

**SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY**  
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# Newsletter Shakespeare Oxford Society

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## A Verytable Land of Bleak Bard Fields: Shakespeare, De Vere, and Ireland

Of all the critical conundrums and curiosities which revolve around the name William Shakespeare few hold more charm or cry out more urgently for clarification at this time of year, as St. Patrick's Day approaches, than the playwright's seemingly inexplicable knowledge of and debt to the ancient Celtic culture of Ireland.

Various scholars have approached the problem in various ways.

The contemporary Irish poet, John Montague, in the introduction to his The Book of Irish Verse, the best anthology so far available for readers with no Gaelic, raises the issue with this rhetorical question, "And did a girl from Munster not get a line in one of Shakespeare's plays?" Montague answers the question in a footnote this way: "Pistol's 'Calen o custure me' is probably the opening line of an Irish song, 'I am a girl from beside the Suir.'"

Dr. Bronson Feldman, the Oxfordian scholar, drew attention to Hamlet's propensity for swearing by Saint Patrick. (See Hamlet, Act I, scene v, lines 135-136.) Feldman used this verbal tendency as the basis for his suggestion that the playwright began writing his masterpiece on the day dedicated to the patron saint of Ireland. (These arguments appeared, first, in Louis Marder's The Shakespeare Newsletter and, more fully, in Feldman's book Hamlet Himself.)

John Thomas Looney, in his ingenious Shakespeare Identified, the first book to uphold Oxford as candidate for the Shakespearean crown, noted the relationship between Edmund Spenser, long resident in Ireland, and Shakespeare. He also directed our attention to the fascination of both poets with a girl they called Rosaline or Rosalind. But Looney seems to have been unaware that both English writers probably drew their inspiration for the use of this name from one of Ireland's bards--a bard who identified both

his muse and his country with a girl he called Dark Rosaleen. Neither the name of this Irish bard nor the date of his poem's composition is now definitely known. It is conjectured that the bard Owen Roe MacWard wrote this powerful song which pathetically looks to the Pope and Spain for liberation of Ireland from the English. That canticle closes, in the English translation produced in the nineteenth century by James Clarence Mangan, a kind of Irish Edgar Poe who propelled a native Irish literature in English, thus breaking the literary silence which fell when the native tongue was all but torn from the land, with these lines:

O! the Erne shall run red  
With redundance of blood,  
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,  
And flames wrap hill and wood,  
And gun-peal, and slogan cry,  
Wake many a glen serene,  
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,  
My Dark Rosaleen!  
My own Rosaleen!  
The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,  
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,  
My Dark Rosaleen!

Adaline Glasheen, the American scholar, has proposed that the main subject of Finnegans Wake, that massive dream-work by James Joyce, Ireland's greatest modern writer, is the Shakespeare authorship question. (The title of this piece is a quote from Joyce's Wake. A clutch of villages in Oxford's native county of Essex are the Bardfields--Great Bardfield, Little Bardfield.)

But perhaps the most entertaining and erudite discussion of Shakespeare's knowledge of Celtic culture yet to appear is T.F. Healy's light-hearted but scholarly "Shakespeare Was An Irishman," published in The American Mercury of

September, 1940. SOS member John Cusick recalled this article to our notice when he wrote to the recent National Convention of the Shakespeare Oxford Society offering to send a copy of Healy's article to any SOS member who mails him a self-addressed stamped envelope. (The offer still stands.)

Healy's popular article, we Oxfordians should never forget, precipitated a tiny classic of Oxfordian literature, "The Secret of Shakespeare's Irish Sympathies" by Charles Wisner Barrell, published in The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter for June, 1941. It is a pleasure to commemorate St. Patrick's Day 1983 by reprinting that little indicator of a high water mark in Oxfordian scholarship--and with the knowledge that Barrell's pioneering effort has found corroborating evidence through the curiosity and diligence of John Cusick.

Mr. Cusick discovered in "The Origins of Irish Surnames" by Hugh Weir, teacher, author, journalist, and a member of the Irish Genealogical Research Society, these pertinent facts:

A significant dispersal of the Irish clans took place, however, when the Normans invaded Ireland in the 12th century....Many names nowadays taken for granted as Irish names were introduced, in fact, into Ireland by the Anglo and Welsh-Normans in the 12th and 13th century...A number of these Norman families retained the prefix 'de' meaning 'From', like de Poers (Powers), D'Arcys, de Lacys, de Veres and de Warrenes (Warrens), although it has usually been dropped in recent times....

Many authoritative writers on Irish names have been unavoidably inaccurate in a number of their pronouncements on derivations. My own name illustrates this point. Some writers have claimed that the name Weir was developed from 'Mc An Mhaoir' meaning 'Son of the Steward' taken from the ancient Gaelic Book of Armagh. However, the correct derivation for most holders of the name in Ireland is that they are descended from Baltredus de Vere who left Flanders in Belgium in 1165.

Despite these different interpretations there is an interesting etymological link between the key factors listed as the word 'Vere' means an enclosed or protected place; 'Mhaoir' (pronounced Weir) is the term for a protector or steward; and 'a weir' is a protective wall across a river.

May this wintry issue of the Newsletter, with the emerald light it casts on Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, better known as Shakespeare, strike you as a token of spring.

W.H.

The Secret of Shakespeare's  
Irish Sympathies:  
Once Again Lord Oxford's  
Own Personality Speaks  
Through the Plays  
by

Charles Wisner Barrell

"Because a bard of Ireland told me once..."  
Richard III, IV.2.108

The Celtic scholar, T.F. Healey, sponsors the whimsical theory in the September, 1940, issue of The American Mercury that "Shakespeare Was An Irishman."

This is probably the one thousand and first effort that has been made to provide a realistic personal background for the elusive Bard. And Mr. Healey's effort, though undeniably far-fetched, has the virtue of being both readable and stimulating. While the Stratford-on-Avon milieu disappears like a puff of smoke from the Healey dudeen, we are not asked to seek the true answer to Shakespeare's identity in cryptograms, spirit rappings or other abracadabra. He is considered primarily as a poet, and poetic license is not too rudely violated in claiming his racial affinity to the land that traditionally honors bards.

The harp that once thrilled Tara's halls would have awakened a responsive cord in Shakespeare's breast. Of that we can rest assured.

From the Oxford-was-Shakespeare point of view, Mr. Healey's brief provides new arguments to prove that the personal psychology behind the plays and poems is that of Edward de Vere, "most excellent" of Elizabethan Court poets. For he alone of all the creative "claimants" that have ever been put forward can be shown by authentic documentation to have been accused of harboring sentiments of radical approval for the activities of Irish patriots. And this, mind you, at a time when the expression of such sentiments was a treasonable offense!

Not a line nor a word has ever been found which personally connects Shakspeare of Stratford with the Irish geographically, politically, genealogically, or through any of the numerous business deals and legal squabbles in which this citizen figures.

Neither was Sir Francis Bacon ever charged with being pro-Celtic. He was too active and ambitious a politician for any such foolishness.

Roger Manners, the boyish Earl of Rutland (born October 6, 1576), fought against the Irish in the army of the Earl of Essex in 1599.

None of these men can be shown to have been the sympathetic Celt-at-Heart that Mr. Healey analyzes.

The situation is quite different when we begin to thumb over Elizabethan State Papers and long-forgotten publications relating to the 17th Earl of Oxford who lost caste by his addiction to poetry, music and the stage.

Following his denunciation in December, 1580, of Lord Henry Howard and Charles Arundel as English spies and conspirators in the pay of the King of Spain, the Earl of Oxford was in turn accused by Arundel of a list of offenses so numerous that Arundel states:

"...to report at large all the vices of this monstrous Earl were a labour without end."

Written in the Tower in an effort to save his own neck, Arundel's counter-accusations are hysterically phrased and in cer-

tain particulars unprintable. A digest is given in the Calendar of State Papers, Elizabeth, 1581-1590. Captain B.M. Ward made a complete transcript of the material while preparing his biography of Edward de Vere.

Charles Arundel later died on the Continent, a pensioner of Philip II. His written catalogue of Oxford's "vices" must be accepted with allowances due the testimony of a proven traitor and political termite. But several of his comments on the literary Earl are extremely interesting when studied in connection with the Healey theory.

For instance, Arundel claims that on numerous occasions he has heard Oxford express commendation of the patriotism of "Dr. Sanders and Lord Baltinglas."

Both of these men were prominent in the Irish "holy war" that seriously threatened English control during 1579 and 1580.

James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald raised the banner of revolt. He was accompanied by the famous Dr. Nicolas Sanders, who bore a papal legate's commission. For several months this rebellion caused keen anxiety to the English overlords. It was finally put down with much bloodshed.

In her Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays, Mrs. Clark argues that Dr. Nicholas Sanders is the original of the miracle-worker referred to by Shakespeare under the nickname of "Saunder Simpcox" in 2 Henry VI, II, 1.

Soon after the Fitzgerald-Sanders abortive attempt to throw off English rule, during the summer of 1580, James Eustace, Third Viscount Baltinglas, took up arms against Elizabeth's Lord Deputy, Arthur Grey. Baltinglas issued a vigorous protest against "the severities and injustice inflicted by Elizabethan officials on the people of Ireland. He repudiated recognition of a woman as head of the Church." Baltinglas and his followers put up a determined but hopeless fight which finally ended with the leader's escape to the Continent. His estates being confiscated by the Crown, one house in Dublin was granted to Edmund Spenser who then served the Lord Deputy Grey as secretary.

The objections of Lord Baltinglas to English rule were based on humanitarian and constitutional grounds. He has always been considered an Irish patriot of high principle and stainless character. Lord Oxford may have known him personally. In any event, according to Arundel's testimony, the playwriting Earl admired Baltinglas as a man of heroic mold despite the latter's enmity to the English government. This attitude fits the Healey Shakespearean thesis perfectly. It is a fact, moreover, that one of Shakespeare's marked characteristics is his ability to recognize heroic qualities in the opponents of his dramatic protagonists. The inexplicable treatment of Joan of Arc, who is pictured as a harlot, is the outstanding exception that proves the rule. Is it just another "mere coincidence," as Oscar James Campbell and other orthodox pundits would have it, that the poetical nobleman here is accused of displaying the same admiration for the valor of an official enemy which Shakespeare so frequently expresses?

The Healey analysis from other angles is equally suggestive of Lord Oxford's creative hand in the plays. The knowledge of Irish folklore and music which Mr. Healey proves to have been among the Bard's accomplishments cannot be verified, through any Stratfordian clue. But here again, Lord Oxford is known to have been in close personal touch with repositories of such knowledge.

Edmund Spenser, who secured his first leasehold in Ireland as a result of the attainder of Lord Baltinglas and who lived in the land long enough to become a recognized authority on its customs and folklore, enjoyed the familiar acquaintance of the poet Earl. Spenser's dedicatory sonnet to Oxford in the 1590 edition of The Faery Queene not only enlists the nobleman's good will because Spenser needs patronage, but most significantly hails the nobleman as himself a great poet, a beloved initiate of the Muses:

And also for the love which thou dost bear  
To th' Heliconian imps and they to thee,  
They unto thee, and thou to them most  
dear...

We may with reasonable assurance picture Edmund Spenser as a frequent dinner guest of "the passing singular odd" Earl of Oxford during

Spenser's visits to London. And as the two poets linger over their apples, cheese and wine, we can visualize the bohemian nobleman, famous throughout England for his love of the curious and the outlandish, "as well the histories of ancient times, and things done long ago, as also of the present estate of things in our days,"<sup>2</sup> lending eager ear to Spenser's tales of the wild Irish kerns who worship the moon "and do use to make the wolf their gossip."<sup>3</sup>

The author of As You Like It displays just such familiarity with Celtic folklore when he has Rosalind mock the love-sick chorus of Phebe, Silvius and Orlando with:

Pray you, no more of this; 'tis  
like the howling of Irish wolves  
against the moon.

Earlier in the comedy, Rosalind--who, in her disdain for love-rhymes displays the same unusual characteristic that distinguishes Spenser's Rosalind of The Shepheard's Calendar--has laughed Orlando's forest-strewn verses to scorn:

I was never so berhymed since  
Pythagoras' time, that I was an  
Irish rat, which I can hardly  
remember.

Here is not only a reference to transmigration, but to the claim of such Irish historians as Gerald de Barry that rats had been expelled from the Isle of Saints by the Bishop of Ferns, whose books they had probably gnawed and who used rhymes to effect his spells upon the rodents.

We can well imagine both Edmund Spenser and the witty and learned Earl of Oxford mulling over such bits of Irish legend as these. But it is difficult indeed to assume that the Stratford businessman would acquire similar curiosa from nowhere in particular.

2. Arthur Golding's reference to Oxford's personality in the dedication to The Histories of Trogius Pompeius (1564).

3. See Edmund Spenser's View of Present State of Ireland (1596).

1. Gabriel Harvey's description of Oxford in Speculum Tuscanismi (1580).

"One may ask," says Mr. Healey, "where Shakespeare got his knowledge of Irish mythology, legend and literature. It formed a phenomenally exceptional knowledge in the England of his day, where it was not even known that it existed. Not to speak of Irish songs and ballads found in the plays. Indeed, the subject of Shakespeare's knowledge of Irish music alone holds much more than the merit of mere novelty to the ripe Shakespearean scholar.

...There are ten...Irish folk-lore songs alluded to in the Plays, but every song is concealed under an alias."

As the partisan and well-wisher of such Irish patriots as Sanders and Baltinglas and the personal friend of Spenser, Oxford was well circumstanced, it would seem, to acquire just such knowledge. Moreover, he had one outstanding advantage here which made it possible for him to evaluate and utilize for dramatic purposes the so-called "hidden music of Eire."

For Lord Oxford was himself a musician of outstanding talent. He even figures in English political history in a musical interlude on the occasion of the execution of Essex for high treason. The story is too well known to repeat in detail here. But all of the Earl's biographical commentators stress his addiction to music, as well as to poetry and the drama.

By the same token, every musical authority who writes on Shakespeare reaches the conclusion that the Bard had so thorough an appreciation of musical technique that many of his finest stage effects are achieved by the scientific application of this knowledge. Louis C. Elson's Shakespeare In Music gives many instances in point. His discussion of the wonderful subtlety with which music is employed to characterize Ophelia's mental collapse is illuminating. Of Scene 2, Act I, in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Elson says:

"This scene could easily give rise to an entire chapter of musical comment and elucidation."

It seems certain that no creative artist possessing technical ability of this high order would be able to conceal it in his person as effectively as the citizen of Stratford did. His most assiduous biog-

raphers have been unable to trace a single contemporary reference to their man which offers any musical connotation whatever. To claim for such a will o' the wisp every personal accomplishment that the author of the plays and poems exhibits, without bothering to substantiate such claims with bona fide documentation, may be acceptable practice in the realm of scholarship presided over by Prof. Campbell and his fellow obscurantists, but it will hardly pass muster among serious students of the Shakespeare problem.

Here again Lord Oxford is the one great concealed poet of his age who can be definitely shown to have embodied in his own person the knowledge and innate ability to meet the musical requirements of "Mr. William Shakespeare's" creative role, as both Messrs. Healey and Elson define them.

During the 1590 decade the Earl who already numbered among his proteges such Shakespearean "source" writers as Thomas Watson, Anthony Munday, Thomas Churchyard, John Lyly and Robert Greene--not to mention his uncle Arthur Golding--became the acknowledged patron of the famous Anglo-Irish composer John Farmer.

Farmer held the post of organist and master of the children of the choir in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, according to the Chapter Acts of that church, reprinted in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians (3rd Edition). He was one of the most gifted composers and musical arrangers of the Elizabethan era, a pioneer in the fields of the madrigal and counterpoint of different orders.

In 1591 Farmer dedicated his first studies in counterpoint to Edward de Vere, "Earle of Oxenford." Divers and Sundry Ways... to the Number of Forty, Upon One Playn Song carries a significant statement of its composer's relationship to the nobleman who, like his prototype in All's Well, is known to have sold many "a goodly manor for a song":

"Hereunto, my good Lord, I was the rather emboldened for your Lordship's great affection to this noble science (i.e., music) hoping for the one you might pardon the other, and desirous to make known your inclination this way....

Besides this, my good Lord, I bear this conceit, that not only myself am vowed to your commandment, but all that is in me is dedicated to your Lordship's service."

At this time, as his volume states, John Farmer was living in London "in Broad Street, near the Royal Exchange."

On August 10th, 1596, the records of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, tell us that Farmer was sworn in as "Vicar Corral" in place of Robert Jordan, "resigned." He held this position until 1599, when he appears to have returned to London to resume a close personal relationship to the Earl of Oxford.

During the same year he published another work, which insures his immortality in British musical history. This was The First Set of English Madrigals to Foure Voices. Newly composed by John Farmer, practitioner in the art of Musick. Printed at London in Little Saint Helen's by William Barley... Anno Dom. 1599.

Again Farmer dedicates his labors to his "very good Lord and Master," the Earle of Oxenforde."

