.

He retired from teaching, because of his health, in 1979. In a burst of energy, drawing on notes he had painstakingly gathered for decades, he wrote what will no doubt be his greatest contribution to the Oxford cause, Early Shakespeare, a study of Shakespeare's earliest plays and poems which was described in the Fall-Winter issue of the Newsletter. During retirement, too, he issued a privately-circulated, research-oriented newsletter entitled Crowners Quest, dealing with various aspects of the Oxford case. And he had plans for more Oxfordian work. He had hoped to follow Early Shakespeare with a sequel, Shakespeare Ripening. What he had in fact beautifully imagined was a three-volume set which would analyze Shakespeare's complete works in the order of their composition from the vantage point of the Oxford theory.

This has been difficult for me to write. I wanted to limit myself, here, to a consideration of Bronson Feldman as an Oxfordian. But he was much more than that and I have not been able to suppress totally the impulse to tell his story fully. Because he was my teacher and my friend, I am well aware of how much more than just an Oxfordian he was. I know that as a teacher and

psychoanalyst he touched many, many people, inspiring them to be the best they could be. I know of his non-Oxfordian writings, his pioneering book, The Unconscious in History, the first serious attempt to apply Freud's theories to history, and his outspokenly critical biography of one of our century's mass murderers, Stalin: Red Lord of Russia. I know that he was the best of those few American historians who have taken seriously the revision of the chronology of the ancient world suggested by Immanuel Velikovsky and that Feldman's articles in this field spread light where there once was darkness. I know of his passionate Biblical studies and his writings on the history of the Jews and his deep concern over the fate of Israel, which was for him an index to the fate of civilization. I know of his joy in James Joyce's works, of how deeply moved he was by the films of Kurosawa, particularly Ikiru, of his love for Handel and Charlie Chaplin, ice cream and the novels of David Graham Phillips. I know, more, that everything he did, everything he said, everything he wrote, was aimed as an attack on the "brutalitarrians," as he called them, of our time, those self-styled makers of history who would make of the earth a prison and a death camp. He was always striving to clear the ground for a future of peace and plenty, health and happiness. His death represents an irreplaceable loss, not only for those of us who were lucky enough to have known him and loved him, but for the world at large, whether the world is aware of that fact or not.

W.H.

#### Shakespeare's Jester--Oxford's Servant

by

Abraham Feldman

(Note: Reprinted from The Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly, Autumn, 1947)

In Shakespeare's First Folio, under the caption of "The Names of the Principall Actors in all of these Playes," appears the name of Robert Armin. From various

sources, including his own published writings, Armin is known to have been one of the outstanding comedians of the period. Beginning as a protege of the famous Dick Tarleton some few years before the death of that low-comedy genius in 1588, Armin had become a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Players by 1598, continuing with the same group after it passed under the patronage of James First as the King's Men. He therefore participated in the production or revival of many of the great "Comedies, Histories and Tragedies." The Editors of the Quarterly take pride in presenting Mr. Abraham Feldman's summing up of the heretofore neglected evidence which shows Robert Armin as the self-admitted servant of the playwright Earl of Oxford at the same time that he is known to have been a member of "Shakespeare's Company." Mr. Feldman's discovery is an important one, adding one more illuminating fact to Elizabethan stage and literary history. It is safe to say that this would never have come about, however, unless this talented instructor in English had been open-minded enough to act upon evidence previously published in these pages proving Oxford to be the true "Lord Chamberlain" of Elizabethan theatrical fame. The dynamic value of our Oxford-Shakespeare research is thus once more triumphantly corroborated. It can also be stated that without the Quarterly to give these facts permanence, they would all still be slumbering in manuscript, much to the satisfaction of the editorial group whose past and future is devoted to the maintenance of the inviolability of the Stratford myths and conjectures. We have known for some time that the so-called "scholarly" journals both in this country and Great Britain blacklist all writers devoted to any angle of the Oxford-Shakespeare case, and that their reviewers and commentators receive definite instructions never to mention the 17th Earl of Oxford except in a derogatory way. Evidently convinced that their livelihood as English literary "experts" may be jeopardized if any fundamental truth of the great Earl's actual relationship to the development of dramatic art in his age were to be widely accepted, they take pains to see that the pages of no publication over which they may be able to exert influence are opened to any forthright and logical discussion along such lines. The

deplorable dullness, triviality and childish lack of logic that permeates the standardized Shakespearean "research" of all such "scholarly" periodicals is, meanwhile, one of the main reasons why English literary history has fallen to its present low estate. No one is to be allowed to express an opinion about the greatest creative personality the race has produced unless he agrees beforehand to accept the approved myths and patent perversions of circumstance upon which these self-appointed lawgivers have set their seal. Of course they have a definite stake in the maintenance of such a condition. It is to be found in the hundreds of books already put into print by the brotherhood, many of which are required reading now in English classes throughout the world. The value of all such works would be materially lessened if Oxford were ever to become known as the real man behind the long-apparent camouflage of the Stratford wall memorial, the Jonson double-talk, the over-painted portraits, etc. So we were not surprised to learn that Mr. Feldman's paper was curtly rejected by two of the best-known scholarly journals here and in England before it gravitated to us. The excuse given by the British review was the familiar one of "lack of paper," while the American university publishers of one of the more pretentious quarterlies devoted to "English literary history" returned it to the author with alacrity "upon the advice of our drama editor." Meanwhile, we are the gainers by an article that will be referred to by all honest historians of the Elizabethan stage in the years to come. Mr. Feldman has contributed several notable papers to the Classical Journal and, among other poetical ventures, recently published a brief but striking tribute to Rabelais in Poet Lore.

Charles Wisner Barrell

Robert Armin merited the tribute of Professor Baldwin of Illinois who called the philosophical clown "Shakespeare's Jester." (T.W. Baldwin, "Shakespeare's Jester," Modern Language Notes, XXXIX, December 1924). The character of Armin as revealed in his scarce scriptures and extolled by John Davies of Hereford in The Scourge of



Folly (1610) appears to have been marked by fate for the roles of Touchstone, Cleopatra's Clown and King Lear's Fool. All lovers of Shakespeare are sure to love Robin Armin and sue to know him better. Every admirer of Edward de Vere will be delighted to learn that "Shakespeare's Jester" was also the avowed servant of the Earl of Oxford, whom Francis Meres in his Wit's Treasury (1598) named first of "The best for comedy among us."

The connexion between Oxford and Armin was discovered in a very rare quarto entitled "Quips Upon Questions, or, A Clownes conceits on occasion offered, bewraying a morrallised metamorphoses of changes upon interrogatories: shewing a little wit, with a great deale of will; or in deed, more desirous to please in it, then to profite by it.

"Clapt up by a Clowne of the towne in this last restraint, having little else to doe, to make a little use of his fickle Muse, and careless of carping.

"By Clunnyco de Curtanio Snuffe.

"Like as you list, read on and spare not, Clownes iudge like Clownes, therefore I care not.

"Or thus,

"Floute me, Ile floute thee: it is my profession,  
To iest at a Iester, in his transgression.

"Imprinted at London for W. Ferbrand, and are to be sold at the signe of the Crowne over against the Mayden head near Yeldhall, 1600." (Through the courtesy of Dr. Giles E. Dawson of the Folger Shakespeare Library I was able to study the copy of these Quips once owned by John Payne Collier.)

Quips Upon Questions was reprinted in 1875 by Frederic Ouvry, with the name of John Singer on the title-page, because Ouvry had been convinced by the jocose J.P. Collier that Singer, the buffoon of the Lord Admiral's company, was "Clunnyco de Curtanio Snuffe." (Most of Joseph Knight's article on John Singer in the Dictionary of National Biography, XVIII, 312, is concerned with Quips Upon Questions. Knight observed, "The ascription of this work to Singer, probable enough from internal evidence,

rests upon the unsupported authority of Collier." What internal evidence Knight had in mind remains enigmatic.) Collier believed that the Admiral's men were playing at the Curtain theater in 1600. It is now well known, they were performing in that year at the Rose and the Fortune. (Joseph Quincy Adams, Shakespearian Play-houses, Boston: Houghton, 1917, pp. 156-157). Equally well established is the identity of the Clown of the Curtain with Robert Armin. (Baldwin, op. cit., p. 447. E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923, II, 300). For "Clonnico de Curtanio Snuffe" appeared on the title-page of the popular treatise, Foole Upon Foole, or Six Sortes of Sottes, also published in 1600 by William Ferbrand, and this treatise is unquestionably the work of Armin, the jester of the Lord Chamberlain's company. (Alexander B. Grosart, editor, The Works of Robert Armin, Actor, London: privately printed, 1880, Part I).

When Professor Baldwin credited Armin with the writing of Quips Upon Questions he had not seen the book. He said that it "should be carefully examined for further biographic detail." (Baldwin, op. cit., 447 n.) If he had scrutinised the 24 leaves of the volume he might have urged examination of it not only for facts of the life of Armin but for revelations of Tudor theatrical history. Sir Edmund Chambers surveyed the Quips and found a single detail which he thought worthy of inclusion in his biography of the comedian in The Elizabethan Stage: "The author serves a master at Hackney." (Chambers, loc. cit.) Unfortunately Sir Edmund left the remark without commentary. Yet it held the clew to several major riddles that have perplexed historians of Shakespearean drama. The passage from which the item was derived occurs in Armin's mock-dedication of the Quips to "Sir Timothy Trunchion alias Bastinado," whose aid the humorist requires against victims of his wit who may be scheming to ambush him. Our Robin wanted the weapon particularly for Tuesday, 25 December 1599. (The date is determined by the reference to Friday in the mock-dedication as 28 December.) For "On Tuesday I take my



Torney (to waite on the right Honourable good Lord my Maister whom I serve) to Hackney." (Quips Upon Questions, Ouvry's edition, Alj.)

Since the Lord Chamberlain's players were in possession of the Globe before September 1599 (Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 85), Professor Baldwin surmised that Armin was showing his quality at the Curtain in December in the service of another Lord. William Brydges, Baron Chandos, is known to have employed Armin some time between 21 February 1594, when he succeeded to the title, and 4 August 1600, when the Stationers registered the Second Part of Tarleton's Jests which announced that Robin was exhilarating the Globe. (Armin's prefatory letter to Gilbert Dugdale's True Discourse on the Poisoning of Thomas Caldwell, 1604, appeals to Mary Chandos, Lord William's widow, to remember the actor's "service to your late deceased kind lord." In Foole Upon Foole Armin told how he and the "Lord Shandoyes players" had wandered in Worcestershire.) But Professor Baldwin's conjecture that Armin went in motley for Lord Chandos at the Curtain in 1599-1600 seems to contradict our present knowledge of that nobleman's actors. There is no testimony extant that they ever performed in London; all records of their exhibitions deal with provincial tours. (John Tucker Murray, English Dramatic Companies, London: Constable and Company, 1910, II, 32). Moreover, if Armin's master when the Quips were composed had been Lord Chandos, the jester would have journeyed to wait on him at Sudeley Castle, far from Hackney.

Sir Edmund Chambers maintained that the Curtain was occupied by the Lord Chamberlain's troupe in 1599. (Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, 403) His argument has not been disputed. When Guilpin's Skialetheia (S.R.--8 September 1598) reported the playing of Plautus and "the pathetic Spaniard" at the Rose and the Curtain, the two leading companies of London were the Admiral's and the Chamberlain's. Marston's Scourge of Villainy (1598) connected the popularity of Romeo and Juliet, a triumph of the Chamberlain's men, with "Curtain plaudities." The fact that the latter were active at the Globe in the autumn of 1599 does not exclude the likelihood of their use of the Curtain. Before they moved to the Globe they had possessed James Burbage's Theater, and strained its resources to a

point where they were compelled to use the Curtain as an "easer." When Armin changed his nom de jeu to "Clonnico del Mondo Snuffe," in the 1605 edition of Foole Upon Foole, he clearly indicated that he played in the Chamberlain's dramas at the Globe the same roles that he capped and belled for them at the Curtain.

The nobleman whom Armin called "the right Honourable good Lord my Maister" could not have been George Carey, Baron Hunsdon, who is generally regarded as the patron of the Shakespeare troupe in 1599-1600. Hunsdon held the office of Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household from April 1597 to December 1602. (E. K. Chambers, "The Elizabethan Lords Chamberlain," Malone Society Collections, London, 1911, I, 39. The chronology of the Queen's Chamberlains in the present essay is taken from the same model study, page 39.) During those years he lived in the Blackfriars precinct of London, never in the suburb of Hackney. As a resident of Blackfriars, in November, 1596, he signed a petition to the Privy Council against the design of James Burbage for the restoration of the theater which had once dazzled there under the direction of John Lyly and the Earl of Oxford. (Ashley H. Thorndike, Shakespeare's Theater, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916, pp. 333-335.) Although Hunsdon was nominally in charge of the royal entertainments, there is nothing to prove that he was an encourager of the stage of Shakespeare. Nashe's dedication of Christ's Tears over Jerusalem (1594) to Hunsdon's daughter gives the impression that the house of Carey offered cold comfort to devotees of cakes, ale and comedies. Henry Carey, the first Lord Hunsdon, who had served Elizabeth as Chamberlain from June 1583 until July 1596, was friendlier to mummers. "He lacked most of the literary culture of his class," (Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, IV, 316) but extended protection to the actors who wore his livery at the Cross Keys inn during October 1594 when the Puritan magnates of the city persecuted them. (Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, IV, 316) Between 1578 and 1583 old Lord Henry did maintain a household in Hackney, at King's Place. But Robert Armin was then only a goldsmith's apprentice.

There was but one literary nobleman dwelling in Hackney when Armin was master of motley at the Curtain. Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the Lord Great Chamberlain of England, transferred his home to King's Place, Hackney, from Stoke Newington in 1596. (B. M. Ward, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, London: John Murray, 1928, p. 319.) Seven years before, this courtier, poet and dramatist had fallen in disgrace with fortune and men's tongues as a result of political and extra-marital scandals. His fortune improved by marriage with the maid of honour Elizabeth Trentham, but he never dispelled the shadows on his name. The curious way in which Armin alluded to him in the Quips, evading mention of his master's title, was not unusual. In March 1603 Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, spoke of him in the same circumlocutory way to Sir John Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower. He told Peyton, according to a letter of the Lieutenant,

he had been invyted...by a great noble man to hacney, where he was extraordinarily fested, at the which he muche marvayled, for that ther was no great correspondence between them, this noble man having precedence of hym in rancke (where by he towlde me I myght knowe him, ther being onely but one of that qualytye dwellying there.) (State Papers Domestic, 1603, quoted by Norreys Jephson O'Connor, Godes Peace and the Queenes, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934, p. 106.)

In the decade 1580-1590 a company of mummers led by the mercurial Duttons had toured the provinces wearing the livery of the brilliant Earl of Oxford. All trace of the troupe disappeared in the next nine years. Then in 1600 the anonymous drama called The Weakest Goeth to the Wall was printed--"As it hath been sundry times plaid by the right honourable Earle of Oxenford, Lord Great Chamberlain of England his servants" (so runs the title-page of the play's earliest extant copy, dated 1618). The lost tragedy of George Scanderbeg was registered by the Stationers in 1601 with a note that it had belonged to Oxford's men. (Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, II, 102). Is it possible that Armin joined the Earl's players after

leaving Lord Chandos's company and before entering the Lord Chamberlain's? In that case we would have to imagine our "Clonnico" with the Oxford troupe sharing the Curtain with the Chamberlain's men in 1599. The chronicles of the Elizabethan theater would indicate that the Earl's own actors never pretended to the grandeur of a house like the Curtain. A letter of the Privy Council of March 1602 addressed to the Lord Mayor of London, designates the tavern named "the Boar's Head as the place they have especially used and do best like of." (Ibid., IV, 335). Not until they united with the Earl of Worcester's players in the spring of 1602, we are told, did they venture to exhibit their quality on a grand stage, such as the Rose. When they performed at the Rose they were called Worcester's men, and William Kempe, formerly of the Chamberlain's company, was the star comedian. Armin's name is not associated in extant documentation with the Worcester group, only with the Chandos and Chamberlain companies. And contemporary allusions mark none but the Lord Chamberlain's servants as the receivers of Curtain plaudits when Armin flourished there.

How could our man of motley have served at the same time the melancholy Earl in Hackney and the Lord Chamberlain at the Curtain? That is the question.

