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A SALUTE TO OUR MAN IN ENGLAND

For over fourteen years Harold W. Patience has been the Shakespeare Oxford Society's most active officer in England. You probably know him best as the secretary of the English Chapter of the Society--the man who collects the dues and distributes our newsletter to the English membership. But Harold Patience means more to us than that. Thanks to his tireless, cordial hosting, many visiting American Oxfordians have been able to tour Castle Hedingham, St. Nicholas Church, and other sites of Oxfordiana trouble free and with increased enjoyment. And, because of his frequent appearances in print, the English public is becoming more and more awara of the authorship question. Harold also regularly keepa us informed about interesting happenings in the field--and with any time left, pursues investigations challenging areas.

In this issue of the Newsletter we are happy to present two of his most recent reports and to wish him "all happinesse" and more time to study upon his retirement from work in 1986.

Helen Cyr,
Secretary

THE SONNETS ON TELEVISION

By Harold W. Patience

American members may be interested to hear that a seriea entitled The Sonneta of William Shakespeare is currently (November, 1984) running on Channel 4 (Commercial) TV. On each weekly episode (which lasts only 15 minutes) a notable actor, dressed in Elizabethan costume, twice recites a particular sonnet. Between these readings a prominent actor, writer or public figure explores the mystery and meaning of the verse in question. The venue for each short discussion is alwaya appropriate: Hampton Court, Penshurst Place, Hatfield Houses, being examples.

On 27th October, Sonnet 94 ("They that have power to hurt and will do none.") was recited by the actor Michael Bryant. The commentary given by John Mortimer, Q.C., was --to quote from a program note--"A witty and irreverant interpretation. Standing in Lincoln's Inn refectory where Twelfth Night was first performed, he says the sonnet is all about judges." On the walls of the magnificant refectory we would aee famous portraits: Queen Elizabeth I, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Francis Bacon, and others.

In the opinion of John Mortimer Sonnet 94 contained a scathing attack on Francis Bacon, who harbored a marked hostility to Shakespeare's friend the Earl of Southampton and who, after the revolt of 1601, played his part in the condemnation of the latter to imprisonment in the Tower of London and the execution of the instigator of the uprising, the Earl of Essex. "In view of this," remarked John Mortimer, the theory that Francis Bacon wrote the works of Shakespeare is plainly ridiculous." Oxfordisns will applaud such perception.

As so often happens, however, the expression of such dogmatic opinions by those of orthodox faith creates (unknowingly to the proponents) a situation whereby "purposes

mistook" are "fall'n on th'inventors' heads." For if it is ridiculous to suggest that Bacon wrote Sonnet 94 then surely it is just as ludicrous to suppose that a commoner would have dared to attack such a personality as Francis Bacon in print. When consideration is given to Shakespeare's obvious obsession with the technicalities of law practice, which in his works often intrude where least expected and quite out of context, it would seem that the real "Shakespeare" must be sought among those talented Elizabethan noblemen who studied at Gray's Inn and thereby acquired the necessary legal knowledge.

A MONUMENTAL MYSTERY

by Harold W. Patience

I would like to offer a few comments on the evergreen theory that original Shakespeare manuscripts, or at least a message for posterity, may have been placed "within tbis monument." Firstly, however, may I draw the reader's attention to an excellent coverage of this subject in the Appendix of Charlton Ogburn's new book, The Mysterious William Shakespeare, The Myth & the Reality.

It was whilst Mr. Richard Horne was on one of his several visits to the "de Vere country" of Essex and Suffolk counties several years ago that we first crossed swords over this intriguing subject. I had expressed to Mr. Horne my theory that the stone "cube" forming the superstructure of the monument (surmounted by a jawless skull) could very well be a repository of manuscripts. Mr. Horne disagreed; my "cube", in his opinion, was in fact an optical illusion--an impression gained by placing oneself full-front to the structure and gazing upwards. This impression, said Mr. Horne, is reinforced by all published photographs of the monument. In the opinion of Mr. Horne there was no "cube". The stonework extended right back to the stained-glass window of the church (i.e., to the rear of the monument) and was in all probability quite solid. Mr. Horne's sketch, based on his idea of the true shape of the superstructure, subsequently appeared in a Newsletter.

It now appears, however, that my argument to the effect that the superstructure, bearing the coat-of-arms, in unique as far as monumental design of the period is concerned, is in some degree supported by certain evidence. A photograph in the Sept., 1980, issue of the journal Essex Countryside shows the monumental bust of Robert Salmon, Master of Trinity House and a member of a family of mariners. The monument was placed in the church of St. Clement's, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, in 1617. In essentials it is of the same design as the famous one erected in Stratford-upon-Avon church, perbaps in that very same year. The two structures show the following variations:

1. There are no "cherubs" on the superstructure of the Salmon monument. (Consider the curious apparent symbolism of the Stratford edifice. One "cherub" holds a spade; an invitation to dig within? The other, whether we accept as authentic the hour-glass shown in the Dugdale engraving or the inverted torch we see today, was surely made to clutch something which embodied esoteric significance.)