The wording of this dedication is so interesting from the personal angle that it should be read at length:

Most honourable Lord, it cometh not within the compass of my power to express all the duty I own, nor to pay the least part; so far have your honourable favors outstripped all means to manifest my humble affection that there is nothing left but praying and wondering. There is a canker worm that breedeth in many minds, feeding only upon forgetfulness and bringing forth to birth but ingratitude. To show that I have not been bitten with that monster, for worms prove monsters in this age, which yet never any painter could counterfeit to express the ugliness, nor any poet describe to decipher the height of their illness, I have presumed to tender these Madrigals only as remembrances of my service and witness of your Lordship's liberal hand, by which I have lived so long, and from your honourable mind that so much have all liberal sciences. In this I shall be most encouraged if your Lordship vouchsafe the protection of my first-fruits, for that both of your greatness you best can, and

for your judgment in music best may. For without flattery be it spoke, those that know your Lordship know this, that using this science as a recreation, your Lordship have overgone most of them that make it a profession. Right Honourable Lord, I hope it shall not be distasteful to number you here amongst the favourers of music, and the practisers, no more than Kings and Emperors that have been desirous to be in the roll of astronomers, that being but a star fair, the other an angel's choir.

Thus most humbly submitting myself and my labours and whatever is or may be in me to your Lordship's censure and protection, I humbly end, wishing your Lordship as continual an increasing of health and honour as there is a daily increase of virtue to come to happiness.

Your Lordship's most dutiful servant to command,

John Farmer

Here we have unimpeachable contemporary documentation regarding Lord Oxford's ability as a musician which should convince the most skeptical that he was fully capable of applying creatively all of the musical technique, taste and feeling which Elson and other authorities find throughout the Shakespearean plays.

The Earl's relationship to the scholarly choirmaster of the Dublin Cathedral should also help make plain the avenues through which the mysterious Bard acquired his intimate knowledge of the folk tunes of Eire.

As invariably happens when new arguments, based upon bona fide documentation and genuine logic, are presented to identify the actual personality behind the professional mask of "Mr. William Shakespeare," Lord Oxford's Irish sympathies, together with his acceptance as a musical colleague by the composer of The First Set of English Madrigals, open up many interesting contributory lines of evidence that the playwriting Earl was the center of the great Elizabethan creative enigma.

Cusick Forms Oxford-Shakespeare  
Group Within Mensa

John Cusick, SOS member from Sun City, Arizona, has formed an Oxford-Shakespeare group for members of Mensa, the social and humanitarian organization for individuals with high I.Q.s. The group's formation will be announced to the more than 40,000 members of Mensa throughout the world in the March issue of that organization's organ.

The group will be dedicated to an exploration of the case for Oxford as Shakespeare and will be known as OSIG, the Oxford-Shakespeare Interest Group. John Cusick will edit the group's newsletter.

Interested parties who are not Mensa members are permitted to subscribe to and write for the newsletter. The subscription rate for non-Mensa members will be \$4.00 per year.

We salute John Cusick's efforts in carrying the campaign to gain recognition for Oxford as Shakespeare into Mensa and wish OSIG a long and fruitful life.

For more details write:

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Scholarly Journals Honor Bronson Feldman

The most recent issues of two scholarly journals pay tribute to the late Dr. Bronson Feldman, Oxfordian scholar and, for a number of years, the director of research of the Shakespeare Oxford Society.

The current number of the American Imago includes a partial bibliography of Dr. Feldman's psychoanalytic writings, including numerous articles and two books on the case for Oxford as Shakespeare, and a previously unpublished essay on ancient history, "Barabbas and the Gospel of Yeshua the Galilean."

The current number of Catastrophism and Ancient History: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Study includes an article by Warren Hope, editor of the Newsletter, "Bronson Feldman, 1914-1982: A Biographical Note." Future issues of Catastrophism and Ancient History are expected to include previously unpublished

contributions from Bronson Feldman's pen. A paper by Dr. Feldman, "Sidelights On Immanuel Velikovsky," was read at an international conference sponsored by that journal and held in Los Angeles in August. The paper will be published as part of the proceedings of the conference.

Shakespeare and Patriotism

by  
Bronson Feldman

(Editor's Note: This is a lightly edited version of a talk delivered by Dr. Bronson Feldman at the Community College of Philadelphia on February 13, 1969. It was part of a course in the evening division entitled "Mysteries of History.")

Why the rivalry for the glory of being Shakespeare?

There is, of course, the literary celebrity that Shakespeare enjoys. Some people say he was the greatest English writer. Others say the greatest dramatist that ever lived--or the greatest poet. Some call him the greatest writer of all time. There is a remarkable unanimity in all this. But it is a literary glory.

Beside that, this writer is considered to have contributed to human knowledge of human nature. His rank in psychology is very high, although the academic psychologists are reluctant to admit it. And they generally credit him with lucky insights, rather than scientific study of the workings of human nature.

If Shakespeare is taken as a teacher, a guide, to the workings of human nature, it would then become very important to find out what his own nature must have been. And on this subject, there is a general darkness. In the academic world, there is a definite aversion--it is more than indifference--there is an aversion to discussing the mind and character of William Shakespeare. Usually, he is treated as somebody who wrote for money and worldly success whose main ambition was to own the biggest house in his hometown and when he accomplished that he gave up writing. This is seriously put forward in many a book as the life and purposes of the world's greatest writer.

If you consider that he was a man deeply concerned about the fate of humanity, then his writings have to be interpreted from another, very different, point of view.

Let me explain by pointing out a recurrent theme in his major plays, a theme, so far as I know, never discussed by any student of Shakespeare. And remember, more has been written about him than about all of the rest of the world's great writers put together. You can see that this is quite an omission.

The theme that I have referred to can be summed up in three words: rejection of patriotism. It shows itself for example in his play Hamlet. In that play there are scenes and discussions which are frequently left out of productions. These discussions take up the relations of the hero with England. England is portrayed in the play Hamlet as a land where fools will jump in order to serve an imperial master, in this case the King of Denmark. When the King of Denmark tells the English to kill Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, originally he had asked them to execute the carrier of the message, that is, Hamlet, the English were thoroughly prepared to do that--without examining at all why the king wanted him killed, did he deserve death or not, and so on. The contempt with which Shakespeare has portrayed the English government there has been ignored by all investigators of that play. They simply don't understand it and they have to disregard it.

But the contempt that Shakespeare shows for the ruling power of his own country doesn't appear only in Hamlet. It appears throughout all the major plays to which he devoted the last years of his life. This depends, of course, on what you consider to be the last plays that Shakespeare wrote. According to the professors, the last plays that he wrote were a series of very dish-watery comedies--The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest, and other plays that are seldom presented in our time. But anyone who has studied the development of Shakespeare's own language--and this includes even some of the professors, the Shakespeare experts--recognizes that Shakespeare's last major works were Hamlet and King Lear, the most complicated, the deepest, the most thought out of all his works. And if you accept that Edward de Vere was William Shakespeare, then it is understandable why Hamlet, the complete Hamlet, did not come out until

1604--which was the year that De Vere died. Very likely, before he died, he was working on the revision of that play.

In King Lear, Shakespeare came out with a plot in which his hero, King of England, is portrayed as determining to ride in battle against his own country on the side of England's traditional enemy, France. Now to take this kind of thing seriously would have had him condemned as a traitor. So this activity on the part of King Lear has been ignored unanimously, to the best of my knowledge--I never met a single writer that dealt with it.

In the tragedy Coriolanus, which is practically never played at all, the hero leaves his native city of Rome and goes to serve the army of Rome's enemy, the Volscians, against Rome. And it is only the intervention of his mother and wife, pleading on their knees before him at the end of the play, that makes him renounce his aim to destroy Rome--which in that play he is presented as capable of doing.

And, finally, I will mention another play by Shakespeare which is practically never acted, Timon of Athens. In Timon of Athens we are again shown the hero's city being marched against by an army, and the hero encourages that army to attack his home country. In that play the line occurs, "It is honor with most lands to be at odds." That's the boldest that Shakespeare comes to expressing his antagonism to patriotism. And instead of saying it is honor with all lands to be at odds, he ironically says most lands--without naming which lands he thinks it is an honor to be in the service of.

This hostility to patriotism is connected with Shakespeare's attitude toward human nature. He is absolutely opposed to nationalism. That is why at the time of the rise of nationalism he went into eclipse. And he was considered to be, as the French writer Voltaire called him, a drunken barbarian, who writes a kind of ecstatic poetry--sometimes very brilliant, Voltaire was willing to admit that Shakespeare could write--but that what he said didn't make sense. The last outstanding teacher of the idea that Shakespeare was an inspired genius who never made sense was George

Bernard Shaw. Shaw said that Shakespeare was a fine poet but mentally at about the level of a moron. I think that statement places Shaw pretty accurately at his own mental level. Of course Shaw, as a supporter of World War I and a glorifier of Mussolini and Hitler was incapable of appreciating Shakespeare's point of view. Shakespeare hated politicians. Even before he adopted his attitude of rejecting patriotism, he hated politicians. In King Lear, he modifies the word politician with the adjective "scurvy." He thinks politicians, or statesmen, are capable of any crime because they always have the justification of the public interest or the public welfare.

To whom did Shakespeare feel he owed his allegiance?

He said, if we take the words of his heroes as reflecting his thoughts, he owes a loyalty only to humanity in general and to God, or to Christ--in one place he refers to "my captain Christ," not speaking in his own person, you understand. One difficulty in interpreting Shakespeare is we have to decide when he is speaking for himself in the plays and when he is representing some contrary character's thoughts. One way, I think, that we can tell is by the recurrence of motive or theme. And this element of hostility to patriotism, the rejection of nationalism, the insistence that we have a higher loyalty than to our country, keeps recurring throughout his major writings.

#### SOS Bulletin Board

Celeste Ashley, of Palo Alto, offers for sale her copy of the Ogburns' This Star of England at \$35.00. Anyone interested in purchasing the book should write her at: 1077 Stanford, Palo Alto, CA 94306. With this edition of the Bulletin Board we resume the biographical history of the Earls of Oxford from Essex Worthies which Celeste Ashley first drew to our attention:

John, 13th Earl of Oxford (1443-1513), second son of the 12th Earl, was committed to the Tower under suspicion of plotting against the king in 1468, but was released after a few months. Later he so far gained the confidence of the king that he was appointed High Constable of England, and tried and con-

demned John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, who had tried and condemned his father and elder brother.

At the Battle of Barnet in 1471, the 13th Earl fought valiantly to avenge his father and brother; but a thick mist caused him to lose sight of the enemy, and when his forces came in sight of other Lancastrians, each side suspected the other of treachery and Lancastrian fought Lancastrian. In the confusion that followed the earl thought the only way to save the cause was to escape from the field of battle. He made for Scotland first. Later he crossed to France, where he assembled men and ships for privateering. Through the course of the following fourteen years his fortunes ebbed and flowed inconclusively; but when Henry Tudor landed in the summer of 1485, the earl was captain-general of the invading army, and at the Battle of Bosworth no-one did more than he to secure the throne for Henry VII.

In acknowledgement of his services, all the honours that former earls had lost were restored, including that of Hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain, and in addition to these the 13th Earl was made Lord High Admiral of England, Ireland, and Aquitaine, High Steward of the Duchy of Lancaster south of the Trent, Constable of the Tower of London and Castle Rising, Privy Councillor and Knight of the Garter. Adorned with these great offices of state he lived in regal splendour at Hedingham castle, where in the summer of 1498 he entertained the king for nearly a week. It is of this occasion that the story is told that at the end of these days of sumptuous entertainment, when the king saw the full number of the earl's retainers lining the route along which he must pass he called out:

'My lord, I have heard much of your hospitality,  
but I see it is greater than the speech: these  
handsome gentlemen and yeomen which I see on  
both sides of me, are they your menial servants?'

'If it may please your Grace', replied the earl,  
'they are most of them my retainers, that are come  
to do me service at such a time as this, and chiefly  
to see your Grace'.

The king looked startled and said:

'By my faith, my lord, I thank you for your good  
cheer; but I may not have my laws broken in my  
sight. My attorney must speak with you'.

The attorney did, and the earl was obliged to compound for no less a sum than 1,500 marks for his offence against the Statute of Retainers.

John, 14th Earl of Oxford (1499-1526), nephew of the 13th earl, inherited his titles at the age of 14, and came into control of his estates in 1520. His extravagance, however, was such that he was ordered to break up his household and live with his father-in-law, the Duke of Norfolk, while Wolsey managed his estates for him. He brought little credit to the line, and when he died at the age of 26 he left no issue. With him the direct line came to an end, as he was the last heir general as well as heir male, and the office of Lord Great Chamberlain reverted to the Crown.

John, 15th Earl of Oxford (1490-1540), was a second cousin of the 14th earl. He was much at court, signed the articles against Wolsey in 1529 and the address to the Pope for the king's divorce the following year. He was commissioner for the deposition of Queen Catherine in 1533 and carried the crown at the coronation of Anne Boleyn. His connection with the king's marriages continued in his part at her trial, and his attendance in the following year at the funeral of Jane Seymour. In 1540 he was in attendance on Henry VIII at Blackheath when Anne of Cleves was received. At the Dissolution he received Colne Priory but he was buried at Castle Hedingham.

John, 16th Earl of Oxford (1512-1562), was the first Protestant earl, and in June 1553 he was one of peers who declared in favour of Lady Jane Grey. But he quickly turned

over to Mary when he saw which way the wind was blowing, and officiated as Great Chamberlain at her coronation. In 1555 he was actually ordered by the Council to attend the burning of heretics in Essex. This, however, did not prevent his return to Protestant favour when Elizabeth became queen. He officiated at her coronation and in 1561 entertained her for five days at Castle Hedingham during her Progress of that year. When he died in the following year he was buried at Castle Hedingham, but no monument to his memory was ever erected.

Brad Fisher, of Springfield, PA, sends us the following curiosity, a clipping from the New York Times of January 15, 1921, with a Berlin dateline, which fluttered from an old book on the authorship question in a second-hand bookstore:

Before a large circle of literary and scientific men and women at Weimer, Mrs. Anna Deventer von Kuhnnow, described as a writer and historian and some years ago a practicing physician in New York, expounded an entirely new and highly sensational theory regarding the personality of Sir Francis Bacon, whom many Germans believe to have been the author of the dramas attributed to Shakespeare.

She said that she has had access to the secret archives of the new Record Office in London and with her own eyes had read documents which had hitherto been carefully hidden and finally almost forgotten, but had recently been rediscovered. According to these documents, she saw Queen Elizabeth was married to Robert Dudley Jan. 31, 1561, in Lord Pembroke's house, in the presence of several witnesses. The same day the Queen was delivered of a son, who it was decided by the royal mother and the bridegroom should be killed.

But Anna Bacon, wife of Nicholas Bacon, afterward Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, begged so touchingly to be allowed to keep the baby that Elizabeth consented, very reluctantly, on the Bacons' oath never to reveal the secret of the child's parentage. Later, however, a rumor of these occurrences spread in

Court circles and was traced to a certain lady-in-waiting, who with sixteen other garrulous members of the Court, was executed.

Elizabeth's boy grew up in the Bacon family, who had named him Francis, and when he was 16 accidentally discovered the secret of his parentage. When Elizabeth heard this she sent him away from England, appointing the sixteen-year-old boy Secretary to the Ambassador at the French Court, where Francis remained until recalled to England by the death of his foster-father in 1579.

Mrs. von Kuhnnow further stated that she had seen all the documents concerning the Bacon family at about that time, but had found no record of the birth of Francis. In his "Minerva Britannia," printed in 1612, Bacon in a cipher repeatedly referred to himself as a prince, the heir to the throne and Elizabeth's first-born, said Mrs. von Kuhnnow, and she asserted that Francis Bacon's correspondence with his foster-brother, Anthony Bacon, also contained much evidence of his real parentage.

The lecturer assured her audience that the same secret archives in London contained evidence that Robert, Earl of Essex, whom Elizabeth had executed, was her second son by Dudley.

Charlton Ogburn, of Beaufort, SC, informs us that he is suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous delays: his new book The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Counterfeit and the Reality has not yet appeared as hoped, but continues to endure the production process. It is now hoped that the book will appear this spring. Charlton also tells us that the Honourable Thomas Lindsay, younger son of the Earl of Crawford and present owner of Castle Hedingham, the ancestral home of the Earls of Oxford, wrote him that Castle Hedingham had 15,000 visitors last year!

Harold Patience, of Braintree, Essex, has kindly sent us another previously unpublished manuscript by Hilda Amphlet, author of Who Was Shakespeare? This unpublished article will appear in a future issue of the News-letter.

## Grand Master Tackles Shakespeare Question by

Kim Holston

"And now," said Maxwell, "Time is bringing Shakespeare forward to lecture about how he didn't write the plays."

The preceding comes from Clifford D. Simak's The Goblin Reservation (New York: Daw, 1982, c1968). Simak, a recently retired newspaperman from Wisconsin, is also one of the most notable of science fiction writers, having won two Hugo Awards, the Nebula Grand Master Award from the Science Fiction Writers of America, and the International Fantasy Award.