The best answer that occurs to me is that "Lord Chamberlain" meant the Earl of Oxford (who was Lord Great Chamberlain of England) almost everywhere except perhaps at Court. Moreover, it is evident that acting groups were not invariably known by one patron's title, and that special casts were occasionally assembled from different troupes to fill special engagements. The opposition of the Puritan administration governing the City of London to theatrical affairs generally would also account for these otherwise mystifying changes in company names and switches in professional personnel. One thing is absolutely certain: standardization in the recorded designations of the various Elizabethan acting groups cannot be taken for granted. For example, as Lord Chamberlain of the Royal Household, Lord Hunsdon is assumed to have had the task of satisfying Her Majesty's predilection for drama. But it has yet to be proved

that either the first or second Lords Hunsdon organized the splendid cry of players who called themselves the "servants of the Lord Chamberlain." The company emerged to public light in 1594, to eclipse the Queen's own histrions; and Sir Edmund Chambers has declared that the interval of four or five years between the last available record of Lord Hunsdon's actors properly so called (at Maidstone in 1589-1590) and the emergence in 1594 "renders improbable any continuity" between the former band and the famous Chamberlain's group. (*Ibid.*, II, 193). The two Hunsdons as Chamberlains of the Royal Household ostensibly sponsored the company at Court. So did the aged Puritan, William Brooke, Lord Cobham, when he held the office of Her Majesty's Chamberlain after the first Hunsdon's death, from August 1596 to March 1597. Yet no scholar has depicted Cobham as a patron of the mummers who confused his martyred ancestor Oldcastle with Shakespeare's Falstaff in the mind of London. Both Cobham and the Hunsdon's must have heartily consented to the supervision of the company's personnel and productions by the histrionic Lord Chamberlain of England. Henry Carey's duties of military command on the Scottish border would not permit him much time for the rituals of Thalia and Thespis; his son George was severely ill during the final three years of the Tudor dynasty. The Earl of Oxford was thus the sole "Chamberlain" in the realm capable of directing the Shakespeare troupe.

The ambiguity of the title "Lord Chamberlain" was manifested in legal documents of the time. In a Chancery suit of claim by lease for the manor of Much Horneade the estate was called "the inheritance of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, lord chamberleyn." (Calendar of Proceedings in Chancery in the Reign of Elizabeth, vol. 1, p. 185.) In the correspondence of Robert Cecil, Lord Cranborne, there are several allusions to the "Lord Chamberlain" which appear to signify his brother-in-law, Earl Edward. There is a letter of 1 July 1603 by Mrs. Hicks, perhaps the wife of Cecil's private secretary, pleading for help in collecting money owed by "my Lord Chamberlain." The main security for the debt of this Chamberlain was an assignment of property at Castle Hedingham in Essex, the birthplace of Oxford. (Calendar

of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, XV, 164. The significance of this item and the preceding one was first indicated by Charles Wisner Barrell in "Lord Oxford as Supervising Patron of Shakespeare's Theatrical Company," Shakespeare Fellowship Quarterly, July 1944, V, 40.) When the mummers of Armin's company uttered the title of Lord Chamberlain they certainly meant the master in Hackney. Touchstone is the chief witness to the truth of this idea, with Quips Upon Questions. "Shakespeare's Jester" was Oxford's servant. So, indeed, was William himself.

Temple University Philadelphia, Penna.

#### Oxford's Sole Acrostic

by

Bronson Feldman

Let me commend for scholars' attention the pair of quatrains published in Brittons Bowre of Delights (1591) signed "Finis. Trentame." Nicholas Breton protested that he had nothing to do with the composition or collection of the volume. The name Trentame plainly identifies the writer, on the subject, of the rimes, Elizabeth Trentham, the royal Maid of Honor, who married Edward de Vere shortly after the Bower of Delights came from Richard Jones's press. The poem is the only acrostic that could be credited to the Earl of Oxford.

Time made a stay when highest powers  
wrought,  
Regard of loue where vertue had her  
grace,  
Excellence rare of euerie beautie  
sought,  
Notes of the heart where honour had  
her place,  
Tried by the touch of most approued  
truth,  
A worthie Saint to serue a heauenly  
Queene,  
More faire then she that was the fame  
of youth,  
Except but one, the like was neuer  
seene.

The reservation phrase in the final line is just what might have been expected

from the playful "madcap" Earl of Oxford.

Note: This is excerpted from "The Secret Verses of Edward de Vere," the article which Dr. Feldman recently prepared and submitted to Studies in Philology in an attempt to expand the collection of De Vere poems issued by Stephen May in that journal. It is to be hoped that the article in its entirety will eventually appear elsewhere. W.H.

### Shakespeare Worship

by

Bronson Feldman

(Reprinted from Psychoanalysis, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1953)

For three hundred years a religion centering in the popular image of William Shakespeare, Gent., of Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, has enjoyed ever increasing fidelity. The existence of the cult was first publicly acknowledged by Ben Jonson (about 1630), who jealously observed that the actors of London adored the gentleman from Stratford despite the criticism of Jonson and his classical friends. To protect himself against the charge of envy, the critic vowed that he had loved the man Shakespeare and honored his memory, "this side idolatry, as much as any." We have too little knowledge of the forms taken by the idolatry at this time. A century had to pass before it emerged into national light, in full panoply of dogma, ritual, and shrine. Babcock's Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry shows how it survived the rationalist period, and triumphed over it. But there has yet been no investigation of Shakespeare worship as a variety of religious experience, as an enigma of psychology.

The primary rationalization used to account for the international devotion to the divinity of the Avon is that people everywhere deeply appreciate his services to drama and world art. This claim cannot be taken seriously. If the hundreds of thousands of people who travel annually to Stratford were actually lovers of Shakespeare's work, there would be a greater interest in the production of his plays in their communities. They would moreover manifest an almost equal passion for the literature of his companions in literature, the great dramatists of his own time and those of prior and sequent

times. The fact is, the worshipers of Shakespeare care less for poetry than they do for the theatre. And the better educated among them seldom know more of his work than a handful of trite quotations, usually remembered out of context, and occasionally distorted in a grotesque way. It is no accident that most of the plays of Shakespeare's prime survive off the stage, and are rarely read outside the experts' libraries. Few of his devotees have looked into his Measure for Measure, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens--to mention just three examples--with any desire to do more than look. We cannot help noticing that the upholders of the cult stalwartly resent any reminder of their ignorance. Ordinarily they will admit with cheer, as one Hunter did in a volume on the Tercentenary Festival of Shakespeare at Stratford, that their understanding of the writer is limited and superficial. They find a mysterious bliss in the ignorance, and many would echo Hunter's avowal: "But from what I do know of his works, I can say with all due reverence, blessed be God for Shakespeare." What they do know of his works never leads them to any examination of the question of the poet's attitude to God, piety and skepticism, which perplexes so many of the learned in his plays. When they bless God for Shakespeare they have something else than literature on their hands. Could it be the personality behind his plays that fascinates and humbles them?

Brown and Fearon (This Shakespeare Industry) think that the reason for Shakespeare's legion of religious followers lies in the fact that his name has been "dinned into the general ear as one of the best and noblest of Englishmen." This, of course, would not explain why the name rings sweetly to the ears of Germans, Russians, Irishmen, and other nationalities not reputed for reverence of Englishmen. Besides, the argument is simply untrue so far as England is concerned. The general ear of that country has been dinned for ages by legends of Shakespeare's ignobility and sins. Every biography of the god dwells on the tales of his deer-thieving and venereal adventures, reports how he persecuted debtors for pence, hoarded grain during time of famine, and schemed to

get a coat of arms on false pretense. Every revelation since the great researcher Halliwell-Phillipps uncovered the main facts of his life that we now possess has only served to intensify the uneasiness that all worshipers of Shakespeare feel in the study of his character. Certain scholars have openly confessed a feeling of gladness over their ignorance of his personality. The late Horace Furness, editor of the monumental Variorum edition of Shakespeare's works, referred to one evidence of academic nescience about the dramatist as "another happy instance of our utter ignorance of Shakespeare's mortal life." Most of the books alleged to be biographies of the Stratford idol are made up of laborious speculation, and not a few of them are mere fictions. Witness the portrayals of Shakespeare as a country schoolmaster, a rural tragedian, a nobleman's page, a law student, a soldier, etc. Not one of these pictures bears a single fact to support it. Mark Twain compared the lives of Shakespeare that he read to reconstructions of prehistoric monsters--a small quantity of bones and a huge fabrication of plaster, two or three paragraphs of authentic statement and heaps of pages of pure fantasy. Attempts to deduce the personality of the poet from his writings, such as Frank Harris made in his "Tragic Life-Story" of The Man Shakespeare and Georg Brandes in his larger but hardly more illuminating book on the Bard, have not won favor in the eyes of Shakespeare worshipers, whether erudite or not.

It appears that the upholders of the cult do not want to know the truth about their deity. Dearer to them than any fact of his earthly career is a vial of water from the Avon or a splinter from the mulberry tree he is said to have planted by his home. The waters of Stratford's river, according to Brown and Fearon, "are deemed so holy that American Shakespeareans will actually send for bottles of this magic fluid, believing it to be an elixir." As for the famous mulberry tree, Washington Irving declared that so many articles of furniture and relics have been manufactured from it that the tree "seems to have as extraordinary powers of self-multiplication as the wood of the true Cross."

In the reverence for relics like the Avon water-bottles and the mulberry commodities we

recognize the signs of real religion, which abhors researches into the terrestrial activities of the individuals it adores. The spirit of it glows in the verses that O. W. Holmes wrote for the dedication of the fountain erected at Stratford in honor of Shakespeare by an American millionaire. In eighty-odd lines of rapture Holmes extolled "This holy fount, whose rills from heaven descend," and put its "baptismal dew" in the same class with "Horeb's rock the God of Israel clave!"

In the same spirit, but with less gravity, David Garrick hailed the Jubilee for "Avonian Willy, bard Divine," held at Stratford in 1769. His friend James Boswell deplored the omission of theological exercises from that event. He "wished that prayers had been read or a short sermon preached. It would have consecrated our Jubilee," he said, "while gratefully addressing the supreme Father of all Spirits, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift." There was no regret over the failure to play any of Shakespeare's works at the festival. Garrick called the dramatist "the God of my Idolatry", but his piety did not prevent him from acting versions of the plays which Shakespeare would not have recognized. It was not the work that Garrick idolized. Nor was it the man. It was a spirit, a creature of his own imagination, the projection of his ego ideal. Because this ideal was essentially identical with the statue erected in the unconscious vanity of his fellow Englishmen, Garrick's god became the god of all men who shared the secret aspirations of the English. I say secret, for if the faithful were conscious of the aspirations that lead them to worship Shakespeare, they would not account for their religion by rationalizations.

It is the remoteness from reason that makes the prevalent attitude to Shakespeare one of piety, of faith. If the believers became aware of the real motives of their cult they might recoil in shame, disgust or horror, as Henry James suspected when he probed the Shakespeare myth in his little masterpiece "The Birthplace." The

chief psychologist among American men of fiction once declared that he was "haunted by the conviction that the divine William is the biggest and most successful fraud ever practiced on a patient world." He expressed part of his sentiments about the divinity in "The Birthplace," while scrupulously refraining from taking the name of the dramatist in vain. The name Shakespeare never appears in his story, only pronouns of capital awe, like He and Him and His.

James also employed the phrase "the Presence" to indicate his story's central figure, its ghost. Nobody can mistake it; he defines the birthplace itself as a national shrine, revered by the hero, a librarian, as "the most sacred known to the steps of man, the early home of the supreme poet, the Mecca of the English-speaking race." These words practically echo the expression of the actor Henry Irving at the dedication of the American memorial fountain in Stratford, where he asserted that "The simplest records of Stratford show that this is the Mecca of American pilgrims...." James depicted his librarian as a gentleman afflicted with a profound desire to know the human nature of Shakespeare, not content with adoration of his divinity. Appointed curator of the national shrine, he prowls its rooms by night, seeking some spiritual contact with the man whom his employers supposed had been born there. Like Delia Bacon, the American lady who roused the first big controversy over the question of the actual authorship of the Shakespeare poetry, James's hero hunts a ghost. The curator also goes nearly insane with questing for the personality behind the myth. He is bothered by the way his pilgrim customers regard the "Birthplace," ignorant of the bare facts about the building, and jealously shielding their ignorance against the light he ventures to give. The librarian soon realizes that not a single particle of proof exists to show that the building celebrated as the native house of Shakespeare was in truth his birthplace. He is aware that scholars have exhumed documents showing that the idol was probably born elsewhere. Nevertheless he is paid, and admonished by his government

paymasters, to teach the travelers to the British Mecca that here indeed the supreme dramatist of the race first opened his eyes on the world. The poor bookworm is duty-bound to display to the pilgrims the very room of the blessed event. "The Holy of Holies of the Birthplace," James records, "was the low, the sublime Chamber of Birth, sublime because, as the Americans usually said--unlike the natives they mostly found words--it was so pathetic." A good deal of the pathos consisted in the sheer emptiness of the chamber, James points out. For it remains empty, except for the alleged "Fact."

To satisfy the doubting Thomases among the pilgrims, the owners of the shrine had filled the building with a multitude of things more or less pertaining to the poet, mainly irrelevance and swindle. The librarian's soul is sickened by it all. "None of them care tuppence about Him," he is confident. "The only thing they care about is this empty shell--or rather, for it isn't empty, the extraneous preposterous stuffing of it." But what was the secret of the shell? That is the question he tormented himself with on his nights of insomnia walking around the sacred place. What aroused the genuine religious emotion in the hosts of visitors who paid the admission price? What had inspired the "Princess of Stuart and Plantagenet blood, destined to wear an imperial crown," as the French ambassador Jusserand wrote, to fall on her knees at the threshold of the house?

According to James, or rather his librarian, "What they all most wanted was to feel that everything was 'just as it was,' when the god was born, that is, lowly and poor. In short, the pilgrims were seeking a modern embodiment of the sacred manger of Bethlehem, and were moved by an impulse similar to the passion of the faithful at the so-called birthplace of Christ.

Why Shakespeare should be uplifted to a position next to Christ in the fantasy of the tourists at Stratford, James does not or can not explain. He seems to be more concerned with the blasphemy implicit in the English Mecca. He can hardly hide his



indignation over the intellectual oppression of his hero, the administrative demand that the curator tell his audience infantile religious lies. "They insisted on your committing yourself. It was the pound of flesh." The parallel James makes between the curator's wage-contract and Shylock's bond in The Merchant of Venice bears oblique testimony to the novelist's conviction that the Stratford idolatry was somehow an insult to Christianity.

Yet James, too, links Shakespeare with Christ, having in mind the artist himself, the genius, whose creations help to enlighten and liberate mankind from brutality and darkness. "There was somebody," a live man, who worked out the Shakespeare poems and plays, James makes his hero remark toward the end of the tale. "But They've killed Him." The philistines, the enemies of genius, the profiteers from superstition, crucified him. "And, dead as He is, They keep it up, They do it over again, They kill Him every day."

This interpretation of the myth by another great artist has naturally not appealed to the majority of critics and collegiate commentators on Shakespeare. Against the ironies of the artists who write about the Stratford cult, against Irving, Coleridge, Emerson, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Henry James, the uncreative raise an outcry for...facts. They seek to silence the iconoclasts by demanding facts. Meanwhile they continue sedulously circulating their folklore.

The genius of James, I believe, hit on the primary key to the comprehension of the Shakespeare creed, when he stressed the flagrantly commercial nature of the "Birthplace." It reminds one of the American fashion of lauding Christ as the world's supreme salesman or advertiser or entrepreneur. In precisely the same spirit biographers of Shakespeare glorify him as a gentleman of trade, a genius in finance. J. M. Robertson felt sure that the poet had "a personality which, of itself, if under no pressure of pecuniary need, would not be likely to give the world any serious sign of mental capacity whatever." Professor Hazelton Spencer, however, voiced the popular opinion, stating that in the soul of Shakespeare, in some uncanny manner, the pursuit of beauty and the pursuit of money were musically reconciled. Brandes had no doubt that the divine William

lacked the generosity which the world commonly thinks an ingredient of great poets: "His was certainly not one of those artist-natures that are free-handed with money when they have it, and confer benefits with good-natured carelessness. He was a competent, energetic business man, who spared and saved in order to gain an independence...." Brandes saw not the least contradiction between the mind that created The Merchant of Venice and Timon of Athens and the mind that hounded Stratford artisans for petty debts. "The instinct of his soul," says Brandes, "which never suffered him to stop or pause, but forced him from one great intellectual achievement to another, restlessly onward from masterpiece to masterpiece--the fierce instinct, with its inevitable egoism, which led him in his youth to desert his family, in his maturity to amass property without any tenderness for his debtors, and per fas et nefas (by hook or by crook: Latin by B., English, F.) to attain his modest patent for gentility--this instinct enables him to understand and feel that passion for power which defies and tramples upon every scruple." In other words, Shakespeare learnt how to utter the souls of scoundrels, not by unconscious identification of his unconscious evil wishes with theirs, but by acting like a scoundrel himself. He could paint a Shylock vividly because he was a usurer, too.