2. The small supporter of the coat-of-arms of Robert Salmon is attached to the superstructure at dead centre. There was no requirement for any stonework, whether in the form of a cube or otherwise, to act merely as a support for a heraldic device.

One gets a strong impression that the atone superstructure of the Stratford Monument, being quite superfluous, must have been deliberately designed for some special purpose.

Discussing the Stratford Monument in his book The Shakespeare Authorship Question: Evidence for Edward de Vere (1971) Craig Huston made the following observation:

> "Above the statue (bust) is what looks like a store box which might contain something."

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WHEN ONE AND ONE AND ONE EQUALS ONE

by Phillip Proulx

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me
still;
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her fould pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd
fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
But being both from me, both to each
friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell:
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live
in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one
out.

Ménage à trois, sexual recriminations, and off-color puns: are these the particulars which Shakespeare so elquently expresses in Sonnet 144? Yes! At least conventional commentators so state. And, what strained conjecture they vainly try to substantiate. However, their interpretaions of this sonnet suffer from their belief that Shakespeare was the man from Stratford.

Standard comments upon Sonnet 144, as exemplified by Louis B. Wright,[2] A. L. Rowse,[3] and, more recently, Robert Giroux,[4] argue there are three actual persons involved in Sonnet 144: Shakespeare, The Fair Youth, and The Dark Lady. These commentators propose this sonnet expresses in serious terms the sexual and spiritual involvement of these three persons in a triangle of passion, with a pun about venereal disease adding spice to the sonnet. However, nothing could be further from the meaning of Sonnet 144.

Sonnet 144 is an autobiographical expression of friction and conflict between the two emotions of "comfort" and "despair". There are not three living persons involved. There is but one, and that is the author in the role of protagonist.

In Sonnet 144, Shakespeare uses a common thematic structure of Elizabethan times in presenting the age-old conflict between good and evil spirits: "The Church inculcated belief in good genius or guardian angel, told off to watch over every human soul, and also in the host of evil spirits who strove without ceasing to thwart the good angel's gracious ministration... So in Shakespeare's SONNET CXLIV the poet bas two loves, of comfort and despair, which 'like two spirits' do 'suggest' him still...[5]

Thus in Sonnet 144, Shakespeare has transformed his aristocratic nature into the guardian angel spirit which is a "man right fair". His playwriting role is presented as a female spirit, replete with all the negative associations attributed to an aristocrat involving himself with the public stage. Augmenting the structure of good spirit versus evil spirit, and consistent with the religious theme of the sonnet, the evil spirit is female, as we learn from Thomas Fuller in his Holy and Profane State that "witches (evil spirits) are commonly of the feminine sex." Also, throughout the sonnet, the author plays upon the motif of the good spirit as being a guardian angel: a guardian angel was not considered to be within the body of a person. Thus consistent with the religious framework, there is presented the idea of the guardian angel as being lured away from the locale of its sould in charge: "Tempteth my better angel from my side" (Line 6).

The friction and conflict expressed in Sonnet 144 arises from the frustrating stigma placed by Elizabethan times upon persons of nobility being associated with the public theater. This opprobrium forced a lack of direct acknowledgement for de Vere as a public playwright. It is this forced silence, either by custom or direct order, which is a fundamental cuase of the inner turmoil expressed in Sonnet 144. Indeed, it is a theme which is repeated more than once in the sonnets: "Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,/ Unlooked for joy in that I honor most," (25); "With

what I most enjoy contented least," (29); "And art made tongue-tied by authority," (66).

Thus in the first quatrain of Sonnet 144 are presented the two most important influences upon the author's life, and in the expected order. Indeed, the first influence presented in the sonnet is nobility, which Shakespeare states is of "comfort" and "a man right fair": conventional commentators acknowledge the phrase "a man right fair" concerns an aristocrat. However, most maintain it is a reference to the Earl of Southampton. The other love mentioned in the first quatrain is of "despair" and is labelled by the author as "a woman coloured ill".

In Sonnet 144, Shakespeare is discussing the forces upon his life which produce the emotions of comfort and despair. He is not musing about actual persons and their effect upon him. The phrase "two loves I have" is an expression of emotions in the same vein as one would express his love of music or love of painting.