At least two of Simak's many books mention Shakespeare. In Shakespeare's Planet (New York: Berkley, 1976), that far world's namesake plays a small and mysterious role, but in The Goblin Reservation, the Shakespeare-Oxford question crops up throughout. Early in the book the main character, Professor Peter Maxwell, notes a sign:

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, ESQ.

Of Stratford-on-Avon, England

"How It Happened I Did Not Write the Plays"

Under the sponsorship of Time College

Oct. 22, 8 P.M. Time Museum Auditorium

Later, Maxwell approaches Time College and, seeing another sign,

"He grinned to himself, thinking of it. English Lit would be beside itself. Old Chenery and all the rest of them had never quite forgiven Time for establishing...that the Earl of Oxford, not Shakespeare, had been the author of the plays. And this personal appearance of the man from Stratford-on-Avon would be rubbing salt into wounds that were far from healed."

Obviously Simak feels the Shakespeare-Oxford question will be resolved eventually. As his historian in The Goblin Reservation says,

"Time found out who really wrote the plays."

(Editor's Note: Mr. Holston is librarian of the Insurance Institute of America, an SOS sympathizer, and typist of the News-letter. We are grateful to him for this contribution.)

Knyvet's Knife

by

William P. Fowler

The publication in the fall issue of the News-letter of my article about the 73rd and 74th Sonnets has evoked my discovery of a still further corroboration of Oxford's authorship of Shakespeare in the reference to "knife" in the 11th and 12th lines of Sonnet 74:

The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,  
Too base of thee to be remember-ed.

Here our master of multiple meaning, in his complete honesty, has actually inserted the name of Sir Thomas Knyvet who wielded the conquering knife, by immediately following the word "knife" at the end of line 11 with a clause beginning with the final "T" of Knyvet. Thus line 11 may well (with a slight change of lettering) be extended to read:

The coward conquest of a wretched "KNYVE/T"  
letting the "T" starting line 12 do double duty. This can apply to no one but Oxford.

An Analogy To The Authorship Question?

"...Whoever heard of anything new coming out of a village! All through the millenia the village has been a bastion of deadly conservatism. Even at this moment, in many parts of the world, villages are stuck in the Neolithic Age. A crucial characteristic of present-day backward, stagnant countries is that the village and not the city is the basic unit of society. People who live close to nature have little occasion to experience continuous progress toward something new and better. They are immersed in the endless recurrence of similar events. The village is equally inhospitable to strange people and strange ways.

"From the point of view of the creative milieu it is difficult to see how the subtly creative act of plant domestication was conceived in the sticks and, as most prehistorians believe, by food-collecting women driven by the necessity to stave off starvation. The creative milieu is characterized not only by a considerable degree of leisure and the absence of pressing necessity, which stifles the impulse to tinker and play, but also by the interaction of people with different ways and bents. Where in any village can you find a human situation distinctly approaching such a milieu?"

Eric Hoffer, First Things, Last Things

JOINSOS

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

Tax-deductible dues:

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

Oxford's Holding In Warwickshire

Harold Patience sends us the following information, obtained from A History of Warwickshire in the Warwickshire Records Office, on Bilton Hall:

In 1481 Sir William Trussell died seised of the manor, which was valued at £14 and was stated to be held of the Prior and Convent of Barnwell, Cambridgeshire. At this time his son Edward was only 2 years old, and the manor came into the king's hands. He died in 1499 when his daughter and ultimate heiress Elizabeth was still a minor, and his son John died, holding the manor of the Prior of Barnwell, in 1500. Elizabeth was granted in wardship to John Vere, afterwards 15th Earl of Oxford, in 1507, whose second wife she became, and to whose family the manor of Bilton passed for some 70 years. In 1574, Edward, Earl of Oxford, leased it to John, Lord Darcy, and in 1580 he sold it to John Shuckburgh, who immediately leased it to Edward Cordell....

It will be recalled that Bronson Feldman suggested that Shakespeare had in his mind's eye the 15th Earl of Oxford when he wrote in The Merchant of Venice I, i, 83:

Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,

Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?

and that Oxford-Shakespeare made punning reference to his Trussell family connection in such lines as, "Must I hold a candle my shames?" (The Merchant of Venice, II, vi, 41). Trussell meant in Old English a candle holder.

# Newsletter *Shakespeare Oxford Society*

*Vero Nihil Verius*

SPRING, 1983

Vol. 19, No. 2

## Morse Johnson Strikes Again

Morse Johnson, an attorney from Cincinnati and the public relations director of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, carries on a constant one-man struggle against the forces of unreason over the Shakespearean authorship question. As readers of these pages know, Mr. Johnson frequently fires off letters to authors of books and articles on Shakespeare who fail to feel obliged to stay within the realms of fact and reasonable conjecture. He also tirelessly takes academics and journalists to lunch, trying to persuade them to lend an ear to the Oxfordian position. Recently, one such lunch certainly succeeded. The following article by Claudia Winkler, an editorial writer with The Cincinnati Post, appeared in that paper on April 11, 1983, thanks to Morse Johnson's efforts:

### WILLIAM WHO?

Last week I encountered a new facet of the cosmic struggle between truth and lies: I had lunch with an Oxfordian.

Not an Oxonian, mind you--nothing to do with where he went to school. No proponent either of the Oxford movement, which pushed the Anglican church toward Rome in the nineteenth century. The cause this gentleman espouses is of greater moment.

Oxfordians believe that the works of Shakespeare were written by Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford. In this century they have supplanted the Baconians (who think Francis Bacon wrote them) as the strongest contenders in the anti-Stratfordian camp, all of whom reject the claim of "the Stratford rustic."

They are, in short, dissenters from the view taught in schools and dignified by inclusion in encyclopedias that William Shakespeare was a bailiff's son from Stratford-on-Avon who lived from 1564 to 1616; who moved to London and became an actor; and who, with scant formal education but dazzling gifts, produced the greatest poetry in the world.

With Mark Twain, anti-Stratfordians dismiss that Shakespeare as "a Brontosaurus: nine bones and 600 barrels of plaster of paris." With Henry James, they are "haunted by the conviction that the divine William is the biggest and most successful fraud ever practiced on a patient world."

No shred of evidence, they say, connects the man baptized William Shaksper at Stratford in 1564 with the authorship of anything save six crude signatures; a shotgun marriage at 18 and the birth of a daughter, then twins; grain dealings, property transactions, law suits; and a detailed will that leaves his wife the "second-best bed" but mentions nary a book. That man's father, wife and children were illiterate, they maintain, and for him to be the creator of Hamlet would be a miracle.

By contrast, say the Oxfordians (who include such diverse notables as Sigmund Freud, Leslie Howard and Paul Nitze), everything, or at least very much, points to the Earl of Oxford, a nobleman and courtier, the favorite of Queen Elizabeth and a fine poet who wrote and acted in plays and maintained a company of players. Educated by the best scholars, well traveled and well read, Oxford would yet have had a motive for concealing his authorship at a time when law and custom forbade even such indirect criticism of the powerful as he put on the stage.

The Oxfordian case is made in exhaustive detail--and the Stratfordian case finally demolished, I am assured--in a work called "The Mysterious William Shakespeare, The Counterfeit and the Reality" by Charlton Ogburn, due to be published this year. For those interested in weighing the evidence it will be indispensable.

But the controversy over Shakespeare's identity, it seems, has been less often marked by dispassionate review of facts than by passionate defense and vitriolic attack. The camps

are labeled orthodox and heretic, and each position is bound up with cherished assumptions about genius and culture.

The orthodox take comfort in their democratic view of genius. Why shouldn't Shakespeare have come of unschooled parents, they ask? It is in the nature of genius to leap out of its context. Hamlet is a miracle. To deny it is "simple truth miscall'd simplicity."

The heretics, stung by the charge of elitism, can pride themselves on their willingness to follow truth wherever it leads, however far from conventional wisdom. Respectable English departments denying them a hearing have only seemed to them to prove that "wisdom turned folly hath the help of schools, and wit's own grace to grace a learned fool."

Some scholars remain what my friend calls agnostics. Hugh Trevor Roper, the great historian of the renaissance and reformation, he says wistfully, "won't come over to our side." More literary types, meanwhile, take refuge in the transcendent theism of Henry Mitchell, the Washington Post's inspired writer about gardens and ultimate things, who says, after all, it hardly matters since clearly God wrote those plays.

The human instrument God used would have appreciated the ambiguities. As for me, I look forward to reaching an informed opinion in the leisure of my old age. The anti-Stratfordian case is at least strong enough to be interesting, and--given what we know about famous hoaxes, great theories proven false and the history of prejudice--I have no difficulty in imagining that several centuries' worth of biographies and even the Stratford tourist industry might have given "to airy nothing a local habitation and a name."

#### How I Became an Oxfordian

by

Rhoda Messner

I confess that I love mysteries, including everything from "What really happened to John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's assassin?" to "Are flying saucers real?" And, of course, I enjoy mystery fiction, although for me it must be well written, well plotted, and filled with believable characters.

However, none of these intriguing mysteries captured and held me through the years like the Shakespeare-Oxford Authorship Mystery. I found it--or it found me--about forty-five years ago: it was a quiet hour in the Cleveland Public Library Reference Division; I was stationed at the Main Desk, leafing through some numbers of the Saturday Review of Literature, to find books and subjects for a woman's club program, one of our chores in those days.

ELIZABETHAN MYSTERY MAN, the black headline read; and, below, the Editor explained, "The theory that the Earl of Oxford wrote the plays usually attributed to William Shakespeare has for many years had an increasing vogue. The Saturday Review believes that the movement has gained enough momentum to interest its subscribers and publishes Mr. Barrell's summary of the theory for the literary record."

(Saturday Review of Literature, May 1, 1937)

I was hooked! The reading and re-reading (and re-reading) of J. Thomas Looney's Shakespeare Identified led me from the road of fascination up to the final peak of conviction.

Meanwhile, I was reading everything old and new that advanced the anti-Stratfordian and the Oxfordian theories: Greenwood, Ward, Rendall, Eva Turner Clark, the Ogburns, the American Bar Association's Shakespeare Cross-Examination (which I understand has lured so many into the Shakespeare problem) and the Millers' great new editions which encompass much that has been published in bulletins and periodicals.

Inevitably, I was talking, talking, to polite but uninterested people about this exciting new discovery of mine, writing letters and articles about Oxford versus Shakspeare of Stratford, that were never published, giving talks to women's groups and school classes, which seemed to stimulate interest and questions but somehow stopped dead there.

I read the Plays again and again, in the light thrown on them by Mr. Looney's book. Some of them, like Troilus and

Cressida and Measure for Measure, believe it or not, at first filled me with aversion; then, they too became part of the picture of Edward de Vere's life story.

Unable to make a dent on the minds of the general public, I decided to write a novel based on Oxford's life. At least, I thought, they should know something about this man whose life and personality had been buried and maligned in the Cecil-dominated records of the period. Absent Thee From Felicity, self-published, was well-reviewed and even cherished by a few, but was too "esoteric" apparently to reach the public I wanted. It hadn't really tried to propagandize for the Oxfordian theory of Shakespearean authorship, just suggest it between the lines. Perhaps this was cowardly but the basic idea, mistaken or not, was to reach a wider public.

Actually, there is no mystery now about the Shakespeare authorship. The only mystery left is why the whole world does not abandon the Stratford man, illiterate and commonplace as he was, and accept for all time the tragic, brilliant Renaissance man, Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.

However, when you think of the 'vested interests' involved in Stratford-on-Avon and in the academic world and when you consider mankind's angry reluctance to give up its "hallowed myths" (like the perpetual controversy over Creation and Evolution)--then perhaps the answer is obvious.

In conclusion, I have some questions to submit: What happened to the Saturday Review's "increasing vogue" and "momentum" of interest in Oxford back in April, 1937? And why haven't our lawyers and legislators been introducing acts requiring that alternative theories of Shakespeare authorship be taught in our public schools? The old improbable "Stratford Will" stories have been around too long. What do you think?

(Editor's Note: We would like for How I Became An Oxfordian to become an irregular feature of the Newsletter. SOS members are encouraged to write up their stories and send them to:

Warren Hope  
Editor  
SOS Newsletter  
812 Goshen Road, C-22  
West Chester, PA 19380

Such articles will have an inherent interest for other Oxfordians and may also guide the Society's planning of future publicity efforts.)

#### Mensa Bulletin Announces Formation of Cusick's OSSIG

The Mensa Bulletin for March, 1983, in its "SIG Column," a column devoted to Mensa's Special Interest Groups, announced the formation of OSSIG this way:

While we are in the library, let us tell you about OXFORD-SHAKESPEARE SIG. John Cusick (13428 Copperstone Drive, Sun City West, AZ 85375) asks the burning question: Who created the Shakespeare canon? (That isn't like the Colt .45, is it? I didn't think so.) The SIG will examine the mystery, leaning toward Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Baconians and Stratfordians welcome. Quarterly newsletters are available for \$3 a year. SASE for details.

SOS member Cusick has prepared a Prospectus of the SIG for potential members which presents an able brief against the Stratford man and includes the statement, "Well worth your contact is The Shakespeare-Oxford Society, P.O. Box 16254, Baltimore, MD 21210 which rides herd (and shotgun) on Oxford matters in the U.S."

In future issues of the Newsletter we hope to report on the progress of OSSIG and look forward to learning how many people become acquainted with the Oxford case through this new vehicle.

#### Oxfordian Background in Pictures by

H. Amphlett

(Editor's Note: We are indebted to Harold Patience and Mrs. Robins, sister of the late Hilda Amphlett, for providing us with this additional manuscript by the author of Who Was Shakespeare?)

Dr. John Donne said, "An hand or eye

By Hilliard drawn is worth a history

By a worse painter made."

This so eulogised Nicholas Hilliard was court painter to Queen Elizabeth and King

James, and Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford must have known him all his years at Court.

There is a miniature in the possession of the Duke of Buccleugh which Hilliard made of the Earl at the age of 38. It was painted in 1588, the year of the Armada: hence the armour which he is wearing, and possibly the reason for the painting--a commemoration of that vital year. The longer hair and turn down collar denote the last quarter of the century.

During the painting of a portrait the sitter comes into very close contact with the painter, for they spend many hours alone together in the studio, and the artist talks to make his sitter look lively and display his personality and the sitter has time to study, not only the artist himself, but the methods he uses in his work. De Vere's exquisite tastes would make him appreciate and value Hilliard's little works of art, and what he saw in the artist's studio re-appeared in his plays.

Thus I believe, without any doubt, that it was of such portraits that he spoke when he made Hamlet say to his mother, "Look here, upon this picture and on this--the counterfeit presentments of two brothers," especially as in a previous scene we have Hamlet's remark to Rosencrantz--"And those who made mows at him while my father lived, give 20, 50 and a 100 ducats apiece for his picture in little."

Oxford knew that Hilliard's charges were high and also that he "copied out" portraits of notabilities for sale, for Hilliard had been allowed a special licence from the queen (renewed by King James), which granted --"To our principal drawer of small portraits a monopoly for 12 years to invent, make, grave and imprint any pictures of our image" and also the privilege of granting to others to publish portraits of the king, "and that no one presume to do so without his licence." This meant that Hilliard had a monopoly of royal portraits and could charge 50 or 100 ducats apiece.

Those who wish to give Shakespeare an actual knowledge of the Danish Court from a personal visit, believe the reference, quoted above, to be to large tapestries which had been recently woven and hung in the royal

palace, and which represented all the past Kings of Denmark. A fire destroyed many of these tapestries but a few remain such as that of Frederick II of Denmark and his son, Christian IV. But the fact that they are referred to as "pictures in little" refutes this hypothesis. Certainly most actors follow this quite English trend of thought and appear with two miniature portraits, one of which Hamlet is probably wearing suspended from a blue ribbon round his neck, as this was a quite normal form of ornament and is to be seen in several contemporary portraits. Hilliard's portrait of "A lover against a background of flames" shows such a locket worn by the sitter. Certainly John Henderson, the famous 18th century actor, understood the reference to apply to miniatures for we have a fine portrait of him in the role of Hamlet, wearing a black satin suit and a periwig of his own period and holding in his hands two miniatures, one of which is suspended from a ribbon round his neck.

In passing I must mention that Decker, the Jacobean playwright, in his "Satiromastix" gives a line to his character, Tucca, as he comes upon the stage, "My name's Hamlet revenge! Thou hast been at Parris Garden, hast not?" and he is followed by a boy who carries under his cloak two pictures as a skit on Hamlet's speech to his mother about the portraits of her first and second husbands, and these must have been large or the joke would have been lost on the audience.

But this is only a farce, and the more unlike the original, the funnier, so that it does not alter my contention that Shakespeare (Oxford), writing Hamlet at the end of 1588-9, as is now accepted by Cairncross and Hotson, had in mind his recently finished portrait, and those other delightful "pictures in little" by Nicholas Hilliard which he had seen and admired in the artist's studio.