This astonishing conception of the poet is also cherished by the "dialectical materialists" of Russia (for instance, A. Smirnov), who picture Shakespeare as a big bold bourgeois, naturally a revolutionary or progressive, who repulses Shylock only because the Jew carries usury too far. Smirnov thinks that Shakespeare preferred profit to interest. He has no patience with the old Marxist notion (defended by Franz Mehring) that the dramatist represented the young court nobility of his time, who were victimized by the mercantile and financial bourgeoisie. The "dialectical materialist," together with the individualist and idealist Brandes, and the whole host of bourgeois biographers of the Bard, form



a chorus that salutes the god of Stratford as an oraclé of capital. That is why Matthew Arnold, while criticizing his countrymen as a nation of shopkeepers, could yet applaud "the great English middle class, the kernel of the nation," for being "the class whose intelligent sympathy had upheld a Shakespeare."

What inspires the popular worship is not merely the hero's money; it is the fact of his success, the fact of his rise from virtual rags to riches, his incarnation of the dream of little business aiming to become big business. Just as the commercial possibilities transformed the local cult of the Avon into what Brown and Fearon correctly term a "cosmic industry," so the commercial character of the Stratford deity aided to promote him into a world-god. These two journalists, who laugh at the absurdities of the Birthplace, themselves take pride in praising Shakespeare as "a man of property, a shrewd investor, and fond of a bargain." One can almost hear the undertone of envy in their praise. After all, it is not every artist or creative writer who unites in his nature the faculty of giving "airy nothing" the reality of literary illusion, with the faculty for accumulating cash.

Brandes scoured the annals of world culture for other exemplars of this strange combination, and he could set by the side of his Shakespeare only the Danish dramatist Holberg, and Voltaire. But these authors were not born in poverty, and conducted their business enterprises in the stock exchange or genteel finance. Shakespeare, if we are to trust the legend, carried on trade with plain malt and wool, peasant real-estate, and tenements, not to mention his sale of the surplus stone from the New Place he bought in Stratford, while conceiving and executing his fantasies of lordly luxurious life for the theatre. And he rose, according to the gospel of Stratford, to the posture of "a capitalist shareholder, a bill promoter, a tithe-farmer," as James Joyce succinctly puts it, as well as "a lord of language," from the misery of a butcher's and leatherworker's household, from a home whose father was twice fined for allowing piles of ordure to accumulate before its walls. I repeat, it is in the fable of that rise that we will discover the source of the Shakespeare religion.

Incidentally, we may note here that Hanns Sachs rejected Freud's belief that the Shakespeare of Stratford could not have been the Shakespeare of the dramas and sonnets, because the Brandes view seemed to Sachs in perfect accord with psychology. "To me," he says, "the small-town boy, whose father was fined for the dungheap at the door, seems still the most likely author of *The Tempest* and *Measure for Measure*." I do not intend to discuss here the century-old question of the authorship of Shakespeare. I mention Sachs's remark just to indicate the magnetism which the lowly idol of Stratford can exert for men of advanced critical powers.

The creed of the idol was stated, with typical terseness, by Alexander Pope, in these lines:

Shakespeare (whom you, and every play-house bill,  
Style the divine, the matchless-what you will)  
For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,  
And grew immortal in his own despite.

The avowal of the poet himself, in the Sonnets, that he wrote for immortality ("Not marble nor the gilded monuments Of princes shall outlive this powerful rime") is rendered null and void in the face of the Stratford creed. As we have already remarked, the writings of Shakespeare mean far less to his mythologists than the legend of his social climb. Our task is to determine the hidden psychological motives for the cult of that climb.

Psychoanalysis gives us the tools capable of bringing to light these unconscious motives, which Henry James had gallantly groped for in his story of the "Birthplace." Without the theory of Freud I see no way of working out the method in what Garrick called his "madness about Shakespeare," the madness of the majority of writers about the Bard. If the economic motives I have outlined were enough to explain it, we would still have to explain the failure of millions to acknowledge the economic basis of their Shakespeare worship. Even the economic determinists offer other reasons for their adoration of him, reasons of esthetics and morality. But

why should economic or ethical or esthetic ideals drop people to their knees? Freud's answer to this riddle may well be tested on the Shakespeare theology.

Like all theologies, the cult of the Bard derives its basic energy from the id, the wishing-well of the unconscious. Before people can worship Shakespeare they must have experienced several wishes which they do not have the courage to allow into consciousness. These desires are treated as wicked, as deadly to the ego or vanity or soul (as you like it). They are nothing less than urges to violate elementary canons of law and order. For instance, the general injunction to honor one's father and mother. The souls who have not felt a longing to dishonor at least one parent are extremely scarce, and William Shakespeare certainly did not belong to their company. He abandoned his parents in a time when they badly needed his wages and comfort, and, if ancient Stratford tradition may be trusted, he disgraced his family by robbing the estate of Sir Thomas Lucy. It is questionable whether they sanctioned his choice of Anne Hathaway as a wife, a woman eight years older than he, already pregnant, and engaged to wed William immediately after his betrothal to Anne Whately of Temple Grafton. One wonders whether the young man, raised amid filth and educated to a brutal trade, honored his father and mother at least with lip-loyalty.

We lack the faintest idea of what he endured in his id and conscience when he broke the divine commandment to obey one's procreants. But we can imagine how most of the people felt who heard about these early escapades of Stratford's "favorite son." Their own consciences, secretly aching from old guilty thoughts of their own parents, and cravings for "wild oats" and revolt, underwent a solace and unction in the belief that the great playwright had actually performed what they just wished. And he, the mutinous son, had grown wealthy and brought his father the formal honor of a patent of arms. Who could resist the fairy-tale quality of this narrative of the butcher's boy who ran away to London and got rich from the stage? It is a daydream of covetous and frustrated sons come true. The story binds the fancy with a stronger magic than the myth of Dick Whitting-

ton and his cat or the tale of Jack and the beanstalk. These appal the young mind with a horrible ogre, the hazard of death and the more concrete horror of hard work. In the case of Shakespeare the ultimate gold is reached by a road of pleasure, the simple expenditure of genius, an outpouring (in the Miltonic phrase) of wild native warbles in less than forty plays. It is generally agreed that he did not make any money out of the Sonnets, which were printed without his consent. He never attained a prominence as an actor that could account for his rapidly heaped wealth. So, if we exclude the possibility that he acquired it by experiments with larceny, we are forced to the conclusion that he made his fortune from the plays. Exactly how this was accomplished, none of the experts in his works can tell. The devotees do not care to find out.

Public opinion has never taken earnestly the excuses produced elaborately by Victorian scholarship for the sublime William's neglect of his wife in the first draft of his last will and testament. He left her, as we all know, his second-best bed with its furniture, and the bequest had to be written between the lines, like the legacies to his fellow-actors Burbage, Heming, and Condell. Most of his admirers feel sure that Shakespeare's connubial life was by no means sweetness and sunshine. The thought does not induce sorrow in them. Indeed, it probably induces a deep unconscious joy. They like to think of the hero as not only getting rich quick but scoring innumerable victories as a lover: they seize with avidity on tales of his adultery in London: they revel in visions of the Dark Lady of the Sonnets entwining him in her gypsy serpentine arms. Violation of the statute against adultery lifts him to a certain secluded rank among the heroes of the daydreaming masses.

At the same time popular belief holds the idea that he remained true and pure in love of his mother. To Celts, Teutons, and Americans this idea is particularly dear, and in itself sufficient to exalt Shakespeare among the gods. They are fond of depicting Mary Arden as a woman

from a loftier social station than his father. They see her as the source of his inspiration, encouraging his talents, grieving for his misfortunes, believing in his redemption and success. It is the sentiment of her character mystically conceived that endows the so-called Birthplace with its pathetic atmosphere. Perhaps the sheer fact that she was christened Mary aids in halowing it. At any rate, the faith that Shakespeare lived in devotion to his mother yields us, I think, the core of his mystery--the oedipus complex.

With the wretchedly small number of facts that we possess about the wonderful William, it might seem a hopeless job to demonstrate his possession of the oedipus complex. Let us see: The pinnacle of his career, most readers would admit, was reached when he gained the privilege of writing "Gent." after his name, with the purchase of his coat of arms. The symbol of gentility that he chose came from the aristocratic Ardens of Warwickshire, a family which he obviously wished to think consanguineous with his mother. By adopting the Arden arms he would be elevating himself, in unconscious imagination, to the splendor his mother occupied in his mind. In psychoanalytic terms, his instinctual drives would be rising to overwhelm his superego, to release the tensions of reproach and hostility which are generated from that internal pattern of parental authority. Making himself an Arden in heraldry was equivalent therefore to an assertion of amorous desire for his mother, a distorted avowal of the incest wish. And by restoring her to prosperity he proved himself the real "husband" of her home, in the old English sense of the word. He carried out the responsibilities his father had handled so disastrously, and thus became in fact his mother's darling man. It is a consummation devoutly wished by all his worshipers in their own filial dreams, their family romances and tragicomedies. The faith that Shakespeare consummated it, in my opinion, forms the root of the Stratford idolatry. It is no accident that the favorite of all the love-stories that scholars and journalists have construed for Shakespeare is the one making him the mate of a second Mary, the aristocratic Fitton. In the unconscious, the

"quick forge and working-house of thought" in his hierophants, the social climbing of the divine William signifies a mounting to Mary Arden's bed. Hence the peculiar rapture over the legend of his rise.

Next to the ecstasy of the incest wish in the oedipus complex runs the inevitable agony of the wish to abolish the father. After our review of his conduct with respect or rather disrespect to the Fifth Commandment of the Jewish-Christian code, we do not require more proof that the hero suffered from repressed yearnings to kill his father. The desire must have been especially violent in the butcher's boy when the old man withdrew him from school and apprenticed him to his bloody craft. According to William's earliest biographer, John Aubrey, he used to enjoy delivering speeches when he killed a calf. In such eruptions of rhetoric the little killer doubtless vented his defiance of tyranny and exulted over his prowess with the knife. But he never came as close to parricide, in the mind's eyes of the Stratford religion, as he did to incest. In the religion he remains the prodigal son, who saves his father from ruin, and assists the old failure to a well-moneyed and peaceful death. The faithful of Christendom cannot endure a god who murders his father; they would rather have a god who murders his son. So it is impossible for Shakespeare to accomplish the parricidal wish in the unconscious of his priests, except by the circuitous process that Freud named "secular distortion."

The changes in family relations and social morality which compelled the transformation of Christianity from a religion whose Heavenly Father sacrifices His Son into a religion whose Heaven-born Son becomes one with the Father paved the road for a similar transformation of the Shakespeare piety. Let us recall that Stratford remembered him as flourishing in oratory over the slaughter of a calf, not a bull. By slaying the infant animal he could identify himself at heart with the butcher-father. Psychoanalysis has long been familiar with the process by which young intellects submit to castration, more precisely emasculation, in the face of the

terrible father-image they carry in the super-ego. Young Shakespeare might have unconsciously mutilated himself in this way, symbolizing the sacrifice in his eloquence over helpless calves. Something of the sort appears to have happened in the minds of his priests. They express it by the ritual surrender of the desire to overthrow the father, by seeking a compromise, a celestial unity with him. James Joyce has portrayed the simultaneous self-humiliation and self-transfiguration with exquisite art in his novel Ulysses. Here he presents Shakespeare as the murdered King Hamlet and the King's son: "He is the ghost and the prince. He is all in all." Joyce identifies the Bard with God: "The playwright who wrote the folio of this world...the lord of things as they are, whom the most Roman of catholics call dio boia, hangman god, is doubtless all in all in all of us, ostler and butcher, and would be bawd and cuckold too but that in the economy of heaven, foretold by Hamlet, there are no more marriages...." The mystic union of Christ and Shakespeare is described by Joyce in ecstatic terms: "God, the sun, Shakespeare, a commercial traveler, having itself traversed in reality itself, becomes that self." Under the metaphysical words can be detected the agony of the infantile ego, struggling to reconcile with the father of its fantasy, against whom it has sinned in thought, with lust to kill, to dispossess. By now it is everywhere recognized that Joyce's Ulysses charms us primarily because of the emotion manifested in his art's working out of this conflict. The recognition that Shakespeare is adored for much the same reason will take a longer time than the Joyce discovery, for the spiritual conflict at the bottom of the Stratford theology is far more complex.

In the cult of Avonian Willy, as Henry James brilliantly demonstrated, "somebody," a creator--an intellectual father-- is in truth killed. The real writer of the Shakespeare lyrics and dramas (whoever he was) has to die in order that the god of Stratford may live, and the culpable souls of his worshipers be appeased. It will be remembered that Boswell keenly regretted the omission from the Shakespeare Jubilee of 1769 of some religious ceremonies "gratefully addressing the supreme Father of all Spirits, from whom cometh every

good and perfect gift." He meant, of course, the Author of the Universe. In the Shakespeare piety, however, our hero of Stratford stands next to Him. As James Montgomery said, when the pilgrims enter the Church of the Trinity in Stratford or the Birthplace, and "Tread the ground by genius often trod," they "feel a nature more akin to God." The romantic fervor of Alexandre Dumas cherished the notion that, next to God, Shakespeare created the most. The question for students of psychological determinism is not how seriously shall we take these extravagant remarks. It is: What do the remarks mean translated into the language of brain-work? In other words, what do they mean by the proximity of Shakespeare to God, the concept Shakespeare and the concept God? Henry James, I feel confident, has supplied us with the answer in his "Birthplace." He alludes to the "supreme Father of all Spirits" in the theatre of Shakespeare as an artist whom the greedy, lustful, conscience-stricken idealists of the Stratford shrine and its worldwide tributaries put to death each day. They kill him by refusal to listen to his art, by falsifying his message, by lying about his lifework, by stifling the vitality needed for the expansion of his creative influence--in particular poetry and drama. Over the imaginary dead body of this "father" rises the religion of the "son," his other self, the jack-of-all-trades and gentleman of various investments who is the William Shakespeare we are taught to venerate. Along with the Spirits of Macbeth, Othello, Falstaff, and Malvolio, the poet gave birth to William Shakespeare, the hero of the biographies. And this "perfect gift" has been welcomed with an ardor surpassing the world's enthusiasm for all his other creations. For in the sublime William he incarnated the beau ideal of the bourgeoisie, the capitalist esthete, the usurer of genius, the manufacturer of masterpieces, and wizard of thrift. Out of the pauper and butcher's apprentice he evolved the man who could plot the enclosure of peasants' commons round Stratford and at the same time win golden opinions for verses like these (from Julius Caesar):

By heaven, I had rather coin my heart,  
 And drop my blood for drachmas, than to  
   wring  
 From the hard hands of peasants their  
   vile trash  
 By any indirection.

Critics have long complained that the patrician soul of the dramatist never stooped to earnest portraiture of burgesses, middle-class folk of the England of his day. There is nothing so hard to see as the object right in front of our eyes. The portrait of the artist as a young maltster and money-lender that Shakespeare drew from the raw material furnished by the runaway from Stratford has been sadly missed. Naturally, for the creator disappeared in his handiwork; the son became one with the father, merging with the maternal holy ghost that haunts the Birthplace.

The Stratford idolatry became a national religion in England after the so-called Glorious Revolution had entrenched the merchants and bankers as the ruling class. Shakespeare became a god of his country then, when the nation woke up to the fact that traders and brokers were claiming the title of "gentleman," as in the plays of Richard Steele, Richard Cumberland, and other mouth-pieces of plebeian glory and hope. The idle children of the parvenu money-nobility went to the playhouses and witnessed productions of Shakespeare, radically revised and "improved," embellished with happy endings, operatic effects, and more or less witty and pretty additions by other playwrights. For nearly two hundred years English taste and intelligence were satisfied by the atrocities surveyed by Nazelton Spencer in his funny volume Shakespeare Improved. Under the spell of this renovated, up-to-date Shakespeare, the public schools forced their infants to learn by rote such wisdom as Polonius's advice to Laertes on how to be safely selfish, and Iago's counsel on thrift. Against this god of British burgesses the poets and critics of the absolute monarchy in France exhausted their arsenal of sarcasm, championing their own idols of feudal classicism. La Harpe sneered that "Shakespeare is the poet of the plain people," in contrast with Racine whose tragedies are "the delicacies of instructed men." Voltaire denounced Shakespeare

as a drunken ruffian, yet in his bourgeois heart he confessed to feeling a power beyond "culture" in the Englishman's dramas. He grieved David Garrick by his "unchristian attack upon Genius." The conviction that Shakespeare was untutored, uncultivated—a voice of experience without the discipline of books—"warbling his native woodnotes wild," as Milton affirmed—endeared him to the British ruling class and their emulators below. The young romantics of the early nineteenth century carried this view of the poet as a child of raw nature, a sweet singer of empiricism, to laughable extremes. They upheld him as a model of "unpremeditated art," inspiration incarnate, just as the actors in Ben Jonson's day had lauded Shakespeare as a nearly illiterate magician, excelling by his natural gifts the whole company of University wits. And so the cult spread, across national frontiers, on the wings of what may be named class narcissism.