The second line of the first quatrain is direct and accessible if it is interpreted for what is stated and not what others wish it to say: "Which like two spirits do suggest me still." The simile "like two spirits" refers to the phrase "two loves" which produce the emotions of "comfort" and "despair". We need only read the phrase "do suggest me still" to understand the meaning of this phrase. Instead of reading the word "suggest" as connoting "prompt", as Wright does, or "urge", as Rowse does, the word "suggest" should be interpreted as it is denoted--to bring or call to the mind; to show indirectly.

The claim that there are three persons involved in Sonnet 144 is further negated by line 11 which reads, "But being both from me, both to each friend." Most commentators argue the meaning of this line is that the "Fair Youth" and "The Dark Lady" are absent from the protagonist and are physically involved with each other. However, consistent with the interpretation of "two spirits" in line 2, this phrase should be interpreted as meaning that both spirits emanate from the protagonist. Thus, "both to each friend" means the protagonist is saying, "both to each, I am a friend." That the author is using the motif of spirits may be discerned from the amorphous description of the "good spirit" and the "evil spirit", as compared to the usage of concrete images and descriptions when he is writing about living persons: "...Thine own deep-sunken eyes" (2); "A man in hue...which steals men's eyes..." (20); "Thou are the fairest and most precious jewel" (131).

"Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,/ Till my bad angel fire my good one out," is not a couplet containing a pun upon venereal disease but an expression congruous with the religious motif of the sonnet. Thus, the guardian angel is from heaven and the evil spirit from hell. When Shakespeare uses the expression "fire my good one out", fire refers to the belief that there are fires in hell.

In conclusion, Sonnet 144 is an excellent example of the strained and misguided interpretations which commentators continually offer to fit their conceptualization of the author as being the man from Stratford. Sonnet 144, far from being a literary exercise upon a sexual triangle with a pun about venereal disease, is an eloquent expression of friction and conflict which the author experienced over the irreconcilability of his aristocratic status and his association with the public theater.

NOTES:

1. William Shakespeare, The Sonnets of William Shakespeare (New York: Avenel Books, 1961), p. 80.
2. Louis B. Wright, ed., Shakespeare's Sonnets (New York: Washington Square Press, 1967), notes opposite Sonnet 144.
3. A. L. Rowse, ed. Shakespeare's Sonnets (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) p. 299.
4. Robert Giroux, The Book Known as Q (New York: Atheneum, 1982).
5. H. Littledale, Folklore and Superstitions: Shakespeare's England (London:

NOTES: (Continued)

Oxford University Press, 1970) p. 534.

THE DARK LADY AIN'T NO LADY

by Phillip Proulx

In the old age black was not counted fair,
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty slander'd with a bastard shame:
For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
Slandering creation with a false esteem:
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
That every tongue says beauty should look so.[1]

Most annotators offer comments upon Sonnet 127 which are typical of the following: "Dark coloring once was not accounted beautiful, at least it was not so called; but now darkness is acknowledged to possess beauty, and beauty itself is called a counterfeit. For nowadays everyone has assumed Nature's power to create beauty from ugliness, and true beauty is no longer appreciated. Thus my mistress is brunette, with black eyes that seem to mourn because of the artificial beauty assumed by many, who prefer false styles and bring into disrepute the work of Nature. But her black eyes are so attractive in their mourning that everyone acclaims her as the model of beauty. (Compare Love's Labour's Lost, IV. iii. 286-93.)

Sonnet 127, far from being a literary exercise which deals with the trite subject of how Elizabethan ladies used make-up, comments upon the circumstances of Elizabethan theatre, and how these circumstances affect the author. Also, it is a sonnet which deals intimately with the authorship question.

That Sonnet 127 does not deal with the subject of the physical beauty of Elizabethan ladies is indicated by the first quatrain: "In the old age black was not counted fair,/ Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;/ But now is black beauty's successive heir." Throughout Shakespeare'a era, blonde beauty was the ideal in courtly and literary circles. To accept standard comments concerning this sonnet, we must believe that blondes were coloring themselves black; which did not happen during Elizabethan times. Also, the author emphasizes that it was in the past--"in the old age"--that black was not counted acceptable.

What Shakespeare is doing in Sonnet 127 is using "black" as a metaphor for playwriting. It must be remembered that black was closely associated with writing during Elizabethan times: "...It is enough to state the fact that the English generally of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries wrote a style which, in the forms of its letters, bore to the more formal characters found in contemporaneous literary MSS. and to the printing type which has been called 'black letter'..."[3]

With the above in mind, that "black" is a metaphor for writing, then the first quatrain may be interpreted as stating that in old days playwriting was not considered proper, or if it were, it could not be acknolweged as being worthwhile. But now writing is beauty's heir; however, writing is slandered with a false pretender.