It is not impossible that William of Stratford should have seen one of these beautiful and very expensive portraits at the home of one of Thomas Russell's distant relatives, but I think we have in Shakespeare a closer familiarity with

the miniaturist's art, for again in the "Merchant of Venice" we get an even more detailed description of Hilliard's work. Thus when Bassanio finds Portia's portrait within the leaden casket he is amazed at its beauty and exclaims:

Fair Portia's counterfeit. What  
divine God  
Hath come so near creation? Move  
these eyes?  
Seem they in motion? Here are  
severed lips  
Parted with sugar breath; so sweet  
a bar  
Should sunder such sweet friends.  
Here in her hair  
The painter plays the spider, and  
hath woven  
A golden mesh t'intrap the hearts  
of men.  
Fresher than gnat in cobweb; but  
her eyes  
How could he see to do them?  
Having made one  
Methinks it should have power to  
steal both of his  
And leave itself unfurnished.

If anyone, in painting a miniature, has had to remove one eye to adjust its size or position, then they will know just how devastated an artist feels when the first eye is left "unfurnished." I have no doubt at all that the writer of that charming description had seen the artist or his assistant in just such a predicament during the painting of a portrait. Hilliard, attending a court production of the Tragedy, must have smiled at the writer's uncanny insight; he may even have loaned the locket and caskets used.

Turning to the sonnets we find Shakespeare returning again and again to imagery drawn from the artist's work and studio, or to choice paintings in his own possession, amongst which were undoubtedly portraits of the Earl of Southampton, which, with his treasures, he kept under lock and key when he was away.

We have two miniatures of the Earl, one aged twenty, where we see him with his dainty love-lock on to his shoulder, and again, rather older and slightly bearded.

Although Shakespeare loved these charming remembrances of his friend, he said, "I never saw that you did painting need." (Sonnet 83) and in Sonnet 67

Why should false painting imitate his  
cheek  
And steal dead seeing of his living hue?  
Why should poor beauty indirectly seek  
Roses of shadow since his rose is true?

and again

Truth needs no colour, with his colour  
fix'd  
Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay  
But best is best if never intermix'd.

When absent from his friend and no longer able to see him in person, he wrote (Sonnet 47):

Betwix't mine eye and heart a league is  
took  
And each doth turn now unto the other  
When that mine eye is famished for a  
look  
O heart in love, with sighs himself  
dothe smother  
With my love's picture then my eye doth  
feast  
And to the painted banquet bids my  
heart.

Or better still (Sonnet 24):

Mine eye hath played the painter, and  
hath stell'd  
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;

One would like to think that Edward de Vere actually owned this miniature of Harry Wriothesley, even if he isn't quite all the lovely things to us that he was to the poet.

When beseeching the young man to marry he says that a child of his would be

Much liker than your painted counterfeit,  
and he even refers to the other side of Hilliard's art when he says

She (nature) carved thee for her seal  
and meant thereby  
Thou shouldst print more, not let the  
copy die.

which reminds us of the licence "to invent, make, grave and imprint any pictures."

There exists a sample of Hilliard's designing for the die of a seal. This is the

obverse of Queen Elizabeth's great seal of Ireland. She is shown very young, crowned, and holding the orb and sceptre. From this design, with which Elizabeth was very pleased, he carved the seal itself. The Queen wrote--"according to the last pattern made upon parchment by you our servant Hilliard---And by the same pattern you shall work, engrave, sink, finish and bring to perfection ready to be used such a new great seal in silver." For this work of consummate art the artist received the lease of the manor of Poyle in the parish of Stanmore in Middlesex, granted in 1587 for 21 years.

We now come to another example of this miniaturist's art, which, seeing that the face is an exact replica of the miniature portrait belonging to the Duke of Buccleugh, I have no hesitation in saying is another, but probably earlier, portrait of the Earl of Oxford. This is the full length painting of a young man in a white suit entangled amongst the briars, which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Miss V. Sackville-West, writing an introduction for a catalogue of Tudor Paintings, shown at the Arcade Gallery in 1947, says of this miniature:

A lover he may be, but that is natural to his years. A poet he may be, and that in the 16th century is almost a certainty; not a very considerable poet perhaps, not even one whose name will be recorded to posterity--he himself will put every obstruction in the way--by refusing to allow his name to be attached to his poems, "trifles composed for his private delight, that would blush to be seen otherwise than by twilight." They may find their way into some song-book, "The Paradise of Dainty Devices" possibly or "A Gorgeous Gallary of Gallant Inventions," but his fastidious reticence will not permit him to acknowledge them openly--that is not in the mode.

It is a shot in the dark for Miss V. Sackville-West was not an Oxfordian, but her description fits as perfectly as does his dandyfied appearance, love-lorn attitude, and facial resemblance to the author of "If Women could be Fair" and "Loves Labours Lost."

This exquisite portrait may have been painted for some special occasion, such as the Earl's wedding with Anne Cecil, but more likely to have been a little later when he returned from the Continent and was labelled an "Italianate Englishman."

The next portrait of the Earl (this time another authentic one) was painted when he was 25. Its author is unknown, but he was probably a Flemish artist residing in Paris. It was painted when the Earl had recently arrived in the French capital and he sent it home to his wife with a gift of two horses. Dr. Dale, the English ambassador, writing to Burleigh in praise of the picture, says, "It seemeth to us he hath done my Lord of Oxford well," and adds, "God send him a Raphael always in his company," which goes to prove that the Earl was a keen connoisseur of art (drawing, it will be remembered, was one of his early accomplishments) for Raphael Sanzio, who died in 1520, was at this date (1574) considered to have been the greatest master of painting; and also that the Earl himself was a subject a "Raphael" would wish to paint--"the most goodly fashion'd man I ever saw; from head to foot in form rare and most absolute; he had a face like one of the most ancient honour'd Romans"--says one who saw him in his heyday.

Dr. Dale further suggests that the artist should be invited to come to England, thus: "If the skill of this painter here be liked, I suggest he would be induced to come thither, for he is a Flemming and liketh not over well of his entertainment here." Lord Burleigh merely made a laconic entry in his diary, "March 12th The Earl departed from Paris and wrote to his wife and sent her his picture and two horses."

Leaving Paris, the Earl went straight to the home of great artists, Italy; and after visiting Milan, passed across the Lombardy plain with its romantic towns Brescia, Verona, Padua to Venice, then at the height of its artistic glory, with Titian finishing a long active life, Tintoretto having finished his enormous wall paintings in the Palace of the Doges, where he might see a painting of the recently won Battle of Lepanto as life-l.

as though one was an eye-witness of the scene, and the two green pennants of great length captured from the Moslem's galleys. No wonder de Vere wrote home to the effect that he wished to see active service against the Turk. Denied this, he continued his sight-seeing, and it is to these days in Italy that we get a reflection in the Introduction to the Taming of the Shrew, thus:

The First Servant says to Christopher Sly, the Tinker, whom they are fooling into believing is really a great man, who has slept and forgotten his former state, "Dost thou love pictures? We will fetch straight 'Adonis painted by a running brook and Cytherea all in sedges hid.' And further: 'We'll show thee Io as she was a maid and how she was beguiled and surprised as lively painted as the deed were done.'"

This painting of Io and Jupiter Karl Else has identified as the one by Correggio which, he says, hung in the palace of the sculptor Leoni at Milan, and there de Vere must have seen it. The pun on Io as E.O. may have added to the memorability of the painting for the Earl.

And, again, another memory word picture of a famous painting:

Or Daphne roaming through a thorny wood, scratching her legs, that one shall swear she bleeds; and at the sight shall sad Apollo weep, so workmanly the blood and tears are drawn.

What a deep impression such art must have made on Shakespeare's mind for him to be able to render it again in mere words! That he admired almost to wonderment the exquisite wall-paintings by Julio Romano at the Palazzo da Te at Mantua, is equally evident; he may even have made sketches of them, for in Lucrece 24 verses are devoted to a description of them, even remembering such details as that one man's nose was shadowed by another's ear, and that many of the crowd were hidden, and so real seemed it, that he wanted to jump up to get a view of the others.

Julio Romano, whom Shakespeare identifies as the artist of Hermione's statue in A Winter's Tale, was a painter, sculptor and architect employed by Francesco Gonzaga at Mantua, and his particular aim was a three-dimensional effect in painting, which gave his figures that stereoscopic and lifelike appearance which the Earl found so astounding, especially when compared with the stiff, flat, cut-out cardboard effect obtained by the English artists in their endeavour to render a likeness of Queen Elizabeth "without shadows," as she is reported to have ordered Hilliard to do.

Mr. J.J. Dwyer (in his pamphlet Italian Art and Shakespeare) goes so far as to say that the line in Love's Labours Lost:

This senior-junior giant dwarf, Dan Cupid

refers to "Signior Julio's" (Romano's) giant dwarf which he added to the foreground of Raphael's "Vision of Constantine" when he was Raphael's pupil and finishing some of the great master's pictures after Raphael's death. The dwarf does not figure in the preliminary sketch for the picture, but was possibly added at the request of Cardinal Ippolito de Medici, of whose dwarf retainer, Gradasso Derrettai, it was a portrait. Karl Else says Romano repeated the likeness of this big dwarf in a wall painting at Mantua.

The appreciation of pictures was instilled into de Vere in his youth by drawing, antique statues being the usual models for training the eye and hand, also by the patronage of artists by the rich nobles around him, followed by intensive study during his travels in Italy, where collectors were filling their palaces with ancient art treasures from Greece as well as modern paintings; and later, perhaps by the sale of works of art that had hung on the walls of Cecil House or King's Place.

That he knew the jargon of the auction room is clear for in Timon of Athens, probably written during those last years at Hackney, and when, I imagine, some of his treasures had fallen under the hammer, he writes:

Timon. Wither art going?  
 Apemantus. To knock out an honest  
 Athenian's brains.  
 Timon. That's a deed thou'lt die for.  
 Apemantus. Right. If doing nothing be  
 death by the law.  
 Timon. How likest thou this picture,  
 Apemantus?

A "knock out" is made by the bidder getting the article below the market price so that the vendor is cheated of his just price and the two concerned in the "knock out" share the difference between the true and paid price, in fact, an auction sale at which the bids are arranged beforehand by the dealers to the detriment of the vendor.

#### SOS Bulletin Board

\*Celeste Ashley, of Palo Alto, has provided us with the biographical history of the Earls of Oxford which has been running in the Newsletter from Essex Worthies. In this issue we reprint the entry on Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford:

Edward, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), is the most romantic and controversial figure in the family's history. He has been charged with reckless extravagance and many vices. No doubt he was extravagant; but the truth is that the 13th Earl lived in a style that none of his successors could maintain. The 14th Earl was ordered to break up his household and live with his father-in-law. When the 15th claimed the inheritance the three sisters of the 14th claimed a share and the estate was divided between them. The 16th lived proudly, and at his death his affairs were found to be in sad confusion, which probably explains the lack of a memorial. Edward, the 17th Earl, was only 12 when his father died. He became a royal ward in the charge of Burgley, whose daughter, Anne, he married in 1571, to the great unhappiness of both.

The 17th Earl spent his youth with poets and scholars. George Gascoigne, the poet from Walthamstow (q.v.), lived with him at Cecil House in the Strand. One of Gascoigne's works, The Supposes, a translation from Ariosto, was later to form the basis of The Taming of the Shrew, and this came to be one of the links between Shakespeare and the 17th

Earl which in 1920 led J. Thomas Looney to claim for de Vere the authorship of Shakespeare's plays. Essex has so many associations with the claim that one or two others should be recorded here. Arthur Golding's (q.v.) translation of Ovid was a source for Shakespearean plots, and Golding was de Vere's uncle and tutor. Canon Rendall (q.v.) of Dedham examined the case for the de Vere authorship in Shakespeare Sonnets and Edward de Vere, and Personal Clues in Shakespeare's Poems and Sonnets. The earl had a company of players known as the Earl of Oxford's boys. Sixteen of his poems were published in The Paradyse of Dainty Devises; 16, along with 45 by George Gascoigne in A Hundred Sundrie Flowers. His poetical output was clearly considerable, and there is an intriguing mystery about his activities during the last 15 years of his life, which were spent as a recluse. In 1596 his second wife, Elizabeth Trentham, one of the queen's Maids of Honour, bought King's Place, Hackney, and it was there that the 17th Earl died in 1604.

He was always a favourite with the queer and especially delighted her by winning chief prize in a joust at Westminster in 1571. Meeting him during travels on the Continent, George Chapman wrote of the earl:

I overtook, coming from Italy,  
 In Germany, a great and famous Earl,  
 Of England; the most goodly fashion'd  
 man

I ever saw: from head to foot in form  
 Rare and most absolute; he had a face  
 Like one of the most ancient honour'd  
 Romans

From whence his noblest family was deriv'd  
 He was beside of spirit passing great,  
 Valiant and learned, liberal as the  
 sun,

Spoke and writ sweetly, or of learn'd  
 subjects,

Or of the disciplining of public  
 weals'

And 'twas the Earl of Oxford.

\*Donald LaGreca, of Philadelphia, draws our attention to the comments on Shakespeare in Max Beer's The General History of Socialism and Social Struggles (1957). In that book Beer wrote (p. 54ff.): "The greatest dramatist of England and of modern times, William Shakespeare (b. 1564, d. 1616), was anti-democratic and anti-communist. His plays are the mirror of the intellectual tendency of the upper classes of society, for whom he wrote. In his drama, Henry VI (part 2), he has left on record the opinions of the upper classes about the peasants' revolts. This drama is important for us, as it represents Jack Cade, the leader of the peasants' revolt of the year 1450, as a communist and dictator. It is in keeping with Shakespeare's whole character that he satirizes Cade and seeks to make him ridiculous, and imputes ignorance, scientific hostility, and rapacity to the people. From the time of Aristophanes up to our day the working classes have found few dramatists who have understood social economy. Hitherto dramatists have written for courtiers, nobles, and the upper middle class. Even a genius like Shakespeare is no exception." While it is clear that Beer characterizes in a crude way the viewpoint of the author of the plays without considering the implications of that viewpoint for the authorship question, it is also clear that Beer misrepresents the viewpoint of the author by dwelling on a play of debatable authorship, even among Stratfordians, and by ignoring such statements as this self-reproachful speech in King Lear:

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er  
you are,  
That bide the pelting of this  
pitiless storm,  
How shall your houseless heads and  
unfed sides,  
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness,  
defend you  
From seasons such as these?...  
Take physic, pomp;  
Expose thyself to feel what wretches  
feel.

\*Ruth Miller, of Jennings, Louisiana, directs our attention to an article by Jack Benoit Gohn in the Georgetown Law Journal, Vol. 70, 1982, entitled, Richard II: Shakespeare's Legal Brief on the Royal Prerogative and the Succession to the Throne, which, as Mrs. Miller writes, "without touching on the authorship issue ... makes a case for Shakespeare as a legal scholar far advanced beyond a layman's appreciation and understanding of the concepts involved."

\*Harold Patience, of Braintree, Essex, England, our man in Shakespeare country, sends us a clipping from the East Anglian Daily Times of December 30, 1982, entitled "A View of Shakespeare's England." The article deals with a map made by Lawrence Nowell, one of the tutors of the Earl of Oxford, and reads in part: "The British Library has purchased the 'Nowell-Burgley atlas,' an item of great beauty and cultural importance which enables the man of today to view Shakespeare's England through the eyes of Lord Burgley, Queen Elizabeth I's most important Minister. It is in the form of a notebook, containing a unique Tudor map of England, Wales and Ireland and a small map of Sicily.... The principal item in the notebook is an exquisite map of Queen Elizabeth I's realm. It was compiled within months of Shakespeare's birth by Lawrence Nowell, a distinguished antiquary and cartographer, and presented to William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, in about 1564. [N.B.: Oxford was then 14 years old and a ward living in Cecil's house.] .... Lord Burghley clearly treasured the map and may well have carried it about with him, as tradition would have us believe. He certainly annotated the back of it in a variety of ways which shed important light on his preoccupations and on British policy at home and abroad in the decade 1564 to 1574."

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# Newsletter *Shakespeare Oxford Society*

*Verò Nihil Verius*

SUMMER, 1983

Vol. 19, No. 3

## How I Became an Oxfordian

by

Harold Feldman

I was never a Stratfordian. I learned my authorship theory as I learned my Shakespeare, and I learned them from the best teacher I have ever known, my eldest brother whom you all knew as A. Bronson Feldman.

He was eighteen at the time, already a trained poet and bristling with interests and learning in a dozen directions like the batteries of a battleship. For him, the most objective scholarship was always merged with a militant advocacy. This, together with an unequalled gift for hilarity, made life with him a privileged education.

I was going on fourteen when Abe read Mark Twain's "Is Shakespeare Dead" to me. Ever since then, the idea that the Divine William was an author has been a joke to me. The next item in this course that I recall was Abe's bringing home a huge heavily bound volume of Ignatius Donnelly's The Great Cryptogram, which he explained to me as a classic example of what happens when a good thinker becomes a cranky fantast. Then came the final step, and it still gives me a sentimental chill when I remember those dog-eared pages full of sense and sensitivity. The decisive book was Thomas Looney's Shakespeare Identified. For Abe, and then for me, there was no major doubt left after that.