Natural and historical science, in the middle of the century, created by the thinkers of evolution, compelled some fundamental changes in the study of Shakespeare. But they did not divert much traffic from the shrine at Stratford, because they lacked the strength to make the changes consistent and long-lasting. Thus scholars came to discern that no genius springs self-determinate from the mother, but grows up in certain fertile circumstances, within reach of culture, wealth and liberty. They gradually credited Shakespeare with an enormous lore of books, including volumes in languages that few Britons could have learnt. They ventured to argue that his patrician muse blossomed out in circles of the highest aristocracy, far from the Cheapside crowd, the market-places and artisans' shops. They abandoned the doctrine that he rose from a barbarous wildness to the peak of literature, and began filling the wildness with materials of a luxuriant civilization.

Then they collided with the cult. The cult depended for survival on the folk belief that the artist and the capitalist were two and yet one. Shakespearean research seemed to be gesturing to subdue the capitalist, to make the artist paramount. It

could not be halted; but the masters of the "cathedral" managed to slow it down. The official doctors and editors of the Bard's labors restricted their analyses of his art to painstaking testimony that it existed above all for the "boxoffice," *ad maiorem gloriam mammoni*. They returned, in brief, to the gospel of the Avon according to Pope, with improvements. In defense of it they turn with astounding affect on persons who would apply the methods and results of psychoanalysis to their Bard. Critics of the cult are simply and downrightly damned as heretics. The ecclesiastic word is used without any intent of humor; weapons habitual to inquisitions with secular arms are employed to back it up. But thereby hangs a tale outside our present concern, which is the examination of the Shakespeare orthodoxy in the light of Freud's dynamic or evolutionary psychology.

#### SOS Bulletin Board

Celeste Ashley's persistent pursuit of fact brought to light the following addition to our store of Oxfordian knowledge from William Addison's Essex Worthies (London, 1973) under the heading HENEAGE:

After the death of his (i.e., Sir Thomas Heneage's) first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Nicholas Poyntz of Gloucestershire (who bore him a daughter, Elizabeth, in 1556), Sir Thomas Heneage married, in 1594, as his second wife and her second husband, the Countess of Southampton, mother of Shakespeare's patron, who was 20 years his senior. A good case could be made out for the belief that Shakespeare's play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, was written for the wedding festivities. Theseus and Hippolyta may well have been intended to represent Sir Thomas and the Countess.

There is much material on Sir Thomas Heneage in the Salisbury Papers. When he lay dying, the Earl of Oxford wrote to Cecil begging him to secure for him appointment as Lord Warden of the Forests of Waltham and Haverling, which had been held by Sir Thomas, but had previously been held for centuries by the de Veres.

Warren Hope wishes to announce that friends and students of Bronson Feldman are forming an educational foundation intended to disseminate and encourage interest in his work. Those Oxfordians who wish to honor Feldman's memory by

contributing to this foundation may send donations to The Bronson Feldman Memorial Foundation, 7844 Montgomery Ave., Elkins Park, Pa. 19117.

Mrs. Vern Messner draws our attention to an article entitled "Tri-State Shakespeare Summerfest" which appeared in Louis Mar-der's The Shakespeare Newsletter, December, 1981. That report on a New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut Stratfordian conflagration includes this cheering piece of naivete: "With all this enthusiasm for Shakespeare it seemed unusual, according to the lecture-guides who gave 65 talks a week in the Globe theatre model, that the most frequently asked question was 'Did Shakespeare really write the plays?' Twenty-three thousand heard the short talks in the Globe and eleven thousand attended the twenty minute talks." We are exceedingly pleased to report that Harold Patience tells us that the English magazine, Essex Countryside, will publish Rhodda Messner's article, "The Great Shakespeare Mystery," in a future issue.

Charlton Ogburn reports that his new book on the Shakespeare authorship question is progressing nicely and that a fall publication date can be expected. We urge Oxfordians to prepare to spread the word as widely as possible.

Nancy Spellman, a new member from West Chester, Pa., informs us that John Galsworthy, the English novelist, did not only publicly praise Looney's book and circulate copies of it, but also referred to it in his fiction. She writes: "Chapter VII of The White Monkey, Volume 4 of The Forsyte Saga, refers to the issue thusly, 'The affair (i.e., the book) purported to prove that William Shakespeare was really Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford....The tome left him (i.e., Soames Forsyte) with judgment suspended over the main issue...So far as he could make out, Oxford was a shady fellow.'"

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# Newsletter *Shakespeare Oxford Society*

*Verò Nihil Verius*

SUMMER, 1982

Vol. 18, No. 3

## Morse Johnson: Oxfordian Man of Letters

Morse Johnson, an attorney in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the Shakespeare Oxford Society's director of public relations, engages in an enthusiastic and constant letter-writing campaign against those who continue to perpetuate and circulate falsehoods concerning Shakespeare. A sample of these letters follows:

Mr. Walter Kerr  
The New York Times  
229 West 43rd Street  
New York, New York 10036

Dear Mr. Kerr:

I quote from your, as usual, informative and delightful Critic's Notebook (NYT 3/18/82):

"Do you realize that if Shakespeare were alive and well and living in New York right at this moment, he'd be taking home \$25,000 a week in royalties?...Shakespeare seems to have been a canny chap where money was concerned, good at counting the house, claiming his just desserts and all that...."

May I respectfully point out that a prodigious search for almost 200 years of every possible applicable record could not locate a single entry showing that William Shakespeare ever received one farthing for any of his plays? The two most authentic accounts of theatrical activities at that time were kept by Philip Henslowe, a producer of many of Shakespeare's plays, and Edward Alleyn, an actor and producer. Henslowe's diary (adjudged "the most valuable single document relative to the early stage" by the renowned Shakespeare biographer, S. Schoenbaum) sets out in detail the payments he made to actors and dramatists from 1591 to 1609 and includes the names and signatures of every other leading playwright at the time but does

not once mention "William Shakespeare." Likewise, there is not a single use of the name "William Shakespeare" in Alleyn's two volume memoirs which contain the names of all the notable actors and play-poets of Shakespeare's time, as well as every other person who helped, directly or indirectly, or who paid out money or who received money in connection with the production of many plays at the Blackfriars Theater, the Fortune and other theaters.

It is certainly curious but also obvious that "William Shakespeare" did not claim "his just desserts" from his creative genius nor, I might add, from his possible but not probable histrionic activities. That traditional biography reiterates he became wealthy on receipts from his plays and his performances is but one of the many unwarranted assumptions time and predisposed orthodox scholarship have converted into "fact."

J. Thomas Looney's "SHAKESPEARE" IDENTIFIED (1920) convinced many eminent scholars in a wide range of disciplines, including scores of distinguished jurists and lawyers, that "William Shakespeare" was a pseudonym used by Edward De Vere, Earl of Oxford. In June 1938 Dr. Sigmund Freud wrote:

"Dr. Mr. Looney: I have known you as the author of a remarkable book, to which I owe my conviction about Shakespeare's identity as far as my judgement in this matter goes...confessing myself to be a follower of yours...."

Columbia University's Professor Frederick Taber Cooper had this to say about this book:

"Here at last is a sane, dignified, arresting contribution to the abused and sadly discredited Shakespeare controversy. It is one of the most



ingenious pieces of minute, circumstantial evidence extant in literary criticism... Every right-minded scholar who seriously cares for the welfare of letters in the bigger sense should face the problem that this book presents and argue it to a finish."

Sadly, too many scholars have chosen not to "face the problem" but instead have avoided or attempted to bury it. The most distorting consequence has been that the accepted image of the person of this unsurpassed genius, who is revealed by his works to have been a polymath, has been reduced to the dimensions of the Stratford grain dealer and money lender, Will. Shaksper. If from this you infer "elitism," please note that among the most outspoken anti-Stratfordians have been Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Charles Chaplin, and Sen. Paul Douglas.

Most sincerely,

Morse Johnson

#### The Water Bearer

by

Harold W. Patience

Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who was born at Castle Hedingham in 1550, has been described as the mystery man of Elizabethan literature. It is evident from the records that the main interests of his life were poetry and the drama. We have his early poems (one, in modern times, finding a place in Palgrave's Golden Treasury), his splendid prose Introduction to Bedingfield's translation of Cardanus' Comferte, and a few of his private letters. In the field of the drama he directed his own company of actors and was associated with the Blackfriars Theatre. He was the foremost patron of the writers and translators of his time.

That he was a playwright himself is evident from Francis Meres' judgment in 1598 that Lord Oxford was "the best for Comedy among us" and from a much earlier letter of the earl which terminates with the remark: "From my new Country Muses of Wivenhoe." Although in 1622 (eighteen years after Oxford's death) Henry Peacham was to place Oxford's name at the head of a list of writers who had made the Elizabethan era a Golden Age of

literature, no play actually ascribed to de Vere has come down to us.

On the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Audley End in 1578 Gabriel Harvey (a native of Saffron Walden) also paid a tribute to Lord Oxford's literary talents. "I have seen many Latin verses of thine," declared Harvey, "yea, even more English verses are extant; thou hast drunk deep draughts not only of the muses of France and Italy, but hast learned the manners of many men, and the arts of foreign countries." With the Spanish menance in mind, Harvey continued his Latin oration by urging Oxford to forsake the pen for the martial arts. "Now is the time for thee to sharpen the spear and to handle great engines of war...thine eyes flash fire, thy countenance shakes a spear...." The last remark is perhaps a reference to de Vere's hereditary crest, as Viscount Bolebec, which depicted a lion brandishing a broken spear. Other de Vere insignias--the boar, the harpy, and the famous star--are familiar sights in Castle Hedingham, Earls Colne and Lavenham.

During the course of his career as hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain, member of Privy Council and a favourite of Queen Elizabeth, Lord Oxford held manor houses at Wivenhoe (Essex), Bilton (on the Warwickshire Avon) and Hackney (where he died in 1604). Although the greater part of his life is shrouded in mystery we know that as Chamberlain he performed three official duties:

1. the bearing of the canopy of State over the Queen in processions;
2. the bearing of the Sword of State before the monarch on important State occasions, and
3. as Officer of the Ewrie, which involved the provision of water in ceremonial vessels for the cleansing of the monarch's hands at the Coronation banquet.

Following the defeat of the Spanish Armada the Queen decreed a solemn service of thanksgiving at St. Paul's. On this occasion (November 24th, 1588) the Earl of Oxford assisted the Earl Marshal in

bearing the golden canopy of State over Elizabeth as she proceeded up the nave of the cathedral. There is probably a reference to this ceremonial duty in Shakespeare's Sonnet No. 125:

Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,  
With my extern the outward honouring...

In Hollar's engraving of the painting by Marcus Gheerhaedts, portraying a procession of Knights of the Garter at Windsor Castle, we see the Queen with the Earl of Oxford who, as Lord Great Chamberlain, bears the Sword of State. Oxford is shown as slightly shorter than Elizabeth, which recalls to us a remark of Thomas Nashe when writing to Gabriel Harvey with reference to the earl: "He is but a little fellow, but he hath one of the best wits in England."

In his hereditary office of Water Bearer Lord Oxford is known to have personally served King James at the Coronation, for the earl's formal application to dress the King and to serve with basin and ewer is recorded in the Domestic State Papers (July 7th, 1603) as follows:

Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, presents to the Court a certain petition...that as he is Great Chamberlain of England of the fee of our most dread lord the King, that it should please the King that he should likewise at the Coronation, as formerly he was permitted to do the said office and service as he and his ancestors have formerly done...and that the said Earl and the Lord Chamberlain for the time being together on that day ought to dress the King in all his apparel and that he may take and have all his fees, profits, and advantages due to this office as he and his ancestors before him have been used to on the day of Coronation. That is to say Forty Yards of Crimson Velvet for the said earl's robes for that day...

He also asks that (he should have the same privileges) as his ancestors (who) from time immemorial served the noble progenitors of our Lord the King with water before and after eating, the day of Coronation, as appears in the records of the Exchequer...

The reply came as follows:

My Lord Steward adjudicates to the aforesaid earl the fees and services of presenting water to the Lord the King before

and after dinner on the day of the Coronation; and to have the basins, tasting cups and towels.

I have emphasised the remark about crimson velvet because it appears to provide us with another link between the Earl of Oxford and William Shakespeare.

King James arrived in London on May 7th, 1603, and ten days later he issued an order taking the Chamberlain's Men under his own patronage and bestowing upon them the new title "The King's Men." A Patent issued on May 19th singled out nine actors for special mention as "Grooms of the Chamber," men who now had the right to wear the royal livery on all formal occasions, the uniform consisting of scarlet doublet, hose, and cloak, with the King's arms and cognizance embroidered on the sleeve.

The extant entry in the Lord Chamberlain's books records the issue of "Red Cloth" to the nine actors as follows:

(Such liveries) to be delivered unto His Majesty's Players...to each of them the several allowances of four yards of bastard scarlet for a cloak, and a quarter of a yard of crimson velvet for the capes.

The total issue of cloth was therefore 38½ yards--undoubtedly the very same "forty yards of crimson velvet" issued to the Earl of Oxford for dressing the men under his supervision. One of these nine men was William Shakespeare who, in the accounts of the Coronation preparations, is described not as a great playwright (as we would expect) but as an actor.

In King Henry the Eighth there is a reference to such a claim as Oxford had made:

Yes; 'tis the list  
Of those that claim their offices this day

By custom of the coronation. (IV.i.14-16)

There are several other references in Shakespeare to Lord Oxford's hereditary duty as Water Bearer:

So that myself bring water for my  
stain (Sonnet No. 109)

Basins and ewers to lave her dainty  
hands... (The Taming of the Shrew,  
II.i.340)

...Another bears the ewer, the third a  
diaper,  
And say 'Will't please your lordship cool  
your hands?' (Induction, Shrew, I)

Enter aloft Sly, with Attendants; some  
with apparel, basin and ewer...  
(Induction, Shrew, 2)

A gift, I warrant. Why, this hits right;  
I dreamt of a silver basin and ewer tonight...  
(Timon of Athens, III.1.7-8)

The actual silver ewer given to the Earl of  
Oxford by Queen Elizabeth as a New Year gift,  
and used by him as Water Bearer to the monarch,  
is in the Rosenbach Museum in Philadelphia.  
The great seal of England can be seen on this  
handsome vessel, together with the inscription:

Elisare Die Gracia Regina.  
Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense  
Anon 1594

It will be noted that the impressive stopper is  
in the form of a boar's head, a symbol of the  
de Veres, Earls of Oxford.\*

(\*Editor's Note: The late Craig Huston first  
located the Earl of Oxford's ewer in Phila-  
delphia. A photograph of the ewer appears in  
Ruth Loyd Miller's edition of J. Thomas  
Looney's Shakespeare Identified.)

#### Did Shakespeare Visit Saffron Walden?

Mary Whitman, town librarian of Saffron Walden,  
Essex, England, closes a letter to Harold  
Patience, dated April 6, 1982, with, "There has  
always been the tradition that Shakespeare did  
come to the town, but no proof." She enclosed  
a newspaper clipping, from 1903, of an article  
entitled "Shakespeare and Saffron Walden."  
That article reads in part:

It appears to be very probable that Shake-  
speare visited Saffron Walden about 1605-  
06. In support of this assertion we give  
the following:-

Shakespeare at Saffron Walden--J.O. Halli-  
well Phillips, F.R.S., LL.D., the well-  
known Shakespearean scholar, in pursuit of  
his favorite object, visited many towns  
(about seventy) to examine the local re-  
cords, under the hopes of finding materials  
illustrative of the life of Shakespeare, or  
of the "stage," at the time he flourished.