But we learned early that good sense and evidence was not enough when it came to the Shakespeare superstitions. Abe's friend, Jess Frank, who brought H.G. Wells and Thomas Huxley into our lives, would not yield, and the air was blue with the debates on the steps of the Free Library between Abe and Jess. Abe's teachers, who loved the plays as much as anyone, Lutton, Penny-packer, Boileau, would not budge on the authorship question. And if any Oxfordian slipped into a repetition of the Baconian nonsense and began claiming that Edward de

Vere wrote all the plays of Massinger, wrote the songs of Thomas Tallis, and discovered the circulation of the blood, they were sure to let us know about it, and Abe's ears would blush.

The happiest time of my apprenticeship in the Oxfordian cause was at Temple University when I succeeded in bringing Charles Wisner Barrell and Gelett Burgess to talk and show slides. The University pooh-bahs were upset about Burgess. Shakespeare aside, he was a world-famous literatus, quoted in the anthologies, and associated with the poem about the Purple Cow. Why wasn't he speaking on a platform graced by Deans on some non-combat subject like Whimsy and Virtue in the American Ethos? Instead, it was probably the liveliest and most educational afternoon in the history of Temple. No English professor attended. But the Stratfordians had two champions from Philosophy and Latin Classics to represent them. Still, after Barrell's demonstration of the portrait alterations, they had little spirit for the job. Abe gave a beautiful summary at the close, lucid and polemical. It was a great day.

I don't think the Oxfordians will win as a direct result of their educational and research efforts. As Abe showed many times, we are dealing with an entrenched superstition, reinforced by private interests and fairytale myths. One day a new generation will look freshly at the subject and say, "Of course, Oxford wrote the plays. What was the fuss all about?"

## The "Ashbourne" Portrait

by

Harold W. Patience

I would like, if I may, to refer readers of the Newsletter back to the leading article in the Summer, 1979, issue which was written by Gordon Cyr and titled "Ashbourne" Sitter Not Oxford.

Contrary to the findings of Charles Wisner Barrell, a further examination of the "Ashbourne" disclosed that it was not, after all, a disguised representation of Edward de Vere, but a portrait of Hugh Hammersley, Lord Mayor of London. This new pronouncement came as a shock to Oxfordians. But as Mr. Cyr so rightly commented at the time--"Oxfordians will naturally be disappointed in consequence of these latest findings, but should be able to take them philosophically and in stride. Their case has never in any way been dependent upon de Vere's having been the subject of 'Shakespeare' portraits."

As far as I am aware, the attention of members has never been directed to a series of strange coincidences surrounding the portrait. It was in 1929 that an American, Mr. Eustace Conway, purchased the "Ashbourne" in the belief that it was a genuine representation of "Shakespeare." The portrait had been the property of an old family resident at Ashbourne, a small town situated in the southwest of Derbyshire. Just five miles distant from Ashbourne Hall, the family seat of the Cokayne family, was Rocester Abbey, in Staffordshire--ancestral home of the Trentham family. Sir Thomas Trentham was the father of Elizabeth Trentham, who became the second wife of Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

The two families were united when Anne Trentham married Thomas Cokayne (1587-1638). Sir William Cokayne was Lord Mayor of London during the years 1619-1626. His only son, Charles, was created 1st Viscount Cullin in 1642.

The great niece of Elizabeth Trentham (Oxford's second wife) was also named Elizabeth and lived from 1637 to 1713. She married Brian, 2nd Viscount Cullen, in 1657.

Apart from these extraordinary family links between the Cokayne's of Ashbourne Hall and the Trentham's of Rocester Abbey, it is to be noted from Mr. Cyr's article that Hugh Hammersley "had been Lord Mayor of London in 1627." Hammersley, then, succeeded Sir William Cokayne (who died in 1626) as Mayor!

The above facts suggest that further research into the history of the "Ashbourne" Portrait--although perhaps throwing no light on the "Shakespeare" Mystery--might yet prove to be of great interest.

His Honour Travers Christmas Humphreys  
An Obituary  
by  
Mrs. M.H. Robins

The British press said "The Gentle Judge dies at the age of 82"; this was on the 13th of April last, 1983. I had been speaking to him on the telephone the evening before, and we had arranged that I should go up to 58, Eccleston Square, the headquarters of the Buddhist Society, on the following Monday. I told him I had heard that he was not too well, to which he replied, "I am perfectly fit, just a relaxed throat." Within twenty-four hours he was dead. I was told that he died within three minutes of having a heart-attack, and before the ambulance arrived. There was a Doctor in the house, who had been attending a Zen class, run by Dr. Irmgard Schloegl, who had been living in his house for some time.

I had known Mr. Humphreys for over thirty years, first meeting him at the Poetry Society's Headquarters in Portman Square, where The Shakespeare Fellowship held their monthly meetings to discuss the authorship question of the plays and poems by William Shakespeare. At this time I was the Hon. Secretary of the Society, and Mr. Humphreys' enthusiasm for the Oxford Shakespeare Theory thrilled me, and seeing I was an Hon. Sec. he too had ideas--which later materialised in my becoming Hon. Editor of The Middle Way, the organ of The Buddhist Society. I give these details to shew that I knew him and his parents, Sir Travers and Lady Zoe Humphreys, as well as his wife, "Puck" Humphreys, and was closely associated with him in his work for the Buddhist Society, of which he was the Founder, and President for nearly sixty years, and also his interest in the Shakespeare Fellowship, which he later renamed The Shakespearean Authorship Society. I did not approve of this rather cumbersome title, but by this time I had given up the Hon. Secretaryship, and Mr. Humphreys had become the President on the death of Admiral Holland. The yearly Dinners at the English Speaking Union, in Charles Street, London W.1. were extremely well attended, and our President never failed to attract members of the Bar, and other notable friends which gave the Society great publicity at the time.

My sister, the late Miss Hilda Amphlett had become interested in the Shakespeare problem from the day that she first visited the Parish Church at Stratford-on-Avon and saw the bust of that oafish looking creature which adorns the monument of William Shakespeare, the maltster, and sometime play-actor of the late 16th century.

From then on her studies led her through every book she could find which would throw light on the problem. Her visits to the De Vere country, chiefly in Essex, proved so interesting that we three sisters could find no better way of spending our holidays than in Lavenham, Earl's Colne, Bures, etc.

Mr. and Mrs. Humphreys also took me to Lavenham for long week-ends, where lectures could be arranged at the ancient Guildhall, and I could retrace my visits to Hedingham and Earl's Colne, covering the ground I had taken when arranging coach tours for the Fellowship in past years.

In 1954 Mr. Humphreys persuaded my sister to start writing her book Who Was Shakespeare?, for which he wrote the Introduction, and also found a suitable publisher in William Heinemann Ltd. The book appeared in 1955. This clear and lucid account of the problem, giving due acknowledgement to Mr. T.J. Looney's Shakespeare Identified, and illustrated with excellent reproductions of existing portraits of the notable people of interest to the theory, brought her many friends, and many enquiries regarding the Society.

Because I believe a knowledge of the Law will lead to the true identity of the real author of the Shakespeare works, I give here some details of Christmas Humphreys' eventful career. Those wishing for deeper knowledge will probably read his autobiography, Both Sides of the Circle, published by Allen & Unwin in 1978.

He was born the second son of Sir Travers and Lady Zoe Humphreys in London in 1901. His mother, who must have wished for a girl, was walking up Notting Hill, when she said to her sister, "I wish Nellie would get out and walk." Which "he" did, quite easily, a little later.

Born into a happy home, his choir-boy days were bliss. He was never taught

music--perhaps hours of practicing were far from his inclination, for with an excellent ear he could learn all the Church music by his mother playing the piano, and singing over the psalms, etc.

At fifteen he was sent up to Malvern, where his brother had just finished and gone into the army, and War. He was subjected to the usual training at that time, which was geared to producing young officers for the British Army in Flanders, and he too would go to Sandhurst in time. Meantime on October 1st, 1917 he was told of his brother's death in Belgium. He was so stunned that it was some time before he could believe it--he was taken ill, and his parents brought him home from Malvern in the summer.

When he was better he returned to Malvern, but his search for "the meaning of life" had begun, and was to be nurtured by finding a book in a shop in Great Russell Street, called Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism by Ananda Coomaraswamy, published by George Harrap & Company, which settled the burning question for him.

Strangely enough, I too was given that book, but not until 1940 when I was studying Manava Yoga with Professor Shastri. The paintings by Abanindro Nath Tagore C.I.E. interested me, as I had read some of his poems, but it was some years before the philosophy became a reality to me, and then I was studying in T.C.H.'s class at the Buddhist Society. (Christmas Humphreys was often referred to as T.C.H., and by his personal friends as Toby).

In 1918, having left Sandhurst, he was sent up to Cambridge to his father's old college--Trinity Hall. He does not seem to have "set the town alight" either with his erudition or love of pranks. In fact he seems to have spent most of his spare time at Theosophical Meetings, and the lectures of Mrs. Yates. I too knew Mrs. Yates when I became a Co. Freemason, but Toby somehow kept clear of that, devoting his time to the study of the Secret Doctrine by Mme. Blavatsky.

Had his brother lived it seems that he would have taken to the Law, and Toby, the poet and dreamer, might have found a "gentler" profession.

He was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in January 1924, and entered his father's Chambers, 1. Temple Gardens, as a pupil of Roland Oliver. In this way he studied his briefs, and went with him to "view," as they say, learning all the business of the Courts, and asking innumerable questions until it could all be absorbed and digested. For the first brief of his own he says he received "two whole guineas," thus his life as a criminal lawyer began.

1924 was an exciting year for him, as apart from his entry into a profession which would hold him for the next fifty years, he had in 1923 founded the Youth Lodge of the Theosophical Society, drawing in some of his Cambridge friends, getting permission to hold their meetings in the English headquarters at 23 Bedford Square. He had also met Aileen Faulkner, the daughter of Irish parents, her father being a doctor from Co. Tyrone. She was all Irish, with a most photographic bone structure, and the fact that she was ten years older than Toby, cemented their devotion to each other, and she was called by all her friends, Puck. They could not marry until he was earning sufficient to keep her, but the happy day came in 1927, when his income from the Bar was some £600 a year. That day in December they were married at a register office, and in the afternoon a Buddhist ceremony, which he had written himself, was performed. Puck, who was a silversmith, made her wedding ring from a golden sovereign.

The Youth Lodge was later termed The Buddhist Society, and became the largest Buddhist centre in the West, which still remains so, for it was disassociated from the Theosophical Society as soon as it was renamed.

Apart from his interests already mentioned he became active in promoting the use of osteopathy, herbalism, and homoeopathy, methods of which he and his wife made use, never calling in a G.P. (General Practitioner) for advice.

He was a great reader and writer of books, and possessed a splendid library. Books sent in to the Buddhist Society for review in our journal The Middle Way (which I edited for eleven years) helped to swell the Buddhist Society library, as the critics gave their contributions, and did not even get the book as a reward.

In 1932 he was appointed junior Treasury Counsel following his eminent father in a position he was to keep for the next twenty-five years, becoming Senior Treasury Counsel as opportunity arrived, and thus being appointed to No.1 Court. No.1 was usually concerned with murder trials, and during those twenty-five years he prosecuted for the Crown in 250 cases. One can mention so many famous trials, but that of Ruth Ellis in 1955--the last woman to be hanged--is one that made him work even harder for the abolition of capital punishment. When he asked her in Court--"At the time you fired the gun, did you intend to kill?" she answered, "Certainly." If she had answered "only in self-defence," the verdict might have been different. She had killed her husband, and must have spoken, and did speak, the truth.

He took silk in 1958; when I say took, I should perhaps have said, he was given, for the Attorney General, Sir Reginald Manningham-Buller, reminded him that he had been a Treasury Counsel for twenty-five years, and it was time he moved on, and really offered him silk. As a Silk he could no longer prosecute. I went with him to the Law Courts in the Strand, and there saw him presented to each of the courts. Dressed in hired knee breeches, and lace ruffles, with silk stockings which insisted on falling down at awkward moments, he got through the proceedings, and could now put Q.C. after his name.

In 1968 the Lord Chancellor, Lord Gardner, sent for him, and invited him to become one of two new judges. He was sixty-seven and deeply grateful; he was sad too, for it meant immediate resignation from the Recorder-ship of Guildford. When the appointment was announced, the Saddlers Company, of which he had been Master, presented him with a new wig and gown, the wig of a judge differing from that of a barrister's in its arrangement of the curls, and what seems to be the remains of a tonsure on top. In June 1975 he passed a lenient sentence on a coloured youth who had pleaded guilty of rape. The Press made a great "do" of this, apparently to orders, but later one of them telephoned him at the Old Bailey, thinking T.C.H. might be disturbed by the outcry and said "We were told to blow it up for a bit as there was nothing else in the news; then a few days

later we were told to cut it." And so he became the "Gentle Judge."

In 1976 he retired, or as he said, "was 'as near as dammit' chucked out." However, they gave him a splendid farewell; it was fifty-five years since he first entered that No. 1 court, and the reminiscences on all sides were touching.

This extraordinary character, seemingly so unfitted for the brilliant career he achieved, was, on the whole, very much liked by those who knew him well. Generous at times, perhaps mean to himself. He would buy his suits from Gamages in Holborn "off the peg." No expensive Saville Row, and lengthy fittings--of course his tall, upright figure needed no "gussets," even in his 80s. But in India, where I went with him on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti festivals I saw him haggle with a street vendor, over a few pieces of jewelry, knocking him down a few rupees. Of course they always expect to be "knocked down," they would only think you stupid if you did not do it, but to me it was embarrassing. It was as though a primordial instinct had overtaken him, perhaps he was just relaxing and wanted to be one with these people.

The news of his death was a great shock to me. I was taken to Golders Green Crematorium on April 16th, wearing white as suitable for Eastern mourning, with a black coat for Western feelings. It was a glorious sunny day, flowers, flowers everywhere, but for me the sun had gone out.

I also attended a crowded Memorial Meeting at the Caxton Hall on May 25th, where old and new faces from the Buddhist Society, and the Saddlers Company were met and greeted. It was a happy meeting, chaired by one of the Vice-Presidents of the Buddhist Society, and several addresses were well received, giving a hopeful atmosphere to most of us. There I was told that he had left me his signet-ring which he always wore on his little finger, and a legacy. The former I shall always wear, and the latter will help me to help others who need it, to follow his example and--"Walk On."

### SOS National Conference

The national conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society will be held in Washington, D.C., on October 21 and 22. The site and agenda for the meeting will be announced through a separate mailing to members.

### Oxfordian Echoes in Hamlet

by

Harold W. Patience

O God! Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall  
live behind me!  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy  
heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy  
breath; in pain,  
To tell my story.

(Hamlet, V.ii)

#### 1. The Ophelia Scenes

Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford (born in 1550 at his ancestral Hed- ingham Castle, in Essex, died in 1604 at Hackney) fits the requirements of "Shakespeare" authorship more than any other individual. Incidents in his life; his love of music; knowledge of classical literature, languages, the law, falconry, political matters, sea-faring and military matters--all these, and a host of other subjects, are strongly reflected in the Shakespeare Works. The caricature of actual contemporary people--persons holding high positions in affairs of State with whom de Vere was closely acquainted--is also evident in the immortal plays. Specially significant is de Vere's known acquaintance with the cities of northern Italy as reflected in The Merchant of Venice, Romeo and Juliet, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Othello, and other plays. The very character of the dramatist's greatest creation, Hamlet, seems to mirror Oxford's persona, explaining, perhaps, why the personality of the Prince of Denmark reaches us with such strange potency.

In signing his own early poems the young and headstrong Earl of Oxford defied the accepted custom of his day

which decreed that a nobleman should not acknowledge his own creative literary work. The author of the Arte of English Poesie (1589) was to write:

"...but in these days (although some learned Princes may take delight in Poets) yet universally it is not so. For as well Poets and Poesie are despised and the name become of honourable infamous, subject to scorn and derision, and rather a reproach than a praise to any that useth it."

John Seldon also voiced the general opinion when he wrote:

"It is ridiculous for a lord to print verses. He may write them to please himself, but to publish them is foolish."

However, the composition of revealing plays was another matter entirely. Anonymity was undesirable, so a nom de plume was necessary. The choice of Shake-speare--with the hyphen, as printed above the Sonnets--could have originated in one or all three of the following trends of thought:

1. De Vere's subsidiary title of Lord Bolebec had as a crest a lion shaking a broken spear.
2. When, in 1578, de Vere accompanied Queen Elizabeth on her Progress to the Eastern Counties the party was met at Audley End by Gabriel Harvey of Saffron Walden who presented the Earl with a splendid Latin oration in which the phrase vultus tela vibrat ("thy countenance shakes spears") was used.
3. In the Lord Chamberlain's Company there was an actor of small parts with a similar-sounding name (William Shaksper) under whose aegis the plays might be sent to press and the anonymity maintained.

Placing the Earl of Oxford's early poem Echo Verses and Shakespeare's early works A Lover's Complaint, Venus and Adonis and Romeo and Juliet side by side we discover extraordinary parallels--choice of words, concepts of thought, imagery, etc.--which display what is almost an obsession with the cave/echo theme, an idea which, indeed, runs through the early works of "Shakespeare" as a leitmotif. Lord

Oxford's Echo Verses, with required emphasis on certain words, read as follows:

Sitting alone upon my thought in mel  
ancholy mood,  
In sight of sea, and at my back an  
ancient hoary wood,  
I saw a fair young lady come, her  
secret fears to wail,  
Clad all in colour of a nun, and  
covered with a veil;  
Yet (for the day was calm and clear)  
I might discern her face.  
As one might see a damask rose hid  
under crystal glass.

Three times, with her soft hand, full  
hard on her left side she knocks,  
And sigh'd so sore as might have mov'd  
some pity in the rocks;  
From sighs and shedding amber tears  
into sweet song she brake,  
When thus the echo answered her to  
every word she spake:

Oh heavens! who was the first that  
bred in me this fever? Vere.  
Who was the first that gave the wound  
whose fear I wear for ever? Vere  
What tyrant, Cupid, to my harm usurps  
thy golden quiver? Vere.  
What wight first caught this heart and  
can from bondage it deliver? Vere.

Yet who doth most adore this wight, oh  
hollow caves tell true? You.  
What nymph deserves his liking best,  
yet doth in sorrow rue? You.  
What makes him not reward good will  
with some reward or ruth? Youth.  
What makes him show besides his birth,  
such pride and such untruth? Youth.

May I his favour match with love, if  
he my love will try? Ay.  
May I requite his birth with faith?  
Then faithful will I die? Ay.

And I, that knew this lady well,  
Said, Lord how great a miracle,  
To her how Echo told the truth,  
As true as Phoebus' oracle.

The Earle of Oxforde

Whilst the parallels are too numerous to set down here, the famous speech of Juliet is certainly noteworthy:

Hist, Romeo hist! O for a falconer's voice  
To lure this tassel gentle back again.  
Bondage is hoarse and may not speak aloud,  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo  
lies,  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than  
mine,  
With repetition of my Romeo's name.

Once again "Shakespeare" displays his expert knowledge of the aristocratic sport of falconry.

More curious "echoes" are to be found in Hamlet which, if found to be scattered at random throughout the play, could easily be dismissed as pure coincidence. The fact that they are confined to the Ophelia scenes, however, gives them special significance.

Polonius: Mad for thy love?  
Ophelia: ..I do fear if.  
Hamlet: ..get thee to a nunnery.  
Ophelia: ..he falls to such perusal of  
my face..  
..thrice his head thus waving..  
..he raised a sigh..  
..Rose of the fair State, the  
glass of fashion..  
Hamlet: Alas, sweet lady, what imports  
this song?  
Ophelia: ..I cannot choose but weep..  
Hamlet: ..a breeder of sinners?  
..Nymph, in thy orisons be all  
my sins rememb'ed.  
Ophelia: ..And I of ladies most deject  
and wretched.  
..There's a rue for you..

The same imagination spawned Oxford's Echo Verses and the Shakespeare poems. In a Lover's Complaint, for example, we find the following 'echoes':

From off a hill whose concave womb re-  
worded  
A plaintful story from a sist'ring vale,  
My spirits t' attend this double voice  
accorded,  
And down I laid to list the sad-tun'd  
tale;  
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale,  
Tearing of papers, breaking rings a-twain,  
Storming her world with sorrow's wind and  
rain.

....

..and true to bondage..  
..Oft did she heave her napkin to her  
eyne..  
..My parts have pow'r to charm a  
sacred nun..  
..Who glaz'd with crystal gate the  
glowing roses..

The cave/echo imagery turns up yet again in Venus and Adonis (Lines 829-834):

And now she beats her heart, whereat  
it groans,  
That all the neighbour caves, as  
seeming troubled,  
Make verbal repetition of her moans;  
Passion on passion deeply is redoubled:  
'Ay me!' she cries, and twenty times,  
'Woe, woe!'  
And twenty echoes twenty times cry so.

## 2. The Duke of Urbino

An existing engraving of a portrait of the Duke of Urbino not only provides a fascinating pointer to Shakespeare's sources but also several astonishing clues as to his identity.

Francisco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino (1490-1538) married Leonora, daughter of Francisco Gonzaga and Isabella d'Este, in 1508. His wife was to bear him five children. The Duke was a man of high courage but possessed of a quick temper; he once killed a priest with one blow of his fist and killed another man who he thought had seduced his sister.

The Duke was taken ill whilst engaged in preparation for an expedition against Solymán the Great and was forced to retire to his grandiose Villa dell'Imperiale. He died during a night in October 1538 and his body was taken to Urbino and buried in full armour. Following raised suspicions in several quarters, a post-mortem was carried out which revealed traces of poison. The Duke's son later ordered the arrest of the barber-surgeon who had attended his father during his illness, and the man confessed under torture that he had poured poison in the Duke's ear at the instigation of Luigi Gonzaga who was related to the Duke's wife.

Like the Duke of Urbino, the old King Hamlet (murdered by poison being poured into his ear) was a renowned soldier. Both in real life and in Hamlet the murderer is related to the victim; Hamlet says, "This is one Lucianus, nephew to the King." Some modern medical practitioners would scoff at any suggestion that poison poured into the ear could have fatal results. The point is really academic; what matters is that many people in the 16th-century (including, apparently, the author of Hamlet and the son of the Duke of Urbino) believed it.

In the following quotes from Hamlet I have stressed points which relate in an extraordinary way to the engraving of the Duke of Urbino and his untimely end:

Hamlet: Then saw you not his face?

Horatio: O yes, my lord; he wore his beaver  
up.

Hamlet: His beard was grizzl'd, no?

...

King: What do you call the play?

Hamlet: 'The Mouse-trap'. Marry, how?

Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the Duke's name; his wife Baptista. A' poisons him i' 'th garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago. The story is extant and written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

...

Hamlet: Look here upon this picture and on this..

...

See what a grace was seated on this brow;

Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;

An eye like Mars, to threaten and command..

In the engraving of the Duke of Urbino (taken from a portrait by Titian) we can observe the following points:

1. The Duke had distinctive curly hair and his beard was grizzled.
2. The prominent eyes of the subject could certainly suggest the description "an eye like Mars."

3. Although the Duke is not represented in full armour we can see, outside the space occupied by the subject the Duke's helmet with the beaver up.

The alterations made by "Shakespeare" (to serve, no doubt, as "red herrings") are interesting and revealing:

1. In real life the murder was instigated by Gonzaga, but in Hamlet Gonzago is the name given to the murdered Duke.
2. In 'The Mouse-trap' the scene of the murder is transferred from Italy to Vienna. It is worthy of note, however, that the story was "written in very choice Italian!"

The engraving of the Duke of Urbino was published in 1575--the very year in which the Earl of Oxford is known to have visited northern Italy!

3. The identify of "good Will Shake-speare"

In 1611 John Davies wrote the following epigram in his Scourge of Folly:

To our English Terence, Mr. Will  
Shake-speare:

Some say good Will (which I, in sport, do sing)  
Had'st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport,  
Thou had'st bin a companion for a King;...

Shake-speare, then, had demeaned himself by appearing on the public stages. The reference could not be to the commoner from Stratford-upon-Avon, whose chosen profession was acting, but to a person of high rank.

The name Will, which Davies uses 'in sport', i.e. in jest, is italicised--which seems to suggest either a nickname or a nom de plume. A further assumption would be that Davies was teasing Shake-speare (with the hyphen, be it noted, as printed above the Sonnets) for his frequent use of the phrase good will. As shown in the following examples, good will would appear to be a pet phrase of the Earl Oxford:

What makes him not reward good will with  
some reward or ruth? Youth.

(Oxford's Echo Verses)

..a work of no less good-will and applica-  
tion..

..a task of delightful industry with an  
indication of special good-will.

..to ensure that neither my good-will  
(which is very great)..

(Oxford's Latin preface to Clerke's  
translation of Il Cortegiano)

..I may declare my good will..

(Oxford's letter to Thomas Bedingfield--  
a preface to the translation of  
Cardanus Comforte)

Shakespeare's Sonnet No.136 concludes with  
these lines:

Make but my name thy love, and love that  
still.

And then thou lov'st me, for my name is  
Will.

This would be a pointless and ridiculous  
statement indeed if the poet's real name  
was Will.

#### SOS Bulletin Board

\*Celeste Ashley first drew our attention to  
the biographical history of the earls of  
Oxford in Essex Worthies. We conclude that  
history with this issue:

Henry, 18th Earl of Oxford (1593-1625),  
born at Stoke Newington, served under his  
uncle, Sir Horace Vere (q.v.), as captain  
in the Palatinate in 1620. From December  
1621 to March 1622 he was Vice-Admiral of  
a Fleet patrolling the Channel. It looked  
as though he would be able to restore the  
family fortunes, particularly when in  
1624 he married Lady Diana Cecil, daughter  
of the Earl of Exeter, who brought with  
her a marriage portion of £30,000, but  
died without issue.

Robert, 19th Earl of Oxford (d.1632) had  
little connection with the county. Castle  
Hedingham ceased to be the home of the  
Earls of Oxford with the death of the 18th  
after being linked for nearly six hundred  
years. The Great Chamberlainship passed  
to Lord Willoughby, cousin and heir  
general of the 18th Earl. But such was  
the spell cast by the history of the de  
Veres that in 1626, when Lord Chief

Justice Sir Randolph Carew, awarded  
the earldom to Robert de Vere, he said:

"I heard a great Peer of the nation,  
and a learned, say, when he lived  
there was no King in Christendom had  
such a subject as Oxford. I have  
laboured to make a covenant with my-  
self that affection may not press  
upon judgement; for I suppose there  
is no man that hath any apprehension  
of gentry or nobleness but his af-  
fection stands to the continuance of  
so noble a name and home and would  
take hold of a twig or twine-thread  
to uphold it. And yet Time hath his  
revolutions; there must be a period  
and an end to all temporal things,  
finis rerum, an end of names and  
dignities and whatever is terrene;  
and why not of de Vere? - for where  
is Bohum? Where is Mowbray? Nay,  
what is more, and most of all, where  
is Plantagenet? They are entombed  
in the urns and sepulchres of mortal-  
ity."

The 19th Earl was killed in battle in  
1632 and Aubrey, his only son succeeded.

Aubrey, 20th Earl of Oxford (1626-1703),  
suffered with other Royalist families  
during the Commonwealth, but at the  
Restoration received the Garter and was  
appointed Lord Lieutenant of Essex.  
James II removed him in 1687 and ap-  
pointed in his place the Roman Catholic,  
Lord Petre. But when William and Mary  
came to the throne, the 20th Earl was  
restored to the point of holding the  
office jointly with the Duke of Albe-  
marle. He died in a house in Downing  
Street and was buried in Westminster  
Abbey. With his death the title became  
extinct. There had been one son of his  
second marriage, but he had died young  
"in a miserable cottage" at Castle  
Hedingham.

If the line had continued we might have  
known more about the 20th Earl. As  
head of the county militia he had grave  
responsibilities in guarding the mouth  
of the Thames from the Dutch. But the  
line died out and even the monuments of  
the de Veres have been treated with  
scant respect. Most of the earls had  
been buried at Colne Priory until in

1583 the 17th Earl sold the lay house, park, and manor to Roger Harlackenden. In 1592 he sold the priory property, which included the tombs of so many of his ancestors, to Roger Harlackenden's son, Richard. Two of the monuments were transferred in the first quarter of the 17th century to Earls Colne church. Then in 1672 the estate passed from the Harlackenden family to a Mr. Wale, whose great-granddaughter committed the final act of vandalism by burning many of the charters that had come down with the property. Not until 1935 was the process of desecration arrested. In that year Colonel Probert rescued the tombs of the 5th, 8th, and 11th earls, and removed them to St. Stephen's Chapel, just over the Suffolk border.

Note: Mr. George Caunt has helped generously with the preparation of this entry.

\*Gordon Cyr, our Executive Vice-President, was one of five Maryland composers commissioned by the Chamber Music Society of Baltimore for chamber works celebrating the 350th anniversary of the State of Maryland. His composition, String Quartet #2, will be premiered by the California-based Sequoia String Quartet on October 16, at the Baltimore Museum of Art's new Meyerhoff Auditorium.

\*Helen Cyr, S.O.S. Secretary, was elected this year as President of the Baltimore Film Forum, an organization which produces film series throughout the year in the Baltimore area, as well as the annual Baltimore International Film Festival each spring.

\*Bronson Feldman, the late historian, psychoanalyst, and Oxfordian scholar, has a previously unpublished article, "The Genesis of Science," scheduled for publication in the August-September issue of Midstream.

\*Warren Hope, editor of the Newsletter, has recently had a pamphlet of his Vietnam poems, An Unsuccessful Mission, published by Robert L. Barth of Florence, Kentucky.

\*Ruth Loyd Miller, of Jennings, Louisiana, editor of Minos Publishing Company's revised two-volume edition of J. Thomas Looney's Shakespeare Identified, has been named

Chairman of the Board of Louisiana State University.

\*Charlton Ogburn, of Beaufort, South Carolina, informs us that the May issue of the ABA Journal carried an ad for Shakespeare Cross-Examination, a compilation of articles from the ABA Journal which examine the evidence for various solutions to the Shakespeare authorship problem. A quote from the introduction of the book used in the ad reads: "The Shakespeare works display such polish and cultivation that many have found it hard to attribute them to their reputed author, the man who is buried in Stratford-on-Avon. The problem is not merely a literary one; the question of the identity of the author of the plays is also one of evidence, and therefore within the province of lawyers." This book, which has served to introduce many to the authorship question, is available for \$6.00 from:

American Bar Association  
Order Fulfillment  
Order-Billing # 299-0004  
1155 East Sixtieth Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Charlton Ogburn's World War II classic, The Marauders, the basis of the film Merrill's Marauders, is now available in a paperback edition.

\*Harold Patience wishes to inform Oxfordians that Christmas Humphreys bequeathed his books on the authorship question to Mr. Patience and that those books are available for use at Mr. Patience's home by S.O.S. members who visit the De Vere country, Essex, England.

S.O.S. in Southern California  
by  
Gordon C. Cyr  
Executive Vice-President

At the end of last June--during a trip to California--I got in touch with most of our Society's members who live in the southern part of the state. These included Mrs. Lincoln Cain of Palos Verdes Peninsula, Richard Roe of Pasadena, Marjorie Gilfillan and her sister Barbara Crowley, also of Pasadena. With the late named, Barbara (Mrs. John) Crowley, I

a more extended visit in her law office in downtown Los Angeles. The Pasadena members are all active Oxfordians and have frequent get-togethers, most often with Ruth Loyd Miller as guest lecturer. Mr. Roe has his own Oxfordian specialty: the Italian painting of Shakespeare's period. And he makes a powerful case in his presentations at these meetings to the effect that Shakespeare must have had a first-hand knowledge of this art.

I also had an opportunity to acquaint myself with the Francis Bacon Library at Claremont College. This invaluable resource center (which could be appropriately nicknamed "Folger West") is endowed and maintained by the Francis Bacon Foundation, a member organization of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. The Francis Bacon Foundation is NOT a "Baconian" organization--that is, it does not advocate the theory of Bacon's authorship of the Shakespearean canon. In my conversation with the Librarian, Elizabeth Wrigley, I discovered that the Bacon Library has about 10,000 holdings covering Francis Bacon "and his period," to wit, Elizabethan and Jacobean England. The holdings comprise both contemporary documents and more recent scholarship. And, since Francis Bacon has been, for better or worse, a prominent fixture of the authorship controversy, the Library does have a virtually complete collection of materials on all the Shakespearean authorship theories, as well as (mostly Baconian) studies in cryptology.

The Shakespeare Oxford Society extends its best wishes for the continued success of the Francis Bacon Library at Claremont College, and hopes that our West Coast members who have little access to the Folger Shakespeare Library or the Library of Congress will make use of the Francis Bacon Foundation's important resources.

#### Oxford in the L.A. Times

(Editor's Note: The following appeared in the Los Angeles Times on February 12, 1983. The response to it was reportedly so great that its author wrote another on the subject.)

"A Bard by Any Other Name..."

by

Charles Champlin  
Times Arts Editor

At a dinner party several weeks ago, I found myself in a thicket of Oxfords and, to coin a phrase, I got a kick out of it.

The Oxfordians, as they're more properly called, are a small but serious and passionately dedicated group of people worldwide who have become convinced that the works of Shakespeare were in fact written by Edward De Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, one of whose ancestors watched King John sign the Magna Charta.

The founding document in the claim is "Shakespeare Identified," written by J. Thomas Looney and first published in 1920. It is a calm and oddly persuasive piling up of circumstantial evidence, negative and positive, against the idea that the actor from Stratford wrote the plays and the poems and in favor of the better-educated, wider-traveled earl.

My hosts were Gordon and Josephine Wilde; their guests, Barbara and John Crowley of Pasadena and Judge Minos D. Miller and his wife Ruth, from Louisiana, had made a pilgrimage to England early in 1982 to visit the sites associated with the 17th Earl.

(The De Veres ran out of earls about a generation later. The title ceased and was re-bestowed in more recent times, so the present earls are no kin.)