At Saffron Walden he met with the  
following entry:-

"Item, givin to the King's plaiers  
vjs viijd--entry in 'the accompte of  
Mr. Benedicte Growte, late Treasurer  
of the towne Corporate of Walden a-  
foresaid, Mr. Robert Newton and Mr.  
Robert Baker then allso Chamberlaines  
of the same towne, taken and allowed  
the seaven and twentieth daie of De-  
cember, Anno Domini 1606, in the years  
of the raign of our sovereign Lord  
James, by the grace of God of England,  
France, and Ireland, Kinge, defender  
of the faith, &c, the fourth, and of  
Scotland the fortith."

Mr. Phillips adds, that "The Saffron  
Walden accounts having always been  
made to the Sunday after Michaelmas,  
it follows that Shakespeare's company  
were there at some time between the  
sixth of October, 1605, and the fifth  
of that month in 1606."--The Visits  
of Shakespeare's Company of Actors to  
the Provincial Cities and Towns of  
England. 1887.

We can well afford to leave it to the  
tiquarians of the Elizabethan stage to  
worry over whether Will Shakspeare of  
Stratford ever aped and grimaced to the  
delight or pain of the citizens of Saf-  
fron Walden. But as Verily Paget, of  
Norfolk, England, makes abundantly clear  
in a letter to Harold Patience, dated  
April 26, 1982, the author of Shake-  
speare's plays and poems was certainly  
familiar with Saffron Walden or, at  
least, with saffron, the rare crocus,  
used in cooking, which gave the town its  
name. She writes:

Hardly surprisingly, we find four  
references to saffron in Shakespeare:

1. Who with thy saffron wings upon  
my flowers diffusest honey-drops,  
refreshing showers...  
Tempest IV,1,78.
2. This companion with the saffron  
face...  
Comedy of Errors IV,4,64.
3. Whose villanous saffron woul  
have made all the unbaked and  
doughy youth of a nation in  
his colour...  
All's Well IV,5,2.

4. I must have saffron to colour  
the warden pies."  
Winter's Tale IV, 3, 45.

Verily Paget shrewdly observes: "Saffron was then such a rarity that only the very rich and famous were likely to have tasted it and only those living in the area where it was grown and processed would have been conversant with its uses and characteristics. These mentions suggest being 'brought up with it'." She further notes, drawing on an article by Jane Grigson, "Saffron: A Pinch of Gold Dust," in the Observer, April 18, 1982, "It seems interesting to me that the only places where the saffron crocus was grown in England were Saffron Walden, some ten miles from Castle Hedingham, and in Cornwall, where the de Veres owned estates."

Harold Patience, suspecting that he might turn up documents concerning the Earl of Oxford in Saffron Walden because of the Earl's patronage of and connection with Gabriel Harvey of that town (Harvey's birth-place was commemorated by Thomas Nash in his exuberant pamphlet, Have With You To Saffron Walden), learned that in Lord Braybrooke's "History of Audley End" there is a record of the following expenditure by the Corporation of Saffron Walden during Queen Elizabeth's second visit to the town:

"1578. Item, unto the Erle of Oxford,  
a paire of Cambridge gloves were given  
with verses."

We Oxfordians now stand ready to assure the citizens of Saffron Walden that there is proof to support their long-standing tradition that "Shakespeare" visited their town. And that "Shakespeare" was Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

(Editor's Note: We are indebted to Verily Paget and Harold Patience for the pieces of information which have been spliced together here.)

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#### THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY'S SIXTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Make plans now to attend the Society's sixth annual meeting in Washington, D.C. this coming fall. The dates are Friday, October 15, and Saturday, October 16, 1982. This year's guest speaker will be Calvin Hoffman, author of The Murder of the Man Who Was Shakespeare and leading advocate this side of the Atlantic of Christopher Marlowe's candidacy for the authorship of Shakespeare's works.

Conference site, agenda, and other details will be announced in a separate mailing.

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#### CHARLTON OGBURN'S NEW BOOK ON THE AUTHORSHIP DUE IN EARLY 1983

The Shakespeare Oxford Society's Honorary President Charlton Ogburn is on the final stages of his book, The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Counterfeit and the Reality, to be published by E.P.M. Publications (McLean, Virginia) at the beginning of next year. This important work should be one of the most definitive studies of the authorship issue in modern times, inasmuch as it represents years of research and revision by the foremost scholar on that issue today. Charlton Ogburn is known the world over in his dual role as author of books on natural history and as principal exponent and "gadfly" of the Oxfordian cause.

S.O.S. members will be happy to learn that, thanks to generous gifts from two anonymous donors, the Ogburn book will 1) be made available to members at a substantial discount, and 2) be assured of a full promotion and publicity blitz. Details of these benefits will be published in the S.O.S. Newsletter as the book's publication date nears.

Gordon C. Cyr  
Executive Vice-President

## LOUIS J. HALLE ON THE MAN FROM STRATFORD

"The problem arises for me, as it has for others, because the identity of the author that comes out so vividly in his works does not match the identity of the man to whom they are attributed. The answer that scholarship would make is that the purely subjective impression derived from the works must give way to the attributed identity if the attribution is clearly based on historical evidence. One supposes that the attribution is, indeed, clearly based on such evidence, and the scholars to whom it presents no subjective difficulty see no reason for doubting it. If one assumes, as we all initially do, that the plays and poems were written by a small town provincial who went to London and became an actor for a number of years before returning to his home, then we are moved to fill out the assumption by making our conclusions on each problem that arises fit it. We persuade ourselves that we know more than we actually do about the actor from Stratford because we know, for example, that he must have been a playwright to have written the plays, we know from the internal evidence of the plays that he was familiar with foreign languages, etc. Consequently, biographical accounts tend to be studded with such qualifying terms as 'presumably' and 'doubtless,' based on the *a priori* assumption of his authorship. If, however, we omit what is based on this assumption, it is surprising to find that we know almost nothing about this man from Stratford, and that the little we do know is incongruous with his authorship of Shakespeare's works."

The Search for an Eternal Norm: As  
Represented by Three Classics, p. 109

A Book Review

by  
Gordon Cyr

The Search for an Eternal Norm: As Represented  
by Three Classics. By Louis J. Halle. University Press of America, Washington, D.C., 1981, 213 pages (paperback).

One would not know from the cover of this book that it contained some of the most cogent arguments for the proposition that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, was the author of Shakespeare's poems and plays. Indeed, the publishers

vouchsafe the reader no information about the book's author, a distinguished writer of worldwide renown and professor at the Institute of International Studies in Geneva.

Professor Halle discusses many authors and literary works besides the "three classics" of the title. But the bulk of the book consists of essays on Hamlet, Odysseus, and The Passing of Arthur (plus a shorter one on Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra). By far the longest of these--comprising 121 pages, a little over half of the book--is the essay entitled Hamlet and the World, divided into three sections: I. Introduction. II. The Play. III. The World and Hamlet.

Halle's thesis is that Hamlet is a deeply introspective personality whose intellect perceives all too plainly the conflict between what Halle terms "an ideal conceptual world, a normative world, a world of harmony, dignity, and truth, a world of propriety in which men and women are governed in their behavior to one another by a system of legitimate relationships that presents itself to the mind as God's or nature's plan," and that other "unbridled world; a world without harmony in which mutually contending men, obedient to no rules, are driven by their ambition for place and power...it is a world of hypocrisy and deceit...of existential chaos." The latter is the world that actually surrounds Hamlet, says Halle, "while the other is an inner world of the creative and aspiring mind."

Criticism, then, according to Halle has wasted time on the surface sources of Hamlet's desperation, such as his mother's hasty marriage, the uncle's usurpation, and so forth. These, the writer feels, are merely the occasions which exemplify that existential world against which Hamlet rebels, but to which he is "indisolubly bound...by kinship and what we may call hieratic position." Halle thinks that no one on comfortable terms with such a world can really appreciate this play, his or her perceptions of its greatness being limited necessarily to an intellectual or aesthetic recognition ..

The critic hits here upon a point that enjoys general consensus: Hamlet is arguably Shakespeare's most autobiographical work (excepting, of course, the Sonnets), and in the character of Hamlet we most palpably find the author, however often we may catch glimpses of him in other characters as well. But what does it mean to say that this or any other fictional work is "autobiographical"? Here, we must guard against a common Stratfordian reductio ad absurdum which goes something like this, "Do you mean to say that Shakespeare was really the Prince of Denmark, or that his father was murdered by his uncle?"

Halle's refutation of this straw man is one of the clearest the present reviewer has read to date: "All literature is autobiographical in the sense that it represents the author's experience only: his experience of himself in the first place, his experience of others in the second place. For when he describes the thoughts and feelings of others he is describing what he is able to recognize only because he has known it in himself." But Halle does not leave the argument at that point. He qualifies it by accounting for the importance of "such imitation as plays a major part in all imaginative literature," and for the creation of necessary supporting characters whose "inner reality is not represented," such as the "undifferentiated" Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, or Fortinbras.

Halle's main point, however, is that though "an author's works may not be significantly autobiographical in detail,...taken as a whole they are so." Shakespeare, for example, "could not have written Othello as he did if he had not directly experienced the pangs of jealousy; and that he put into Macbeth a remorse that he himself felt with a terrible poignancy...I have no doubt that Shakespeare knew what it was to suffer from insomnia; and, in fact, a repeated theme of his plays is the inability to sleep associated with high position and responsibility."

It is these and many similar observations that have led Louis Halle to the Emersonian inability to "marry" the facts of the Stratford Shakespeare's life to the picture of the author "his verse" presents to us: "If I ask myself what is the standpoint from which these works were written, the answer is that they were written from the standpoint of one who was a member of the higher nobility, or

who was so intimately associated with it as to share its point of view altogether. There are no signs, I hasten to add, that the point of view is put on, as by a commoner who, having risen to high place, adopts what is not native to him." Halle then proceeds to repeat the points J.T. Looney made over 60 years ago to the effect that all the Shakespearean characters with the strongest "autobiographical implications" are members of the highest aristocracy, "or, at least, of a ruling group," whereas the commoners in the plays are "seen from the outside and are seen, for the most part, from above and at a distance." (It is noteworthy that Oxfordians are not alone in these perceptions. The eminent historian, Hugh Trevor-Roper, for example, who has taken no public position on the Shakespearean authorship, called attention to Shakespeare's elitist sympathies in his November 1962 Réalités article.)

It is small wonder, then, that Halle like Looney is led inexorably to the identification of Shakespeare with Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, who, Halle says, "is Hamlet in his essential character and basic circumstances alike: a lord who by birth stood at the highest level in the realm, who was part of the royal entourage, who was wild and rebellious in his youth, engaging in such escapades as one associates with Prince Hal, who thereby found himself time and again 'in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes' (as Shakespeare reported himself in Sonnet XXIX)." Although he concedes another explanation is possible, Halle concludes, "I cannot believe that the man of Stratford wrote the plays, and I am strongly disposed to believe that de Vere was the actual author." A graceful paraphrase of Mark Twain's position vis-a-vis Shakespeare and Francis Bacon, and one that expresses the present reviewer's views to near-perfection.

Also, to this reviewer at least, the power of Louis Halle's thesis on the authorship owes much to the liberal discount accorded the numerous "parallels" of Oxford's biography to Hamlet's plot and personages: the relationship, for example, of Lord Burghley to Polonius, or



that of Oxford's first wife, Anne Cecil, to Ophelia, and so on. The critic wisely contents himself to rest the argument on his observation that Shakespeare describes the court and its fashion and intrigues "from the position of an insider like Hamlet, who has been the victim of its hostility toward those who do not play the game. What he is describing in the largest sense is the irremediable corruption of the post-expulsion world that manifests itself most intensely at the centers of power, becoming more bland as one moves out from them--through the academic world represented by Wittenberg to the rustic societies of the simple country folk." Shakespeare's characters, according to Halle, long for the far more "carefree" life of "...the wretched slave,/Who with a body filled and vacant mind/Gets him to rest..."

Justice, however, to the critical forcefulness contained in these 121 pages of The Search for an Eternal Norm cannot be rendered in a brief review. All Oxfordians should buy this book. (Write to University Press of America, Inc., P.O. Box 19101, Washington, D.C. 20036.)

#### The Earl of Venice?

by  
Warren Hope

I would like to correct and enlarge on a statement which occurs in the minutes of the Fourth National Conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. (See the Fall-Winter, 1981-82, issue of the Newsletter.) The minutes state that I announced at the meeting that Oxford planned "to purchase a home in Venice." What I actually said was that Oxford built a house in Venice.

The fact appears in Logan Pearsall Smith's The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966 reprint of the 1907 edition). In Volume II of that work, on pp. 112-114, appears a letter from Wotton to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated from Venice on May 5, 1617 (N.S.). That letter reads in part: "Here, besides the captains and soldiers, are more gentlemen of our nation at the present than have ever been seen before in this place. The chief is my Lord of Oxford, come newly from the Court of Tuscany; a gentleman who hath added much abroad both to his stature and judgement, and kept his religion very sound, which, with his other civil abilities, make me hope that he will

prove a brave instrument for the honour and service of his country." The reference to "my Lord of Oxford" is to Henry de Vere, eighteenth Earl of Oxford, son of Edward de Vere, the seventeenth Earl, by his second wife, Elizabeth Trentham.

Logan Pearsall Smith provides a footnote to this reference to "my Lord of Oxford." That footnote reproduces the address made by Wotton when he presented the eighteenth Earl of Oxford to the Doge in Venice on April 27, 1617. (Smith apparently found the address in the Esposizioni Principi, Archivio di Stato, Venice.) The address reads in part: "Your Serenity (the Doge) will oblige me, if he (Henry de Vere) may be allowed to enter and kiss your hands, and then may visit the beauties of Venice, to see which, beyond their universal fame, which is an incentive to every one, he has an especial motive in the example of his father (Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford), who in former times came to Italy, and when he arrived in Venice, took no trouble to see the rest of the country, but stopped here, and even built himself a house."

This seems to be sound evidence that the seventeenth Earl of Oxford in fact built a house in Venice. Wotton was a contemporary of Oxford and it is unlikely that he would make such a statement, if it were false, in the presence of the Doge and Oxford's son. This may do much to help explain Oxford's "extravagant" expenditures while traveling in Europe and also Shakespeare's intimate knowledge of Venice, its sights, sounds, and merchants.

#### A Decalog for Idolaters

1. Verily I, Abraham Bronson Feldman, of Philadelphia, Penn., have the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from the University of New Mexico, from well awarded studies in English literature and American history, and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania

(1950) where my major field of research was English poetry and drama in the period of Shake-speare. My doctoral dissertation was on "Dutch Influence in the Tudor Theatre." Several of its discoveries were published in the London Times Literary Supplement, Notes and Queries, & so on. Since 1928, when I entered the Central High School, I have been what the world cult that maintains William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon (a malt-dealer, money-lender and realestate speculator) was the supreme dramatist of the human race, calls a "heretic." My "infidel" days ended after years of intensive learning in the spring of 1932, when I declared myself convinced that John Thomas Looney of England had told the truth in 1919, when he affirmed in his book "Shakespeare" Identified that the true creator of Hamlet, Lear, and their stage and shelf companions, was Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford (1550-1604). This belief led at Temple University to my being blacklisted academically so that I could not obtain employment as a college teacher of English. I became a municipal archivist and curator, then a historian teaching "World Civilisation" at the Community College of Philadelphia. I also adventured into psychoanalysis, both as an author and practitioner, winning the privilege of two years' work with the late Dr. Theodor Reik of Vienna, who dared not follow his master Sigmund Freud when the latter proclaimed himself a disciple of Looney. Thus I earned the stature of the chief target of polemic in Norman Holland's volume Psychoanalysis and Shakespeare (1966).

2. The gentleman from Stratford, for whom university professors claim the complete works of William Shake-speare, never claimed them for himself, never signed his name "Shake-speare" but always as Shakspeare (pronounced to sound like Shockspoor), and made his fortune by silently serving as the real writer's agent in dealings with actors and printers. Once upon a time professors and publishers almost arrived at the honesty of spelling their idol's name Shakspeare. It is never too late to tell the truth.
3. The true writer who adopted the pen-name Shake-speare was a nobleman who would not

only have been publicly disgraced if his manual labor as a worker with the inkwell had become notorious; he would have lost his earldom and deprived his family of their rank and rights; probably the charge of bastardy which was brought against him in boyhood would have been resurrected, and the fate he feared in his Sonnets would have destroyed many whom he loved, or hardly knew.

4. You shall honor the father of modern British drama and world-visionary poetry, "dreaming of things to come,"\*
5. You shall not steal. "The worker is worthy of his wages," as Yeshua the Galilean said.\*\*
6. You shall not murder, nor side with and shoulder the state servitude of murderers, such as William Cecil and the inheritors of his horrors.
7. You shall not prostitute the vocation of teacher to trade, advertising, or usury, but labor humbly as a fetcher of facts to the ignorant, namely, all of us.
8. You shall not bear false witness.
9. You shall not pollute nor pervert the mirror of nature, literature.
10. You shall devote as many of your days and hours under the stars as your strength will endure to reflection on the road of God that is truth, and enjoyment of justice, its goal.

\* Delia Bacon was the earliest to realise the unknown Lord of languages was a prophet of cultural revolution, in her Philosophy of Shakespeare's Plays Unfolded (1856), whose publication Nathaniel Hawthorne paid for.

\*\* Over a century ago at least, the scholastic silliness of calling Shake-speare a mimic of Marlowe, a play-patcher, and plagiary of the Lylys, Peeles, Greenes, should have halted and given way to an elemental knowledge of the worth and wages of art.

(Editor's Note: The late Bronson Feldman prepared this Decalog as a Preface for his book, Early Shake-speare. We decided to let Oxfordians see it before the book appears.)

SOS Bulletin Board

Celeste Ashley, of Palo Alto, sends us a brief but excellent history of the de Veres, Earls of Oxford, from William Addison's Essex Worthies (London, 1973). We print an excerpt from that biographical history and will publish more of it in the next issue of the Newsletter:

## VERE

The de Vere family flourished in Essex from the Conquest to the death of the 20th Earl of Oxford in 1703.

Aubrey (Alberic) de Vere, first of that name, came over with the Conqueror and was granted 14 lordships in Essex, 2 houses in Colchester, 9 estates in Suffolk, and properties in other counties. He planted vineyards at Hedingham, Belchamp Walter, Lavenham, and Kensington, where Earls Court is believed to take its name from the court of the de Vere earls of Oxford, who were lords of the manor. In 1111 he founded a Benedictine priory at Earls Colne, and shortly after that date died there, although he had made Hedingham the head of his barony. Weaver (Ancient Funeral Monuments) tells us that the inscription on his tomb described him as first Earl of Guisnes and recorded that his wife was the Conqueror's sister.

Aubrey II (c.1090-1141) married Alice FitzRichard of Clare. He succeeded his father as King's Chamberlain, an office that was confirmed to him and his heirs in perpetuity. He also followed his father in acts of piety by making gifts to Colne Priory and Colchester Abbey. Then in 1135 he himself founded a priory at Hatfield Broad Oak. But his principal memorial is the noble castle keep at Castle Hedingham. At his death in a London riot he was buried at Earls Colne.

One of Aubrey II's daughters, Alice, married Robert de Essex (q.v.), lord of Rayleigh; another, Rohesia, married Geoffrey de Mandeville, 1st Earl of Essex (q.v.). It was she who erected the cross at the crossing of the Icknield Way and Ermine Street which gave rise to the town of Royston (Rohesia's town). A third daughter, Juliana, married Hugh Bigod, 1st Earl of Norfolk. A fourth married Roger de Raines, lord of Rayne.

Aubrey III, 1st Earl of Oxford (1110-94), joined his brother-in-law, Geoffrey de Mandeville, in supporting the Empress Maud (who actually died at Hedingham Castle) against Stephen, and for this support the empress created him Earl of

Oxford, a title which Stephen appears to have accepted by 1153, and which was confirmed to him by Maud's son, Henry II.

Aubrey, 2nd Earl of Oxford (c.1163-1214), son of the 1st Earl, died without issue.

Robert, 3rd Earl of Oxford (d.1221), was the third surviving son of the 1st Earl. He was one of the barons who forced King John to sign the Magna Carta. At his death he was buried in Hatfield Priory church, and not, as his ancestors had been, at Earls Colne. In the first quarter of the arms on the tomb effigy of the 3rd earl appears the mullet, or five-pointed star, which came to be one of the de Vere badges during the time of either the second or third Aubrey as a reminder of the incident recorded by Leland, who relates that

'The Night coming on in the chace of the Bataile, and waxing dark, the Christianes being four miles from Antiocke, God willing the Saufte of Christianes, shewed a white Starre or Molette of fyve Pointes, which, to every Manne's Sight, did lighte and arrest, upon the Standard of Albery there shining excessively'.

Hugh, 4th Earl of Oxford (c.1210-63), inherited the titles and offices of his line at the age of 11. He fought in the Holy Wars and was one of the barons who protested to the Pope in 1246 about the large sums of money being extracted annually by the Church from the common people.

Robert, 5th Earl of Oxford (d.1296), fought under Simon de Montfort at the Battle of Lewes, and was summoned to the first Parliament in December 1264. In the following year he was at Winchester with the younger Simon de Montfort, and after being captured at Kenilworth on the 1st August he was deprived for a time of his titles and honours. He recovered the earldom of Oxford under the Dictum of Kenilworth and probably acted as Chamberlain at the coronation of Edward I in 1274. At his death, his heart was buried in the Grey Friars at Ipswich, his body at Earls Colne.

Robert, 6th Earl of Oxford (1257-1331), who carried on the martial traditions of his family, earned the title of 'Robert the Good'. He was a man of great independence of mind. Although he served in the Scottish wars he boycotted the Bannockburn campaign. He also refused to attend the secret Parliament at York. Collins, in Noble Families, says of him:

'His Government, both in Peace and War, being so prudent, his Hospitality, and Works of Charity, so wisely abundant, and his Temperance, with a religious Zeal, so admirably conjoined, that the common People esteemed him as a Saint'.

His only son having died, he was succeeded in 1331 by his nephew, who was then only 19.

John, 7th Earl of Oxford (1313-60), officially recovered for the family the hereditary office of King's Chamberlain, which the fifth earl lost at Kenilworth. He was one of the finest soldiers of his day, being one of the commanders of the First Division at Crecy, with the Black Prince and the Earl of Warwick. During the siege of Calais he distinguished himself by leading 200 ships into an engagement with a French fleet bound for Calais and by capturing 20 French ships and many galleys with supplies. At Poitiers in 1356, it was the English archers led by the Earl of Oxford that saved the day. Four years later he was killed at the siege of Rheims.

Thomas, 8th Earl of Oxford (1337-71), accompanied his father, the 7th Earl, in his last campaign, and served in France in 1369; but he appears to have spent most of his time at home, peacefully carrying out the duties of a great landowner. He died at Great Bentley, but was buried at Earls Colne.

Robert, 9th Earl of Oxford (1362-92), acted as Chamberlain at the coronation of Richard II, although he was only 15 years old at the time. He married Philippa, daughter of the Earl of Bedford and grand-daughter of Edward III and Philippa of Hainault. By right of his own and his wife's ancestry, the 9th Earl lived close to the king and was at times accused of exercising undue influence in national affairs. In June 1381 he was at Richard's side when he rode out to meet the Peasants' Army at Mile End. When he came of age in 1383, he received from the king a

grant of the custody of the town and castle of Colchester and the overlordship of the Tendring Hundred. In 1385 he was granted additional estates without rent by Richard to assist him in the conquest of Ireland, and on December 1st 1385, in full Parliament, Robert, 9th Earl of Oxford, was created Marquess of Ireland, with semi-regal powers. The following year the marquessate was revoked and he was created Duke of Ireland.

When Richard was deprived of his kingly powers and the government transferred to the Commission presided over by the Duke of Gloucester, Oxford fell with him. He was also in disgrace at the time for having deserted his wife, Philippa, and for abducting one of the queen's maidens, Agnes Lancecrone, even going so far as to obtain, by dubious methods, a divorce from Philippa. This, however, was declared null and void by the Pope in 1389 and Philippa had the style of a Duchess for life.

Throughout these fluctuations of fortune, the Earl retained the king's confidence. In 1387 he made an abortive attempt from headquarters at Chester to regain power from Richard. When this failed he fled to the Low Countries, and in 1388 was condemned to death by Parliament for treason. His estates were forfeited; but as the succession was not barred by the attainder, the entailed estates were restored at his death in 1392 to his successor in the earldom.

Aubrey, 10th Earl of Oxford (c.1340-1400), uncle of the 9th Earl, tried in vain to recover for the family the office of Chamberlain, lost by the attainder of the 9th Earl. The first Parliament of Henry IV supported him, but Henry was adamant, and there were probably other considerations than those of loyalty. It was said at the time that the Earl was suffering 'from such feebleness and sickness as one who languished from palsy, having no health or discretion'. In the 8th Earl's time the Aubrey who became 10th Earl had been granted the stewardship of the Royal Forest of Havering. In 1378 he was granted the custody of Hadleigh Castle, the manor of Thundersley and the crown revenues

from Rayleigh. He carried the king's sword when Richard met Wat Tyler at Mile End in 1381. In view of his long association with Hadleigh, it is thought probable that he was buried there.

Richard, 11th Earl of Oxford (1385-1417), was one of Henry V's commanders at Agincourt.

Bronson Feldman's "The Secret Verses of Edward de Vere," a snippet of which appeared in the Spring 1982 issue of the Newsletter, the issue which was dedicated to Dr. Feldman's memory, appears in its entirety in the current issue of The Bard. Copies of The Bard may be purchased by writing:

The Shakespearean Authorship Trust  
11 Old Square, Lincoln's Inn  
Chancery Lane  
London WC2A 3TS  
England

Ruth Loyd Miller, while in England, obtained a set of six prints of 18th century engravings relating to Castle Hedingham and its environs. These include five plates of Plans of Castle Hedingham and Environs, prints from engravings published April 23, 1796 by Act of Congress, by the Society of Antiquaries, London, as follows: Plate XL: Plan of the Ballium (or inner court) of Castle Hedingham; Plate XLI: Plans of the Stories and Dungeon, Elevations of the Chief Entrance, Loop, Holes, and Windows; Plate XLII: Elevation of the South Front of Hedingham Castle, of various Apertures, Bases, Columns, etc. with a Plan of the Ground Floor; Plate XLIII: Section of Hedingham Castle from East to West; Plate XLIV: South West View of Hedingham Castle in the County of Essex, and a plate of a Map of Castle Hedingham and Environs, published as the Act directs October 1, 1777, by John Chapman and Peter Andre. Ruth Loyd Miller offers to members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society slightly reduced copies of these prints at \$15.00 for the set of six prints. Sets may be ordered by writing:

Ruth Loyd Miller  
Old Evangeline Road  
P.O. Bin 1309  
Jennings, Louisiana 70546

Verily Paget, an SOS member from Norfolk, England, draws our attention to "an extract from the newly published The Lyttleton Hart-Davis Letters, correspondence of George Lyttleton and

Rupert Hart-Davis Volume 4, covering 1959. It has just been published by John Murray. Sir Rupert Hart-Davis is the well-known London publisher who set the London Library on its feet from the late 1950's. George Lyttleton was an Eton housemaster for several decades and taught Sir Rupert classics in his last year when he 'fell under the spell of his infectious enthusiasm for literature.' Many years later they agreed to write to each other almost weekly and much is written by both about literature, concerning which both are outstandingly knowledgeable. Thus George Lyttleton's observations here cannot be taken lightly, although he writes in such a light hearted manner."

The extract of Lyttleton's letter to Hart-Davis reads: "I am writing a life of Shakespeare in 1500 words for Dick Routh's wildly improbable biographical dictionary. I don't find it very easy. Until I really began to poke about I hadn't realised how very few facts about him are really known. The point I have arrived at combines the convictions that W.S. of Stratford couldn't have written the plays, and that no one else could have. You may remember that old Agate, after toying with the Baconian theory, came, characteristically, to the conclusion that S. wrote the bulk of every play but that he was Bacon's 'fancy boy' and his patron put in numerous odd bits here and there. But does that really hold more water than any other theory? It is interesting to find that Masfield found in the Stratford bust 'a man with much vitality of mind' and that the Droeshout portrait, which most people find frankly doughy, shows 'a face of delicate sensitiveness'. Isn't this wishful thinking? I shall of course give Tolstoy's opinion; after reading all the plays some seven times he says that the universal admiration of the poet proves the world to be mad."

Harold Patience, of Braintree, Essex, kindly informs us that A.L. Rowse continues to speak to himself in public. In a recent Sunday Telegraph Magazine, Rowse cast the following swirls before pine, as E.E. Cummings used to say:

"Worst of all are the Shakespeare and Richard III crackpots...One court grandee, a royal secretary, told me that he thought all Shakespeare's plays were written by the Earl of Oxford. So I said innocently: 'And I suppose you think Richard III didn't kill the Princes in the Tower?' 'However did you know that?' he said. 'That is just what I do think.' I replied: 'Because they are two psychological kinks that go together'. And I have never been spoken to in that quarter since. Never mind: it was not his business to know. And that is what is wrong with so much of the fan mail I receive. People should be ready just to listen to those who do know, as I always am. I am ready to listen to what a mechanic tells me about the insides of my motor-car, or to what a doctor says about my own insides. Why cannot fans take the same attitude?"

Olga Ironside Wood, of Suffolk, England, reports that the "Evening of Poetry, Prose, and Music" which she and Ronald Blythe put together and performed in the Chapel of St. Stephen, Bures, on Saturday, March 27, 1982, during the recent visit of Judge and Mrs. Miller to England, was an extraordinary success. Olga Ironside Wood's introductory remarks included the following:

"You may well ask why we are tonight paying deference to Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, Arthur Golding, his Uncle and Tutor, and poets of their time. Surrounded as we are by de Vere ancestor tombs, I will tell you.

"About 20 years ago, the American Bar Association published a series of essays putting forward the idea that Edward de Vere was the author of plays and poems said to be written by one William Shaxper of Stratford....

"These essays roused the curiosity of Ruth Loyd Miller, an American lawyer and her Judge husband, whom I am happy to say we have with us tonight. They tracked down the outstanding literary detective of all time--one J. Thomas Looney, an English schoolmaster. This patient, scholarly man identified the characteristics we should expect to find in a man who was Shakespeare and then combed the records of the period to see who fitted these.

"With Edward de Vere as author, everything falls into place."

### Shakespeare Tried In Detroit

Carleton Healy, an S.O.S. member from Gross Pointe, Michigan, had the pleasure of attending a trial at which Shakespeare faced charges of fraud on April 23, the hypothesized birthdate of the hypothesized bard. Styled "the trial of the centuries," the event was a funny fundraiser for the Cranbrook Writers Guild. The purpose of the trial was "to determine whether Shakespeare's work and reputation merit the reverence and critical acclaim accorded them."

The prosecutor, described as "flamboyant," was Mark McPherson, information services director of Wayne County Community College. Kurt Berggren, of Ann Arbor, was the defense attorney. Phillip Traci, an English professor at Wayne State, appeared as an expert witness for the defense, testifying that he believed Shakespeare's plays are "clearly the product of a single intelligence--whoever wrote them." Traci's testimony swayed the jury who acquitted Shakespeare of the charges.

The Detroit Free Press described the hilarious proceedings this way: "Extraordinary procedures included the judges's order of 'Wine for the witness!' the (denied) request by juror Charley Manos for wine to be served during deliberations, the appearance of a witness in kilts and bare knees and of another who calmly poured Guinness stout into a glass as he testified...And the defendant, William Shakespeare, never appeared."

The playwright's commentary on the proceedings might have been those wonderful words from Much Ado: "Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this."

### A Reminder:

The 6th National Conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society will be held in Washington, D.C., on October 15 and 16, 1982.

Guest Speaker: Calvin Hoffman



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# Newsletter *Shakespeare Oxford Society*

Vero Nihil Verius

FALL, 1982

Vol. 18, No. 4

## Shake-speare's Heart Unlocked

by

William Plumer Fowler

(Editor's Note: The following ingenious and literarily sensitive reading of two of Shake-speare's sonnets by SOS member William Fowler, whose edition of Oxford's letters we anxiously await, relies in part on the author's acceptance of some rather controversial speculation—that is, the hypothesis that the Earl of Southampton was the illegitimate son of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Queen Elizabeth. While this hypothesis has been misused as a ground for attacking the Oxfordian case at large, and though far from all Oxfordians accept or even seriously entertain the hypothesis, Mr. Fowler's work is of enough importance and interest to deserve a hearing. Additionally, many of Mr. Fowler's sharpest points do not require acceptance of the hypothesis to be valid. I have taken the liberty of slightly modifying Mr. Fowler's language at two places to indicate where speculation veers from fact. I have also added a footnote which is intended to indicate the possibility of contrary arguments. Oxfordians with alternative views on these or other of Shake-speare's sonnets are encouraged to express those views in future issues of the Newsletter. Readers who are not Oxfordians should realize that the hypothesis mentioned here is not at all an integral part of the case for Oxford as the true author behind the pen name, "William Shakespeare.")