Having sweated through my share of Shakespeare classes starting in high school, I might be inclined to say that a rose by any other name would be just as hard to parse, paraphrase or memorize. On the other hand, I love a good mystery, and the Shakespeare caper is still unsolved 419 years after his birth. Oxford is, of course, only one of several contemporaries who have been advanced as the true and only begetter of the work.

There have been so many, in fact, that William Peter Blatty, known best as the author of The Exorcist, in 1965 wrote a slim, clever and very funny book called I, Billy Shakespeare, in which the Bard returned from the Thereafter to assert his claims and denounce Francis Bacon and his other rivals in a series of irascible tape recordings.

(Shakespeare last surfaces in Castro's Cuba, agreeing to write a new play, "Victory at the Bay of Pigs," but Castro's secretary, a CIA plant named Consuelo Gauze, talks him out of it in return for delivering his tapes to the United States.)

The Bacon claim surfaced in this country first, in the mid-19th Century, and researchers insisted they had found elaborate cyphers buried in the Shakespearean text, hidden messages from Bacon proving his authorship. By one theory, he was Queen Elizabeth's illegitimate son and had no other way of speaking out.

The Baconian heresy, as one encyclopedia calls it, died of its own foolishness. The French have made claims for William Stanley, the sixth Earl of Derby, and Roger Manners, the fifth Earl of Rutland.

One German scholar successively favored the Earl of Southampton and Rutland as a team, Anthony Bacon and the Earl of Devonshire. Sir Walter Raleigh had a turn at bat early in this century.

I discussed these matters with Jack Briley, the American-born scriptwriter of "Gandhi" last week. Briley had set out to be a Shakespearean scholar-teacher and prepared his Ph.D. thesis on the Earl of Southampton, one of the two possible "W.H.'s" to whom the sonnets are dedicated.

Briley is still convinced that Shakespeare was who we think he was, but his favorite of the alternate theories, a caper story if there ever was one, stars Christopher Marlowe.

This story argues that Marlowe was not really stabbed to death in a tavern brawl at all, as history has it. The playwright had to vanish because he was a spy for French Catholic interests favoring Mary over the Protestant Elizabeth to get England back into the Catholic fold, and his cover had been blown. So the death was faked. He had to keep writing so he used Will Shakespeare, an obliging young actor just in from the country, as his front, centuries ahead of Woody Allen and the blacklist.

The question arises: Does it matter? The work exists and survives and whether the author was "the man from Stratford," as the Oxfordians call him, reserving "Shakespeare"

for the true begetter, or one of the aristocrats who had to lay low because the gypsy theater was below their dignity, he was one of the few authentic geniuses in the world's history.

The quick answer from the Oxfordians (and the 17th Earl has now emerged as the principal claimant to be Shakespeare if Will wasn't) is that justice ought to be served, and better four centuries late than never.

It's not surprising that many lawyers, like Judge Miller and his wife, who is also a lawyer, have been drawn to the Oxford cause, because they find it not least a contest between evidence and tradition.

The issue is more sensitive than might be thought, because Shakespeare is a major industry. Anne Hathaway's cottage loses something of its charm if Will was only an entrepreneur who latched on to a good thing and took bows for another man.

A whole population of scholars would have to rewrite its lectures and revise its footnotes. The Oxfordians, although they don't necessarily buy conspiratorial theories, have no trouble detecting real hostility and the occasional academic stonewall erected in their path.

What the Oxfordians and the Shakespeareans and the Baconians and the Marlovians have in common is the wistful dream that one day, somewhere, an authentic pen-to-parchment manuscript will turn up, solving literature's greatest mystery.

Meantime, they keep researching for other clues, other links, and they have honorable support. So unlikely a supporter as Sigmund Freud wrote in 1935 that Looney's book had him "almost convinced" that De Vere was the man. More recently, the distinguished British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper, now a peer, indicated he regarded the Shakespeare case as still open.

I would like to think so; every mystery deserves a great solution. Or, as the man from Stratford--Shakespeare, De Vere, Marlowe or none of the above--wrote in "Hamlet":

What a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown,  
shall live behind me.

### California Hosts First "Shake-speare" Festival

As a result of the efforts of Oxfordians Tish Winkworth, David Hanson, Judge Minos D. Miller, Jr., Ruth Loyd Miller, and others, the first Royal "Shake-speare" Revels was held at Ojai, California, from June 23 to 26. A Midsummer Night's Dream was performed at Libbey Bowl in Ojai and an Elizabethan Faire was staged at Libbey Park.

This was, as far as we know, the first Shakespearean festival to be staged during which the sponsors highlighted the controversy and mystery surrounding the authorship of the Shakespearean plays and poems and focused attention on Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, as the most likely author of those literary works.

It is to be hoped that the Royal "Shake-speare" Revels will flourish and stage many future festivals and that other festivals will follow its courageous example. Those responsible for the festival deserve the heartfelt thanks of the Shakespeare Oxford Society.

### De Vere Memorials at Wivenhoe

by  
Warren Hope

My seven-year-old daughter, Jessica, and I were fortunate enough to spend a week's vacation in England this summer. Although the bulk of our time was spent in London, we also took a flying visit to the Shake-speare country in Essex.

Following the advice of Harold Patience, who kindly acted as our unofficial guide to the village of Castle Hedingham, Oxford's ancestral home, we spent one day in Colchester--England's oldest city and, as Harold has frequently pointed out, "Cymbeline's town." (A major thoroughfare of the city is Cymbeline Way and the historical Cymbeline shifted the seat of government to Colchester.)

After visiting Colchester castle, now a museum and archaeological site (the castle, by the way, houses a fine portrait of Horace Vere's daughter and her husband, Fairfax, the soldier and patron of the poet Andrew Marvel who saluted the Veres in verse in his poem on Fairfax's home, "Nun-Appelton House"), the ruin of St. Botolph's priory which dates from the 11th century, and other sites, I decided to

have a look at Wivenhoe, near the mouth of the river Colne. You will recall that when, in 1573, Thomas Bedingfield's translation of Cardanus' Comforte, Hamlet's book, was published at Oxford's request and expense, the earl contributed an introductory letter to the work "From my new country Muses of Wivenhoe...."

Wivenhoe today is almost a suburb of Colchester. The acreage now used for the still relatively new University of Essex is almost all that separates the outskirts of the city from the village. Wivenhoe's waterfront is less commercial or industrial than recreational: it serves as the home of a number of clubs for amateur sailors. Jessie and I wandered around the docks, visited the Church, and stopped in a pub, asking if anyone knew of a home in the area dating from the 16th century and, possibly, called "The Muses." We greeted the negatives we received with another question, "The 17th Earl of Oxford, Edward de Vere, had a home here in the time of Elizabeth. Any idea if it could be still standing?" This, too, was answered with negatives. But then an elderly man said, "We have streets named De Vere, you know. Up at the top of the hill De Vere Lane runs off to the left into De Vere Close."

We of course made the hike up the hill and found De Vere Lane and De Vere Close. There is no way of telling now, apparently, whether De Vere's "new country Muses" once stood in the vicinity of these streets. But at least there are these street-name memorials of the De Veres at Wivenhoe.

### Stratfordiana

\*Merrill D. Peterson, in his Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation: A Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 344, records the diverse reactions of Jefferson and John Adams to Stratford-upon-Avon following their visit to the town in 1786:

"At Stratford-upon-Avon they followed the tourists' custom and cut a chip from the chair in the chimney corner where Shakespeare supposedly sat. Adams entered a tribute to the poet's genius in his diary. Jefferson's dry record of the excursion runs as follows:

'paid postillion 3s; for seeing house where Shakespeare was born, 1s; seeing his tomb-stone, 1s; entertainment, 4s. 2d; servants, 2s; horses to Hockley, 12s.'"

\*Charlie Chaplin, in his My Autobiography (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964), p. 364, set down these observations when he recalled his only visit to Stratford:

"On the way to Manchester I stopped at Stratford-on-Avon, a place I had never visited. I arrived late Saturday night, and after supper took a walk, hoping to find Shakespeare's cottage. The night was pitch-black but I instinctively turned down a street and stopped outside a house, lit a match and saw a sign: 'Shakespeare's Cottage.' No doubt a kindred spirit had led the way--possibly the Bard!

In the morning Sir Archibald Flower, the mayor of Stratford, called at the hotel and conducted me over Shakespeare's cottage. I can by no means associate the Bard with it; that such a mind ever dwelt or had its beginnings there seems incredible. It is easy to imagine a farmer's boy emigrating to London and becoming a successful actor and theatre owner; but for him to have become the great poet and dramatist, and to have had such knowledge of foreign courts, cardinals and kings, is inconceivable to me. I am not concerned with who wrote the works of Shakespeare, whether Bacon, Southampton or Richmond, but I can hardly think it was the Stratford boy. Whoever wrote them had an aristocratic attitude. His utter disregard for grammar could only have been the attitude of a princely, gifted mind. And after seeing the cottage and hearing the scant bits of local information concerning his desultory boyhood, his indifferent school record, his poaching and his country-bumpkin point of view, I cannot believe he went through such a mental metamorphosis as to become the greatest of all poets. In the work of the greatest of geniuses humble beginnings will reveal themselves somewhere--but one cannot trace the slightest sign of them in Shakespeare."

#### Reminder -- SOS National Conference

The national conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society will be held in Washington, D.C. on October 21 and 22. The site and agenda for the meeting will be announced through a separate mailing to members.

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# Newsletter Shakespeare Oxford Society

Vero Nihil Verius

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## The World's Most Baffling Literary Mystery\*

by  
Morse Johnson

According to standard Shakespearean biographies, William Shakspeare came from Stratford-on-Avon to London around 1587. It is assumed (there being no record) that he had spent 4 or 5 years in the Stratford Grammar School (curriculum unknown). There is no evidence of any sort, by document or hearsay, that he had exhibited any other scholarly, literary or cultural interests or skills or that he had ever written one word. Indeed, the distinguished 19th century biographer, Halliwell-Phillips, whose methodical and extensive research of the Stratford records is still considered authoritative, wrote:

"Removed prematurely from school, residing with illiterate relatives,...thrown into the midst of occupations adverse to scholastic progress--it is difficult to believe that when he first left Stratford he was not all but destitute of polished accomplishments. He could not, at all events, under the circumstances in which he had then so long been placed, have had the opportunity of acquiring a refined style of composition."

Undoubtedly, moreover, he spoke with a Warwickshire dialect, almost unintelligible to Londoners.

This is the man who tradition claims that from the time of his arrival in London in his early 20s to by the time he reached 40 had achieved the following as "William Shakespeare."

- Written and revised with a quill pen no fewer than 30 Five Act dramatic and poetic masterpieces, all of which reflect, as testified to by esteemed experts in their respective disciplines, profound and extensive classical learning, professional comprehension of the law and legal procedures,<sup>1</sup> meticulous information about historic events and persons

from ancient times to his period, detailed and accurate knowledge of contemporary court affairs and the idiosyncracies of high court personages, a fluent command of the lores of heraldry, ornithology, horticulture, aristocratic sports, naval and military affairs and an intimate familiarity with topography, customs, monuments and life in Italy and France;

- Written with a quill pen 154 mature and matchless sonnets, all of which compress emotions, imagery and philosophies with unparalleled brevity;
- Written with a quill pen the two scholarly, polished and lengthy poems, Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece;
- Provided day-to-day managerial and playwright participation in the production of a great number of performances by The Lord Chamberlain's Company in several playhouses in London, at court and in theaters throughout England;
- Rehearsed for and acted in many of these productions;
- Maintained a family and residence in Stratford and conducted an active business, made personal loans, purchased 3 separate pieces of real estate, hoarded corn and frequently litigated there, without ever writing a letter and without any Stratford resident--family member, associate, lawyer, friend--ever having an inkling of his literary activities.

Save for the existence of the works themselves (sole reliance on which simply begs

\* This title is drawn from Hamilton Basso, The New Yorker (April 8, 1950).

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix

the question), exhaustive research has not found one whit of evidence as to this man's activities from 1587 to 1604 to account for his attainment of any of the vast and diverse learning and lore the author of the works had to have possessed.

And when he died and was buried in 1616, there was not a trace of one single person giving any indication that this man was the author of the plays and poems which had probably inspired and delighted more people, from royalty to commoner, than all of his fellow dramatists and poets put together.

Can any mind be so credulous or so frozen by centuries of tradition as to accept as even remotely possible that such a prodigious and voluminous outpouring of soaring and encyclopedic creativity could have been conceived, perfected and hand written by a man with such a barren and incongruous background in less than 20 years, by the time he reached 40, while still engaged in other mostly extraneous, time-consuming and energy-sapping activities?

#### Appendix

(G. G. Greenwood's The Shakespeare Problem Restated (1908) has several chapters detailing in depth the "learning" of Shakespeare as reflected in the works. Two of these are most illuminating. One covers his classical learning and the other his mastery of the law. An extract from Chapter XIII as to the latter is herein below set out (at pp 371-376--First Greenwood Press Reprinting 1970).)

#### SHAKESPEARE AS A LAWYER

The Plays and Poems of Shakespeare supply ample evidence that their author not only had a very extensive and accurate knowledge of law, but also that he was well acquainted with the manner and customs of members of the Inns of Court and with legal life generally.

"While novelists and dramatists are constantly making mistakes as to the laws of marriage, of wills and inheritance, to Shakespeare's law, lavishly as he expounds it, there can neither be demurrer, nor bill of exceptions, nor writ of error." Such was the testimony borne by one of the most distinguished lawyers of the nineteenth century who was raised to the high office of Lord Chief

Justice in 1850,<sup>1</sup> and subsequently became Lord Chancellor.

"Let a non-professional man, however acute," writes Lord Campbell again, "presume to talk law, or to draw illustrations from legal science in discussing other subjects, and he will speedily fall into laughable absurdity."

And what does the same high authority say about Shakespeare? He had "a deep technical knowledge of the law," and an easy familiarity with "some of the most abstruse proceedings in English jurisprudence." And again: "Whenever he indulges this propensity he uniformly lays down good law." Of Henry IV, Part 2, he says: "If Lord Eldon could be supposed to have written the play, I do not see how he could be chargeable with having forgotten any of his law while writing it." Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke speak of "the marvellous intimacy which he displays with legal terms, his frequent adoption of them in illustration, and his curiously technical knowledge of their form and force." Malone, himself a lawyer, wrote: "His knowledge of legal terms is not merely such as might be acquired by the casual observation of even his all-comprehending mind; it has the appearance of technical skill." Another lawyer and well-known Shakespearean, Richard Grant White, says: "No dramatist of the time, not even Beaumont, who was the younger son of a judge of the Common Pleas, and who after studying in the Inns of Court abandoned law for the drama, used legal phrases with Shakespeare's readiness and exactness. And the significance of this fact is heightened by another, that it is only to the language of the law that he exhibits this inclination. The phrases peculiar to other occupations serve him on rare occasions by way of description, comparison or illustration, generally when something in the scene suggests them, but legal phrases flow from his pen as part of his vocabulary, and parcel of his thought. Take the word 'purchase' for instance, which, in ordinary use, means to acquire by giving value, but

<sup>1</sup> Lord Campbell. See Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements.

applies in law to all legal modes of obtaining property except by inheritance or descent, and in this peculiar sense the word occurs five times in Shakespeare's thirty-four plays, and only in one single instance in the fifty-four plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. It has been suggested that it was in attendance upon the court in London that he picked up his legal vocabulary. But this supposition not only fails to account for Shakespeare's peculiar freedom and exactness in the use of the phraseology, it does not even place him in the way of learning those terms his use of which is most remarkable, which are not such as he would have heard at ordinary proceedings at nisi prius, but such as refer to the tenure or transfer of real property, 'fine and recovery,' 'statutes merchant,' 'purchase,' 'indenture,' 'tenure,' 'double voucher,' 'fee simple,' 'fee farm,' 'remainder,' 'reversion,' 'forfeiture,' etc. This conveyancer's jargon could not have been picked up by hanging round the courts of law in London two hundred and fifty years ago, when suits as to the title of real property were comparatively rare. And besides, Shakespeare uses his law just as freely in his first plays, written in his first London years, as in those produced at a later period. Just as exactly, too; for the correctness and propriety with which these terms are introduced have compelled the admiration of a Chief Justice and a Lord Chancellor."

Senator Davis wrote: "We seem to have something more than a sciologist's temerity of indulgences in the terms of an unfamiliar art. No legal solecisms will be found. The abstrusest elements of the common law are impressed into a disciplined service. Over and over again, where such knowledge is unexampled in writers unlearned in the law, Shakespeare appears in perfect possession of it. In the law of real property, its rules of tenure and descents, its entails, its fines and recoveries, and their vouchers and double vouchers, in the procedure of the Courts, the method of bringing writs and arrests, the nature of actions, the rules of pleading, the law of escapes and of contempt of court, in the principles of evidence, both technical and philosophical, in the distinction between the temporal and spiritual tribunals, in the law of attainder and forfeiture, in the requisites of a valid marriage, in the presumption of legitimacy, in the learning of law of prerogative, in the

inalienable character of the Crown, this mastership appears with surprising authority."