More than a century has passed since William Wordsworth, in his Sonnet on the Sonnet, urged us to "Scorn not the Sonnet," and perceptively observed:

"With this key, Shakespeare unlocked his heart."

And Wordsworth's advice was followed by the late Dr. Louis Paul Benezet in his approach to the solution of the mystery surrounding the authorship of Shakespeare ever since the Rev. James Wilmot, as far back as 1785—after his investigation in Stratford had indicated

that Shakspeare, the son of illiterate parents, could neither read nor write—first suspected that "something is rotten" in the state of England, as well as Denmark. Wilmot believed the name "William Shakespeare" to have been a pseudonym of Sir Francis Bacon's. But it is Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, rather than Bacon, that Dr. Benezet shows to have been the true author, following the solution first advanced in 1920 by a British schoolmaster, J. Thomas Looney (pronounced "Loney") in his book "Shakespeare" Identified as Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. Looney had reached this conclusion by a veritable piece of Scotland Yard detective work, in locating the one man in all England possessing at that time all the qualities requisite to the writing of the Shakespearean canon, besides having written poetry in the same meter as some of Shakespeare's.

Dr. Benezet in 1937, while Superintendent of Schools in Manchester, New Hampshire, and before joining the Dartmouth College faculty, published his convincing booklet on Oxford's authorship, Shakspeare, Shakespeare and De Vere; and twenty-one years later, when he was 80 years old and Professor of English literature at Jackson College, Honolulu, he brought out his last book on this topic, The Six Loves of "Shake-Speare," with his reasoning based very largely on the Sonnets. Time has borne out the soundness of Dr. Benezet's analysis, and the truth of Looney's prophetic conclusion that with Oxford, "the problem of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays has been solved, and all future enquiry is destined to furnish but an accumulating support of the solution here proposed."

Oxford (1550-1604) was at least eleven years older than Bacon (1561-1628) or Shakspeare (1564-1616) or any of the other claimants;

and he alone meets all fourteen of the "Requirements for the Author" listed in Dr. Benezet's helpful chart in Appendix B of his first book, taken from those on which Looney had based his original identification. Oxford was a man of exceptional sensitivity, genius, education, and ability, who possessed all the social, linguistic, cultural, military, and cosmopolitan advantages that in the case of the Stratford man have had to be presumed. And unlike the Stratford man, Oxford had spent over a year in foreign travel, particularly in France and northern Italy, the scene of so many of the Shakespearean plays. Two of Oxford's uncles, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (inventor of the Shakespearean sonnet form) and Lord Edmund Sheffield had been poets; and another uncle, his mother's brother Arthur Golding, had been Oxford's unofficial tutor while translating Ovid's Metamorphoses--with the contents of which, according to Sir Sidney Lee, Shakespeare "at all periods of his career....gave signs of affectionate familiarity." Poems had appeared over Oxford's name or initials up until he became 26 years old in 1576, after which no poems or plays in his name can be found, even though he was reputed by his contemporaries to have been the best for his time in poetry, comedy and tragedy.

Dr. Benezet tells us that Oxford took his nom de plume of "William Shakespeare"--a then common name of which there were at least three individuals living near London--from his crest as Lord Bulbeck before succeeding in 1562 to the earldom of Oxford. This crest was a lion shaking a broken spear in token of victory. A further reason is seen in the Earl's position as head of the world's first secret department of wartime propaganda (See B.M. Ward's "17th Earl of Oxford." ) through the medium of the stage--for which "Spear-Shaker" would have been a fitting slogan--starting in 1586 (two years before Spain's Armada invasion attempt). In that year, he was granted an unexplained huge salary of 1,000 pounds a year from the British Exchequer at a time when England was faced with a life and death struggle against Spain. Following this salary grant, some ninety patriotic plays by various authors had appeared, which--as at least three historians attest--were a crucial factor in assuring the Armada defeat and England's ultimate victory in the Anglo-Spanish War. Oxford's phenomenally large salary continued for 18 years under both Queen Elizabeth and King James until the Earl's

death in 1604, two months before the signing of the treaty of peace with Spain. A third good reason for the pseudonym's appropriateness is that Oxford himself had been England's champion Spear-Shaker in the winning of the three tournaments in which he had participated between 1571 and 1584.

In seeking "the true key to the Shakespearean mystery" in Shake-Speare's Sonnets (as the name appeared on the title page of G. Eld's first imprinting in 1609) Dr. Benezet in his first book accepts the identification made by Percy Allen and Capt. B.M. Ward, of the nine-year-old boy who was Oxford's page in the 1584 tournament as the fair (or Vere) youth to whom so many of the sonnets are addressed and as Oxford's illegitimate son who had been rather generally known by the name of "William Shakespeare" (his father's pseudonym). This boy reached the age of 18 about 1592 when the sonnets urging the youth to marry were being written. Dr. Benezet explains the hoax of attributing the authorship of Oxford's works to the simple actor William Shakspeare of Stratford, as a device seized upon by Oxford's three legitimate daughters and their grandfather Lord Treasurer Burghley in order to conceal the family scandal.

On the other hand, J. Thomas Looney was convinced that this youth or page was Henry Wriothesley, the 3rd Earl of Southampton, to whom Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece were dedicated in 1593 and 1594 respectively; and that Oxford's interest in Southampton was due to the latter's having become engaged in the early 1590's to Oxford's daughter Elizabeth--although Southampton had resolutely refused to yield to the pressure of his guardian Lord Burghley (her maternal grandfather) to go through with the marriage, and had subsequently married Elizabeth Vernon instead. While Dr. Benezet in his first book considers it "very strange for any man to give such affection to one who merely was related to him through the tie of approaching marriage," he later, in his last book, abandoned his original identification and accepted Looney's conclusion that the fair youth was Henry Wriothesley, and that the sonnets represented Oxford's effort to pro-

note that marriage--though they actually only urge the youth to perpetuate his line by choosing "some mother" (Sonnets 3 & 6) for "some child of yours" (Sonnet 17). Furthermore, no mention of this marriage by Oxford is found in any of his known letters, of some fifty of which the writer has now finished a detailed study to be published soon, and which average over two correspondences per line to Shakespeare.

Southampton has today become generally accepted as the young man to whom the Sonnets are addressed. But what is far less generally accepted, and what eluded both Mr. Looney and Dr. Benezet, is that some have advanced the hypothesis that Southampton himself was this illegitimate first-born son of Oxford's, who could not be openly acknowledged, because his mother was incredibly none other than Queen Elizabeth. This--far more than the desire to hide the de Vere family scandal--would, if true, account for the great secrecy and mystery surrounding Oxford's name and pseudonym; and, in the light of the necessity of preserving Queen Elizabeth's national image as the chaste "Virgin Queen," explains England's having made "the divine William" (in the words of Henry James) "the biggest and most successful fraud ever practised on a patient world." Queen Elizabeth, we must realize, was the one unifying force holding her Catholic and Protestant subjects together in the face of her country's threatened invasion by Spain, and of the Spanish King Philip's Catholic plots to supplant her by Mary Queen of Scots on the British throne. As Queen Elizabeth's child, Henry Wriothsesley--Titania's "little changeling boy" for whom Oberon begs in A Midsummer Night's Dream (II,1,120)--had been really born in June, 1574, and had in some way been substituted for the Countess of Southampton's own child born eight months before, in October, 1573. Thus both of the original identifications of Oxford's young page were right; and the breaking of Southampton's engagement to Oxford's daughter Elizabeth de Vere was probably due to Oxford's being forced to at last reveal his true paternity rather than let Southampton marry his own half-sister.

If Southampton's true parentage--particularly the suggestion of Queen Elizabeth's having had any children--comes as a shock to the average reader, as it did to the writer, reference is made to the full explanation in

Chapter 61 of Dorothy and Charlton Ogburn's This Star of England (Published by Coward-McCann, Inc., New York, in 1952, and republished in 1972 by the Greenwood Press of Westport, Connecticut) and to that book's preceding Chapter 46 and Note 3 of its Appendix. The Ogburns' conclusion as to Southampton's true parentage was also reached by Percy Allen and B.M. Ward. Space limits us here to pointing out that Queen Elizabeth was no less highly sexed than her father Henry the Eighth, and that she had her affairs with Leicester and other men, including Oxford, but that, in her determination to do what was best for her country, she had to maintain her national image of "Leaving no posterity," which "William Shake-speare" (as the poet's name appears in Robert Chester's Love's Martyr under "The Phoenix and Turtle," when first published in 1601) explains in his allegorical swan-song of "The Phoenix and Turtle" (the "Phoenix" being the Queen; and "Turtle" or "Turtle Dove," Oxford--DOVE is an anagram for the initials of Edward de Vere Oxford):

"'T was not their infirmity,  
It was married chastity."

Dr. Benezet did not, however, go far enough in his exposition of the way in which some of Shake-Speare's Sonnets unlock the true poet's heart, since the sonnets themselves provide impressive corroboration for the Ogburns' above conclusion. But in order to understand this, we must recognize the Elizabethans' delight in nimble wordplay--puns and ciphers being then highly regarded. Oxford, moreover, used as cachets for his name Edward de Vere (more briefly "E. Vere") and childhood nickname "Ned Vere," the words "EVER" and "NEVER," as well as "TRUTH" and "TRUE," English translations of the Latin "VER" and their derivatives; also his initials, "O" and "E.O." with which he had signed some of his early poems. We should also recognize that the Earl of Southampton's (Henry Wriothsesley's) initials "H.W." were written by the Elizabethans as "H.UU." (there being then no separate letter "W") and pronounced "HUE," like a cockneyed "YOU"--words occurring fairly often in Shakespeare's Sonnets.

With this introduction, we turn first to the 76th Sonnet, which--as Dr. Benezet indicates--has been recognized since 1930--see Gerald H. Rendall, Shakespeare Sonnets and Edward de Vere (London: John Murray, Albemarle

Street, W., 1930) p. 210--as revealing in its second quatrain the 17th Earl of Oxford's family name, "E. Ver," as evidence of Oxford's authorship of the Sonnets, viz. (with emphasis added):

"Why write I still all one, EVER the same,  
And keep invention in a noted weed,  
That EVERY word doth almost tell my name,  
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?"

This sonnet's fifth line, with which the above-quoted quatrain begins, brings together (as shown by the Ogburns' This Star of England, Chapter 64, page 893) both the Third Earl of Southampton's motto, "One for all and all for one," and Queen Elizabeth's motto, "semper eadem" or "ever the same," with the Earl of Oxford's "E. VER" cachet squeezed between them--"showing" Southampton's carefully concealed "birth" of Oxford's and Queen Elizabeth's parentage, in the mottoes and name-clues "where(to) they did proceed," and then giving the key to what this master of multiple meaning is up to in the double reference to "you" for "H.UU." for Southampton's initials in the third quatrain and in the reference to "son" in the concluding couplet, viz. (with emphasis added):

"O, know, sweet love, I always write of you (H.UU)  
And you and love are still my argument.  
So all my best is dressing old words new,  
Spending again what is already spent,  
For as the sun (=son) is daily new and old,  
So is my love still telling what is told."

But even more astounding corroboration of the sonnet-writer's name and relationship to Southampton is found in the preceding 73rd and 74th Sonnets, which are among the pairs invariably grouped together in all attempted rearrangements of Shakespeare's Sonnets. We consider first the 73rd Sonnet (emphasis being added):

LXXIII.

"That time of year thou mayst in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang

Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou see'st the twilight of such day

As after sunset fadeth in the west,  
Which by and by black night doth take away,

Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.

In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,

That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the death-bed whereon it must expire  
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by:

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,

To love that well which thou must leave ere long."

This sonnet is outstanding for its beauty of description, both of natural phenomena, and of a man in the late autumn or early winter of life (another strong argument against the much younger Stratford William Shakspeare's authorship). And it is hardly one in which to look for clues as to the sonneteer's name, particularly after the poet's having written in the 71st Sonnet (two sonnets back),

"Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,"  
and in the immediately preceding 72nd Sonnet,

"My name be buried where my body is,  
And live no more to shame nor me nor you."

But the answer, both as to the identity of the poet, and as to the time of year that we may behold in him, will be found in the sonnet's concluding words, "leave ere long," which, when spoken, give us the triple entendre of "E. Vere" in English, and of l'hiver in French, for winter, the time of year that we may behold in the poet E. Vere, or the aging Oxford, "When forty winters had besieged his brow" (to paraphrase the opening line of Sonnet 2).

Noting next the triple emphasis with which the phrase "in me" from the opening line of the first quatrain is twice repeated in the words "In me thou see'st," introducing each of the two succeeding quatrains, we are impelled to peer more closely into "the twilight" and "the glowing," which the poet

tells his son that he may see "in me," or in E. Ver.

So--turning to the second quatrain,

"In me thou see'st the twilight of such day

As after sunset fadeth in the west"--

we ask just what that twilight is. Why, "evening" of course, or more poetically, "EVE"--the first syllable, as pronounced, of the French "hiver," with its aspirate "h," or of the poet's name E.VERE.

And with these solutions to the first two quatrains, it is only reasonable to expect an equally significant one in the third quatrain, "In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire," etc.; and we find it in the Latin infinitive "fervere" (meaning "to glow" or "the glowing")--a double echo of the last syllable--ver--of the French "hiver," or of Oxford's name "E. VERE" (if we let the "v" do double duty).

So there it all is: (1) the French "HIVER" for winter, the time of year beholden in "E. VERE"; with (2) its first syllable the English "EVE" for "the twilight" seen "after sunset"; and (3) its last syllable "VER" (or VERE) seen doubly in the Latin translation "FERVERE" of "the glowing," wherein the final "VERE" lies dying on the ashes left from the now consumed initial "FER"vor of his youth; and (4) with all three quatrains bound together in the English "leave ere" or French "l'hiver," for the Earl's name "E. VER" and the winter beholden in him, both of which we "perceive" in the concluding clinching couplet, with the poet's name "E. Ver" ringing out to us like the stroke of a blacksmith's hammer upon an anvil--leading up to the ensuing Sonnet 74.

And all this throws considerable light on the otherwise misleading title of The Winter's Tale--in French "Le Conte d'Hiver"--as close as the Earl dares come to signing his own name in French as "Le Comte d'Hiver," or "The Earl d' E. Vere" (i.e., the Earl of Oxford).

And if our Stratfordian friends call this just "A Midsummer Night's Dream," we have a precedent as to Oxford's tri-lingual word-play in English, French, and Latin, in his triple rendition of a single precept: (1) in Hector's words to Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida (IV,5,224), "The end crowns all"; (2) in Lord Clifford's dying words in Henry VI, Part II (V,2,28), "La fin couronne les

oeuvres"; and (3) as the last link in this tri-lingual trilogy, Oxford's statement in his holographic letter of January, 1602, to Sir Robert Cecil, "Finis coronat opus."

A further significance will be found also in the word "well" in the sonnet's last line,

"To love that well which thou must leave ere long."

This word "well" is often used by Oxford as a pun on his name "Ver"; since "well" is a variant of spring, meaning not only a source of water, but also a season of the year, for which the Latin is "Ver."

After gasping at the superlative genius of a man who could conceal both such an adroit riddle and its answer in a sonnet of such great beauty, we turn to the ensuing 74th Sonnet (adding emphasis):

LXXIV.

"But be contented: when that fell arrest  
Without all bail shall carry me away,  
My life hath in this line some interest,  
Which for memorial still with thee shall  
stay:

When thou reviewest this, thou dost review  
The very part was consecrate to thee:  
The earth can have but earth, which is  
his due;

My spirit in thine, the better part of me.  
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of  
life,

The prey of worms, my body being dead;  
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,  
Too base of thee to be remember-ed,

The worth of that is that which it  
contains,  
And that 's this, and this with thee  
remains."

This sonnet presents another puzzle, viz.: as to just what the "memorial" is that is referred to in lines 3 and 4:

"My life hath in this line some interest  
Which for memorial still with thee  
shall stay."

(Note the antithesis between "my life" and the double entendre in "memorial," as me morial or me dying.) To solve this puzzle, or rather riddle, however, we have only to follow the clear directions in the ensuing lines 5 and 6:

"When thou reviewest this thou dost REVIEW  
The VERY part was consecrate to thee."



From the repetition in line 5 of the "this" from the phrase "in this line" in line 3, we perceive that line 4 should end with a colon and that the words "in this line" refer not to line 3, but to the ensuing line 5 as the one in which to find the "memorial" on reviewing it. Also, in line 6 we are told what to look for in reviewing line 5, that is for the poet's "VERY part," or his family name VER, consecrated to the fair (Vere) youth. So let us follow these directions.

The result is amazing. For in the double-headed word "REV-IEW," read backwards, we actually see again or "re-view" the father, "VER," consecrated or joined in a Janus-like "memorial" to his carefully concealed "base-born son of the SONnets, S(outhampt)on," with the dying father's name, "VER," seen as we "review" or glance back over the first syllable, "REV"; and the son's initials, "HUU," for Henry Wriothesley, pronounced as we read its last syllable, "IEW," forward. What a magnificent memorial!

The word "REVIEW" itself, moreover,--if reviewed or read backwards as directed--becomes "WE I (Roman one) VER," to give us further memorial proof that "my friend and I are one," as in the 42nd Sonnet (13)--"friend" being a common Elizabethan designation for a man's natural son--and what is more, a clear statement that Southampton and Oxford are both of the same "Ver" blood.

The sonnet goes on in its sestet to tell Southampton that the Earl leaves his "spirit" or "better part" to him, even though his own dead body (maimed by Sir Thomas Knyvet's "wretched knife," as Oxford was in their duel\*) is now left to "worms"--vers in French. And it is this leaving of the poet's spirit to the fair youth that has been generally regarded as the sonnet's chief significance.

Thus this 74th Sonnet supplies the information lacking to both Mr. Looney and Dr. Benezet that Southampton himself was the illegitimate son to whom Allen and Ward believed the sonnets to the fair youth--now shown to be a Vere youth--were addressed, and thus puts "Shakespeare's" Sonnets to the fair youth on the highest plane. The sonnet corroborates

\* Editor's Note: It should be mentioned that this duel was fought as a result of Oxford's relationship with Ann Vavasor, Knyvet's niece, supporting those who argue that Sir Edward Vere, Oxford's illegitimate son by Ann Vavasor, is the youth addressed in these Sonnets.

Allen's and Ward's conviction, as first accepted by Dr. Benezet, that they arose from a philoprogenitive motive--one much stronger than mere affection for a prospective son-in-law. The sonnet reveals the sound basis behind Southampton's obdurate refusal to marry his own half-sister. It also dovetails with Professor Akrigg's belief expressed in his book about Southampton (Akrigg, Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton, pages 45-46) that the 5,000 pounds reputed to have been collected from Southampton by Lord Treasurer Burghley--ostensibly as damages for the youth's breach of promise to marry Burghley's granddaughter Elizabeth de Vere--were really a disguised fine for Southampton's aid to the two Danvers brothers in their escape to France after their murder of Henry Long. This last consideration, along with Burghley's promotion of the engagement to his granddaughter, fits in with that astute nobleman's efforts to protect at all costs Queen Elizabeth's national image as the chaste "Virgin Queen" by drawing red herrings across all trails leading to her and his own family's scandal, but at the same time punishing Southampton without implicating him as an accessory to murder.

Furthermore, this 74th Sonnet strengthens a weak link in Dr. Benezet's analysis in his Six Loves of "Shake-Speare," that Shakespeare's Sonnets were severally written to his six different loves, constituting three well-matched pairs: (a) "the two Elizabeths"--Queen Elizabeth and the Earl's second wife Elizabeth Trentham; (b) "the two Annes"--his first wife Anne Cecil, and his dark-haired mistress Anne Vavasor; and (c) "the two fair youths"--Southampton and Sir Edward Vere (Oxford's younger bastard son by his dark mistress Anne Vavasor). These two youths are now shown to be Vere youths, Oxford's two bastard sons, even though Sir Edward Vere was dark like his mother. Sir Edward Vere was clearly identified as the Earl's son by Charles Wisner Barrell and traced to Holland where his father had sent him to be educated away from any stigma of bastardy, and where, as some speculate, after having written plays with a bastard as the hero under the nom de plume Cyril Tourneur, he was killed as Colonel in the British forces opposing Spain.

Oxford, in his complete loyalty to his Queen and country, was later forced, as one of the panel of Lords passing judgment on the Essex rebels in 1601, to condemn his own first-born son Southampton to death with Essex for treason, as the latter's second in command. But though Essex's head rolled off on the block two weeks later, Southampton's sentence was commuted by Queen Elizabeth (his biological mother) to life imprisonment in the Tower, from which he was released on her death two years later, by King James as his first official act before leaving Scotland for his coronation in England. Thus Shakespeare, as the writer Oxford will always be known, was able at the end of the Earl's life in the 107th Sonnet to pour out his heart to Southampton as,

"Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom,"  
and--with the Spanish War no longer a threat, and referring to himself by his initial, "O," for Oxford, camouflaged as a small letter without a period--to add (emphasis supplied):

"Uncertainties now crown themselves  
assured,  
And peace proclaims olives of endless  
age"--  
but fearful lest his "O" for Oxford, and his double meaning in "olives," be missed, explaining that in spite of Death,

"I'll live in this poor rhyme"--  
as Oxford does, in Shakespeare's immortal  
verse.

#### Baylor Receives Books Which Explore Question of Shakespearean Authorship

Baylor University officials recently received a set of books from Ruth Loyd Miller of Jennings, La., in honor of her aunt, Lucille Meadows.

The books explore the question of Shakespearean authorship--whether or not Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, was the author concealed behind the pseudonym "Shakespeare."

Included in the set are Volumes I and II of "Shakespeare Identified" by J. Thomas Looney, "Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays" by a Turner Clark and "A Hundreth Sundrie

Flowers: From the Original Edition of 1573" by Bernard M. Ward. Published in 1975, the books were edited by Mrs. Miller.

"My purpose in editing these books was to get them back in print and onto the library shelves for students to use," stated Mrs. Miller, a leading authority on the Shakespearean authorship question. "I wanted to uncover every scrap of evidence and to bring all available materials together. If Shakespeare were on trial for his life, and if you had to convict him with a connection to his plays, he would go free. There is not one single fact to connect him with these works. Everything has been supposition and conjecture."

According to Mrs. Miller, there is a strong "movement" concerning this subject in England. Most of the research is being done by very prominent people, especially attorneys and journalists, she said.

(Editor's Note: This item was issued as a press release by Baylor University. It has appeared in papers throughout Texas and Louisiana.)

Sir John Smith  
by  
H. Amphlett.

(Editor's Note: We are grateful to the late Hilda Amphlett's sister, Mrs. Robins, for permission to print the following unpublished manuscript, and to Harold Patience, for sending us the manuscript. Hilda Amphlett was the author of Who Was Shakespeare?)

Those who have followed the case for Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, as a claimant for Shakespearean honours will remember the praise bestowed on Oxford by Chapman in The Revenge of Bussy d'Amboise. The excerpt that is usually quoted commences, "I overtook coming from Italy in Germany, a great and famous Earl of England," and concludes "And 'twas the Earl of Oxford." The speech then concludes, "...and being offered at that time by Duke Casimir the view of his right royal army then in field, refused it" (Duke Casimir, with 6,000 soldiers under the Duc de Conde had mustered in Chatillon in Burgundy in January 1576) "...and no foot was moved to stir out of his own free-determined course; i wondering at it ask'd for it his reason,

it being an offer so much for his honour. He, acknowledging, said, 'twas not fit to take those honours that one cannot quit.' Indeed he 'esteemed it freer to keep his own way straight, and swore that he had rather make away his whole estate in things that crossed the vulgar, than be frozen up, stiff, like Sir John Smith, his countryman, in nobles fashions, affecting, as though the end of noblesse were those servile observations."

Who was this Sir John Smith whose "servile observations" had roused Oxford's scathing denunciations? How did their paths cross? And what had Shakespeare to say about it?

Sir John Smith or Smythe was born in 1534 and was thus sixteen years de Vere's senior. He was the eldest son of Sir Clement Smith and resided at Little Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex, and was, therefore, in the manner of gentry, a near neighbour of Lord Oxford's. Sir John's mother was Dorothy, daughter of Sir John Seymour of Wolf Hall, Wiltshire, sister of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and was thus cousin to King Edward VI.

He did not obtain a degree at Oxford, and after having been chidden by King Edward for hearing mass in 1550, followed his natural bent towards military matters and went to serve in the Low Countries. Later he fought against the Turks in Hungary and so came under the notice of the Emperor Maximilian II.

Protesting his devotion to England and his desire to return home he was granted the Manor of Little Baddow by Queen Elizabeth, and, on the recommendation of Sir Henry Lee, he was invited by her majesty to enter government service for which office his linguistic powers made him suitable.

In his own words "refusing very great entertainment that he was offered by certain very great and foreign princes" he accepted the queen's offer, and it is probable that it was at this time that he was knighted. In 1576 he was sent to France on a government mission, and it was this year that Duke Casimir had mustered his troops and Oxford is reported as making his scathing remark about "his countryman Sir John Smith" whose phrase of "refusing very great entertainment" etc., sounds as though he had transferred Oxford's proffered honours to himself. He, Sir John, is reported as having given a disparaging account of the ladies of the French Court in comparison with those of the Court of Elizabeth, but we may presume that this was one of

the "servile observations" which disgusted Lord Oxford.

In the spring of 1577 Smith was entrusted with a diplomatic mission of high importance to Madrid to explain Elizabeth's attitude towards the unrest in the Low Countries; an account of his reception by King Philip and the Duke of Alva being still preserved at Lambeth.

He seems to have been an odd-tempered man, very self-opinionated and observing little respect for his superiors with whom he happened to disagree. He had borrowed money of the queen and his importunate appeals to her and her ministers brought repeated reprimands. But when the country was threatened by the Spanish Armada he was directed to train regiments of soldiers raised in his own county of Essex, and it was his silly boast that he admitted to their ranks only men of respectability. In fact he wrote to Burleigh warning him of the danger of forming an army of men of the baser sorts.

It was at Tilbury that the paths of Smith and de Vere again crossed as may be seen from a letter written by the Earl of Leicester, Commander-in-Chief of the troops massing to protect England in the event of invasion, July 28th, 1588:

"My Lord of Oxford returned again yesterday with Captain Huntly as his company. It seemed only his voyage was to have gone to my Lord Admiral; and at his return thither he went yesternight for his armour and furniture. If he come I would know from you what I should do. I trust he is free to go to the enemy, for he seems most willing to hazard his life in this quarrel."

And the letter concludes with an account of the antics of Sir John Smith thus:

"You would laugh to see how Sir John Smyth hath dealt. Since my coming here he came to me and told me his desires so grew upon him as he must needs go to the baths. I told him I would not be against his health but he saw what the time was and what pains he had taken for his countrymen and that I had provided a good place for him. The next day he came again, saying little to my offer then and seemed desirous for his health to be gone. I told him what place I did appoint which was a regiment of a great part of

his countrymen...Yesterday being our muster day he came again to dinner to me, but such foolish and glorious paradoxes he burst without any cause offered as made all that knew anything smile and answer little, but in sort to satisfy men present than to argue with him. After at the muster he entered again into such strange tries for ordering men, and for the fight with weapons as made me think he was not well and God forbid he should have charge of men that knoweth so little as I dare pronounce he doth."

How Oxford's "jovial mind" would have enjoyed this scene in retrospect, even if at the time, with the urgency of his country's needs and safety, he was consumed with impatience and annoyance. Every real-life scene thus observed found its way into the inimitable works:

FALSTAFF. "If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnable. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons; enquire me out contracted bachelors such as had been asked twice on the bans;...I pressed me none but such toasts-and-butter...and they have bought their services, and now my whole charge consists of slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, and such as, indeed, were never soldiers."

In 1591 Smith composed "four or five little books" treating of matters of arms and in the following year he published one of them in which he favoured the use of the bow-- "Certain discourses written by Sir John Smyth, knight, concerning the forms and effects of divers sorts of weapons and other verie important matters militarie, greatly mistaken by divers of our men of warre in these daies and chiefly of the mosquet the caliver and long bow." So we hear:

FALSTAFF (choosing recruits) "Oh, give me the spare men and spare me the great ones. Put me the caliver into Wart's hand, Bardolph.

BARD "Hold, Wart, traverse;--thus, thus, thus--"

FAL "Come manage me your caliver. So, very well; go to--very good; exceeding good. Oh, give me always a little lean old chapped shot."

SHALLOW "He is not his craft's master-- he doth not do it right. I remember at Mile-end Green, when I lay at Clement's inn there was a little quiver fellow and he would manage you his piece thus and he would about and about, and come you in, and come you in; rah tah tah; bounce would he say; away he would go, and again he would come--I shall never see such a fellow."

You can almost hear the audience laughing at the words and absurd action.

Smith, in the dedication of his book, addressed it to the "English nobility" and gave vent to his resentment at failing to obtain regular military employment and charged Leicester and others with incompetence and corruption.

The queen ordered all copies of the book to be "called in" "both because they be printed without privilege and that they may breed much question and quarrel."

Sir John protested hotly to Burleigh, and Queen Elizabeth capitulated.

Possibly as he grew older he grew more disgruntled and more unbalanced for on June 13th 1595 "he rode with Sir T. Seymour into the field where pikemen were practising and bade the soldiers forsake their colonel and follow him. 'The common people,' he told them 'have been oppressed and used as bond men these 30 years, but if you will go with me I will see a reformation and you shall be as freemen.'"

For this outrage he was arrested for treason and sent to the Tower. Examined in the Star Chamber, June 14th, he said he was drunk, apologised, and nothing further was done about the matter, but he remained in the Tower until February 1596.

He had already sold Little Baddow to Anthony Penning of Kettleberg, Suffolk, 30th April 1595.

His inflated idea of his own military prowess is again evidenced by an elaborate drawing for a suit of Damascened armour which appears in the Book of Armoury in the Tower and from which the Greenwich Armourers made their exquisite suits of armour for the nobility.

SOS 6th National Conference

The 6th national conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society was held at the Hyatt Regency in Washington, D.C., on October 15 and 16, 1982. Some of the highlights of the conference were:

- Mr. Philip Proux was elected treasurer of the Society, with Helen Cyr continuing as Society secretary. All other officers were reelected.
- The Cyrs unveiled newly prepared materials with which the Society will respond to requests for information.
- Helen Cyr discussed her scientific analysis of the language of Oxford as compared with that of Shakespeare and announced that her study will be ready for publication within a matter of weeks.
- Guest Speaker Calvin Hoffman gave an entertaining talk on his activities as an anti-Stratfordian over the years.
- Charlton Ogburn reviewed some of the questions and problems in past Oxfordian research which he has encountered as a result of his work on his forthcoming book.
- Gordon Cyr discussed the possible role of the Earl of Derby, Oxford's son-in-law, in the composition of the Shakespearean works and urged Oxfordians to consider the writings of the Derbyites as possible sources for further Oxfordian research.

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SOS Bulletin Board

Celeste Ashley, of Palo Alto, it will be recalled, turned up a biographical history of the Earls of Oxford in Essex Worthies. An excerpt from that reference work follows: John, 12th Earl of Oxford (1408-62), took the Lancastrian side and was executed with Aubrey, his eldest son, for plotting against the king. It was alleged against them that they had prepared the way for a Lancastrian landing on the east coast.

Ruth Loyd Miller, of Jennings, Louisiana, has been elected Vice Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University (LSU). Mrs. Miller is the first woman to be elected to this post. Reverend Willie Hausey, when seconding her nomination, said that Mrs. Miller is "possessed with the idea of knowing what's at the bottom of things. She's a seeker of the truth" and cited Mrs. Miller's work on the Shakespearean authorship question in support of his statement.

One Baton Rouge paper noted:

Miller has a well-established reputation as a researcher and writer on subjects dealing with the authorship of works attributed to William Shakespeare. She is presently writing three books on English historical figures.

Mrs. Miller announces as available from Minos Publishing Company, P.O. Box 1309, Jennings, LA, at \$10.00 each, folders of photocopied materials which she used to illustrate her lectures at the London Heraldry Society last March. Each folder contains: a lineage chart of the Earls of Oxford; a fold-out pedigree chart of the de Veres, Earls of Oxford, with numbers corresponding to the numbers of the shields as tricked in the Tyllotson MS4, Society of Antiquaries (reproduced by permission of the Society); a precis of the life of John de Vere, 13th Earl of Oxford, builder of the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Lavenham, Suffolk, where the shields were originally depicted in stained glass forming a brilliant and colorful genealogical record of the de Veres from the days of William the Conqueror to the year 1513. (The precis of the life is from the Rev. Majendie's book on the de Veres of the Castle Hedingham.) Each folder also contains reproductions of a number of photographs of shields and designs decorating the plinth of the Tower of the Church.

Harold Patience, of Braintree, Essex, has now completed his book-length manuscript entitled The Identity of Shakespeare. Mr. Patience describes the book as a full-blown discussion of the case for Oxford as "Shakespeare" directed at "the man in the street." The manuscript is now in search of a publisher in England.