To all this testimony (and there is much more which I have not cited) may now be added that of a great lawyer of our own times, viz. Sir James Plaisted Wilde, Q.C. 1855, created a Baron of the Exchequer in 1860,...and better known to the world as Lord Penzance,...Lord Penzance, as all lawyers know, and as the late Mr. Inderwick, K.C., has testified, was one of the first legal authorities of his day, famous for his "remarkable grasp of legal principles," and "endowed by nature with a remarkable facility for marshalling facts,"<sup>2</sup> and for a clear expression of his views."

Lord Penzance speaks of Shakespeare's "perfect familiarity with not only the principles, axioms, and maxims, but the technicalities of English law, a knowledge so perfect and intimate that he was never incorrect and never at fault...The mode in which this knowledge was pressed into service on all occasions to express his meaning and illustrate his thought, was quite unexampled. He seems to have had a special pleasure in his complete and ready mastery of it in all its branches. As manifested in the plays, this legal knowledge and learning had therefore a special character which places it on a wholly different footing from the rest of the multifarious knowledge which is exhibited in page after page of the plays. At every turn and point at which the author required a metaphor, simile, or illustration, his mind ever turned first to the law. He seems almost to have thought in legal phrases, the commonest of legal expressions were ever at the end of his pen in description or illustration. That he should have descanted in lawyer language when he had a forensic subject in hand, such as Shylock's bond, was to be expected, but the knowledge of law in 'Shakespeare' was exhibited in a far different manner: it protruded itself on all occasions, appropriate or inappropriate, and mingled

<sup>2</sup> Preface to The Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy: A Judicial Summing-up, by the Rt. Hon. Sir James Plaisted Wilde, Baron Penzance, 1902.

itself with strains of thought widely divergent from forensic subjects." Again: "To acquire a perfect familiarity with legal principles, and an accurate and ready use of the technical terms and phrases not only of the conveyancer's office but of the pleader's chambers and the Courts at Westminster, nothing short of employment in some career involving constant contact with legal questions and general legal work would be requisite. But a continuous employment involves the element of time, and time was just what the manager of two theaters had not at his disposal. In what portion of Shakespeare's (i.e. Shakspeare's) career would it be possible to point out that time could be found for the interposition of a legal employment in the chambers or offices of practicing lawyers?"

Stratfordians, as is well known, casting about for some possible explanation of Shakespeare's extraordinary knowledge of law, have made the suggestion that Shakspeare might, conceivably, have been a clerk in an attorney's office before he came to London. Mr. Collier wrote to Lord Campbell to ask his opinion as to the probability of this being true. His answer was as follows: "You require us to believe implicitly a fact of which, if true, positive and irrefragable evidence in his own handwriting might have been forthcoming to establish it. Not having been actually enrolled as an attorney, neither the records of the local court at Stratford nor of the superior Courts at Westminster would present his name as being concerned in any suit as an attorney, but it might reasonably have been expected that there would have been deeds or wills witnessed by him still extant, and after a very diligent search none such can be discovered."

Upon this Lord Penzance comments: "It cannot be doubted but that Lord Campbell was right in this. No young man could have been at work in an attorney's office without being called upon continually to act as a witness, and in many other ways leaving traces of his work and name."

<sup>3</sup>"The worst of it is," said that ardent Shakespearean Gerald Massey, "for the theory of his having been an attorney's clerk, that it will not account for his insight into law; his knowledge is not office sweepings, but ripe fruits, mature, as though he had spent his life in their growth."

There is not a single fact or incident in all that is known of Shakespeare, even by rumour or tradition, which supports this notion of a clerkship. And after much argument and surmise which has been indulged in on this subject, we may, I think, safely put the notion on one side, for no less an authority than Mr. Grant White says finally that the idea of his having been a clerk to an attorney has been 'blown to pieces.'"<sup>3</sup>

#### How I Became an Oxfordian

by

Phillip Proulx

The day looms vivid in my memory in spite of the passing of more than eight years. I was a senior at The American University, majoring in literature and concentrating my efforts in poetry. In youthful bliss, I was striving to become a better poet. I considered myself then, as I do to this day, first and foremost a poet; no if's, and's, or but's.

In order to fulfill the requirements of an undergraduate degree, I found myself taking two Shakespeare courses during the fall semester of 1974. William Shakespeare, as I thought of him then, held out hope. Without the advantages of much formal education, coming from a less than privileged background, by the sheer magnitude of his talent, he had become the greatest of playwrights.

Heck, if Shakespeare could do that, then I could make it as a poet. Little did I realize then, however, that on Sunday, November 24, 1974, as I scanned The Washington Post, my perceptions with respect to William Shakespeare would be profoundly altered. As I turned to the Outlook section of the paper, there it was smack on the front page: an article by someone named Charlton Ogburn about the real identity of William Shakespeare.

To say I found the article fascinating and powerfully perceptive is an understatement. But, as I read the article, I kept thinking, "Why haven't I heard even one word about this theory? And who is this Edward de Vere?"

Barely had our professor reached the front of the room that Monday, when the article was mentioned. As it turned out, the majority of students had read it. That class was one of the most electric and enthusiastic of the semester.

For myself, and for most of my fellow students, the salient point of the article was that the greatest figure of the English language was inauspiciously sandwiched between two generations of illiterates. OK. His mother and father could not read or write. That is not fatal in itself. But that of his two daughters who reached maturity, the elder, Susanna, could not recognize her husband's handwriting and the younger, Judith, could neither read nor write? That was too, too much to ask. In spite of their gender, surely, the father, to whom language and literature were of all-consuming importance, would see to it that his children would learn to read and write. The hour quickly went by and not another word was said about the article during the remainder of the semester.

My next watershed came when, armed with four years of studying literature, I found myself as a delivery man for a type setting firm. (I have never seen a classified ad for a poet.) There I was--out of college and I hadn't read all of Shakespeare's Sonnets! So between runs to downtown Washington, D.C., at less than sane speeds, I started from Sonnet Number 1 and went through the collection. My employer accepted this peculiar behavior, more out of respect for my driving ability than for love of literature. With Charlton's argument rattling in my head, I came out of that experience convinced the man from Stratford did not pen the Sonnets.

Sorry, pedants, but knowing something about putting one's emotions into verse, the experiences of the Sonnets are no mere literary exercise. The more moving, direct, and powerful a poem is, the more actual the circumstances behind the effort. As one knows from Walt Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," Whitman, indeed, had been on that ferry. When Shakespeare states in Sonnet 76, "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?,"

we know his name is not readily associated with his works and, as with any literary production, his personality cannot be fully hidden. The Sonnets are not a world of country but of court!

The years have past since those events, and I have augmented my study of the authorship question with many books and articles from both sides of the question. No matter what I digest in the future, however, I will always hold a special feeling for Charlton's article--for it was my beginning of exposure to the question of authorship.

So to end, Dear Louis B. Wright, past Director of the Folger, I am not, "...so naive or ignorant as to doubt the reality of Shakespeare as the author..." nor do I, "...betray an obvious snobbery," but I know the name William Shakespeare is a pen name and that Edward de Vere is the personality behind that name. Also, I do not have to stretch logic to absurd degrees about Elizabethan spelling of surnames, opportunities of education, the illiteracy of parents and descendants, payments for plays, ability to use a quill pen, knowledge of foreign languages, knowledge of court intricacies, characterizations of living persons, absence of personal correspondences, familiarity with legal proceedings, total dissimilarity of known facts with expected personality, the absence of tributes upon death, etc., etc., etc.

#### Oxford and the Avon

by

Charlton Ogburn

From 1589-90 on, Oxford was out of the public eye, as far as the record shows; his whereabouts remain generally unknown to us. These last fifteen years we may suppose he spent active in the theatre and in writing or, as in most cases, revising, the poems and plays we know as Shakespeare's. "That never am less idle, lo!", as he had written, "Than when I am alone." Where did he go in 1589? There is some thought that he spent part of his time at the old manor house of Stoke Newington, which would be his temporary home after his second marriage. It is also possible that he repaired to the valley of the Avon.

There is in Billesley Hall, three and a quarter miles from Stratford; a room long known as the Shakespeare room. Billesley in the 1580's had been owned for more than 400 years by the Trussel family, of which Oxford was an offshoot through his maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Trussel, who had married the 15th Earl. (Percy Allen states that Elizabeth had as her family crest a "trussel," or candle-holder, and that Romeo has reference to it when, in declining to take part in the Capulets' ball he explains:

...I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase;  
I'll be a candle-holder and look on.)

It is asserted, I do not know on what basis, that Billesley was part of her inheritance as an heiress of the wealthy Edward Trussel, and by some, evidently in error, that it passed to Edward de Vere. In any event, it was in the possession of Thomas Trussel in the early 1580's. (Shakspeare was evidently also derived on his mother's side from a Trussel family, leading to speculation that he and Oxford were related.) According to a local rumor, As You Like It was written in Billesley Hall, a rumor most easily accounted for as having originated in fact.

It would perhaps not be surprising if Thomas Trussel had offered the hospitality of his home to his illustrious kinsman or that Oxford had found in it at times a welcome escape from the Court and its demands and intrigues. The owner, however, "made conveyances of the manor in 1585," which may or may not have included the Hall, and "on 6 August of that year...committed robbery and felony on the highway at Bromley, Kent, and was in 1588 attainted and sentenced to death," according to the Victoria History of the County of Warwickshire (1951), which further states that "Billesley manor passed to the Crown and was granted in 1590 to John Willes and others"; for the two-year interregnum it might again have been available to Oxford.

It would appear that the sentence of death cannot have been executed, for the Dictionary of National Biography, which does not mention the indiscretion at Bromley, has Thomas living until 1625, having sold Billesley "before 1619" and written The Souldier pleading his own Cause, of which a "second impression, much enlarged with Military Instructions" appeared in 1619. The subject would have given him a common bond with Oxford, as, for that matter, would the hold-up on the highway.

One property in the neighborhood of the Avon that definitely belonged to Elizabeth Trussel and passed from her to her grandson Edward was Bilton manor, situated on the outskirts of Rugby on a tableland rising from the south bank. Bilton Hall, as far as I know, is the only one of Oxford's houses that he may have occupied, not counting the keep at Hedingham, that is standing today. It is a long, low building predominantly of muted red brick beneath a high, sloping roof, the chimneys much higher still, with three-story, gabled extensions. Closing your eyes to the lofty annex dated 1623 that overshadows it now, you see it probably much as it would have appeared to Oxford and enter through a shallow-arched doorway through which he would have passed.

We read of Bilton manor in The Victoria History that "In 1574, Edward, Earl of Oxford, leased it to John Lord Darcy and in 1580 he sold it to John Shuckburgh, who immediately leased it to Edward Cordell." For the first report, a record of 16 Elizabeth is cited and for the second one of 22 Elizabeth. What leased and sold is not, however, entirely clear. It was not until 1600, according to the O. U. D., that "manor" came to denote "the mansion of a lord with the land belonging to it; a landed possession." Before then it signified "A unit of English territorial organization, orig. of the nature of a feudal lordship." The difference could conceivably account for the discrepancy between The Victoria History and Sir William Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire, which states of Bilton that "by Edward, Earl of Oxford, towards the latter end of Qu. Eliz. reign was it sold unto John Shugborough, Esq., then one of six Clerks in Chancery, which John dyed seized thereof in 42 Eliz." That would have made it one of the last of his properties that Oxford relinquished. In 1711, Bilton would be purchased by another literary figure, Joseph Addison.

Oxford would have found near Billesley and Bilton still sizable remnants of the once vast Forest of Arden. And this course brings us again to As You Like It, which takes place largely in a woodland

of that name. A sunny evocation of the charm of the simple life in dappled glades, the comedy is nominally laid in France and therefore the forest is that of Ardennes, as we should render it, but I think no one doubts that it was the English woodland the dramatist was thinking of. As You Like It is really two plays. "Probably Shakespeare revised, and in part rewrote, an earlier play of his own," Kittredge judges. The original is in the style of the early comedies, as Edward Dowden says, and was probably written about 1581. It provided the story on which Thomas Lodge based his novel Rosalynde, composed during a sea-voyage, "when every line was wet with surge," and published in 1590--a novel "intensely Euphuistic in style," as Kittredge says. The later, finer parts, "written in a manner which we hardly find in Shakespeare before the production of Hamlet," to quote Dowden again, could have been inspired by the dramatist's move to Bilton. These parts include the half-dozen characters not appearing in Lodge, notably Jaques and Touchstone, the two sides of Oxford. The sanctuary the troubled spirits of the play find in the Forest of Arden could well be the refuge that Oxford found there. His mood would have been expressed by Duke Senior in the speech beginning Act II, which could scarcely have come from a dramatist not himself a nobleman and courtier. I venture to quote it again, more fully:

"Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,  
Hath not old custom made this life more  
sweet  
Than that of painted pomp? Are not  
these woods  
More free from peril than the envious  
court?  
Here we feel but the penalty of Adam,  
The seasons' difference; as the icy  
fang  
And churlish chiding of the winter's  
wind,  
Which, when it bites and blows upon my  
body,  
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile  
and say  
'This is no flattery: these are  
counsellors  
That feelingly persuade me what I am.'  
Sweet are the uses of adversity;  
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,

Wears yet a precious jewel in his head:  
And this our life exempt from public  
haunt  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the  
running brooks,  
Sermons in stones and good in every-  
thing.  
I would not change it."

The Second Printing of the Sonnets  
by

Harold W. Patience

The Editor of the News-Letter has drawn my attention to the fact that in one of my articles I mentioned a second issue of the Sonnets (in 1640) and has asked me to enlarge on this apparently hitherto obscure point.

I must first of all make it quite clear that in this particular instance I had no actual access to original documents or mss, having obtained my information merely from Volume One of E.K. Chambers' William Shakespeare - a study of facts and problems (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930). The passage in question reads as follows:

(1640) Poems: Written by Wil. Shakespeare. Gent. (Cotes device (McKerrow 283) Printed at London by Thos. Cotes, and are to be sold by Iohn Benson, dwelling in St. Dunstons Church-yard. 1640.

To the Reader

I Here presume (under favour) to present to your view, some excellent and sweetly composed Poems, of Master William Shakespeare, Which in themselves appeare of the same purity, the Authour (sic) himselfe then living avouched; they had not the fortune by reason of their Infancie in his death, to have the due accommodation of proportionable glory, with the rest of his everliving Workes, yet the lines of themselves will afford you a more authentick approbation than my assurance any way can, to invite your allowance, in your perussal you shall finde them Seren, cleere and eligantly plaine, such gentle straines as shall recreate and not perplexe your braine, no intricate or cloudy stuffe to puzzle intellect, but perfect eloquence;

such as will raise your admiration to his praise: this assurance I know will not differ from your acknowledgement. And certaine I am, my opinion will be seconded by the sufficiency of these ensuing Lines; I have beene somewhat sollicitus to bring this forth to the perfect view of all men; and in so doing, glad to be serviceable for the continuance of glory to the deserved Author in these his Poems.

I.B.

This is followed by verses on Shakespeare by Leonard Digges and John Warren. Besides the Sonnets, the text contains (a) the full contents of the Passionate Pilgrim of 1612, partly interspersed among the Sonnets; (b) A Lover's Complaint; (c) the Replies by Raleigh (now in full) and Ignoto to Marlowe's lines from England's Helicon (1600)....The Phoenix and Turtle...Milton's Elegy...Basse's Elegy...etc.

It is to be observed that as late as 1640, following a reference to the death of the author, the Shakespeare Works are described as everliving, i.e. immortal.

This surely reinforces the anti-Stratfordian contention that in referring to "Shakespeare" as "our ever-living poet" in his dedication of the first issue of the Sonnets in 1609 Thomas Thorpe was aware that the author had died prior to that year. It is to be noted that "Shakespeare" himself, in King Henry VI, Part One, speaks of the dead King Henry V (through the mouth of Sir William Lucy) as "that ever-living man of memory."

Unless Thomas Thorpe was mistaken (and this is surely unlikely) the real "Shakespeare" had died prior to the year 1609. This being so, only three "claimants" to the authorship qualify for serious consideration:

1. Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford (died 1604)
2. Queen Elizabeth I (died 1603)
3. Christopher Marlowe (killed in 1593).

#### Editor's Note:

The SOS Bulletin Board will resume in the Winter issue of the Newsletter.

#### Highlights of the National Conference

The national conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society was held on October 21-22 in Washington, D.C., at the Loew's L'enfant Plaza Hotel. Highlights of the conference include:

1. Helen Cyr's stylistic study of writings by Shakespeare and De Vere will be sent to members of the Society.
2. Plans were made for new promotional efforts.
3. Morse Johnson made an entertaining presentation of his activities as an Oxfordian letter-writer to Stratfordians who make bloopers in print.
4. Warren Hope presented a paper on Oxford's relations with Sir John Davies, the Elizabethan poet and jurist.
5. Phillip Proulx reported on a talk by O.B. Hardison, Jr., director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, on Shakespeare (an article based on this report as well as an interview with Dr. Hardison will appear in future issues of the Newsletter).
6. Gordon Cyr reported on the quarto publication of Shakespeare's works and its importance for the Oxford theory.
7. Helen Cyr updated her stylistic study.
8. Initial plans were made for the 1984 conference to be held in London with side trips to Essex.

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