Continuing with the personification of writing, the second quatrain states that since authors have learned the art of playwriting, they are misusing their talent by not being honest. Therefore, writing is not beauty and does not deserve a place of reverence. Thus "Nature's power" is not an allusion to women using make-up

but a reference to playwriting. "Art's false borrowed face" is not a comment upon women's countenances but the recognized power of playwriting to present the unacceptable as acceptable.

That Shakespeare is not musing about a living woman in Sonnet 127 should have been noticed long ago for with the third quatrain an interesting development occurs. It is that this quatrain is conditional in respect to the above circumstances which are described in the first eight lines: "Therefore my mistress' eyes..." In other words, due to the situation described above, my mistress' eyes are raven black. If the condition did not exist, then would the mistress' eyes be so colored? Shakespeare implies that his mistress has the ability to change the color of her eyes, an ability suited for metaphors not living persons.

"At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,/ Sland'ring creation with a false esteem," is the author's comment, I believe, upon the man from Stratford aggrandizing himself as being a gentleman. And, it is this pretension which is one of the motivating forces of the sonnet.

To conclude, Shakespeare is not dealing with the superficial topic of how Elizabethan ladies used make-up to color their faces. This is a sonnet which uses "black" as a metaphor for playwriting and comments upon current conditions with respect to Elizabethan theatre.

NOTES:

1. William Shakespeare, The Sonnets of William Shakespeare (New York: Avenel Books, 1961), p. 70.
2. Louis B. Wright, ed., Shakespeare's Sonnets (New York: Washington Square Press, 1967), notes opposite Sonnet 127.
3. Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, Handwriting: Shakespeare's England (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 285.

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"THE MYSTERIOUS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE" IN THE NEWS -- AN UPDATE

Since our last issue, two Stratfordian contenders mentioned in this space have led with their chins in discussing Charlton Ogburn's new book. So it should come as no surprise to Oxfordians that those chins have become somewhat yolk-smeared.

In the February 3 "Letters" section of The New York Times Book Review, Robert Girous protested what he imagined to be an invidious comparison of himself with Richard Nixon--a comparison, of course, which the S.O.S. Newsletter editor neither made nor ever entertained. But after recovering from the putative "scurrility" of this comparison, Mr. Giroux launched what he fondly supposed was a death blow to the correspondent's "faulty scholarship:" "Because of 'social prohibition,' Mr. Cyr claims, 'none of the noble playwrights,' except Thomas Sackville, published plays in their lifetime, which might prove the Oxfordian thesis (for which there is not a shred of evidence) that Oxford needed Shakespeare's name as a cover for 'his' plays. Mr. Cyr's scholarship is faulty: Edmund Blount published the living Earl of Stirling's plays in 1604, the year Oxford died. Sir Philip Sidney's plays, 'The Lady of May,' was published by his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, in 1598, after her brother's death."

Now, aside from the irrelevance of citing a posthumous publication (Sidney's play, to wit) as evidence for a nobleman's publication of his own plays "in his lifetime," the reader who has followed this controversy from our last issue ["An Hundreth Sundrie Flawes" in the (New York) Times Review," S.O.S. Newsletter, Fall 1984, pp. 5-8], will notice an important omission in Mr. Giroux'a misquotation of the letter in question. In his December 9 review, Giroux had listed a handful of aristocrats who wrote plays, including Sackville, and then asked why the Queen "did not mind" these dramatic activities on the part of some of her favorite courtiers.

The Newsletter's editor, in correcting Mr. Giroux's misapprehension on this point, wrote that the activity frowned upon by the Queen was publication by a nobleman of his own verse or drama, and then went on to say that none of the handful of "noble playwrights Mr. Giroux cites published their work." Giroux, it will be noted, has quietly suppressed the underlined words in this sentence, in order to cast doubt upon the very existence of the "social prohibition" in question.

But Giroux's imputation of "faulty scholarship" to someone who has not taken into consideration an example he himself had not mentioned in his review has resoundingly backfired--and in a manner that calls into question this controversialist's qualifications to lecture the unsuspecting on the issue of Shakespearean authorship.

The "Earl of Stirling"

If Robert Giroux had taken the trouble, before penning his unfortunate letter, to consult the Dictionary of National Biography, he could have discovered for himself that his "Earl of Stirling" is a very shaky witness for his case. In a letter to the New York Times Book Review which was not published, the Newsletter editor wrote,

"Although the Scottish poet William Alexander was indisputably 'living' at the time of Blount's publication of his plays, he was scarcely in a position to defy the 'social prohibition' of which I wrote: Alexander was not created 'Viscount Stirling' until 1630--fully 26 years later! Indeed, he was not even knighted until 1609, describing himself before that year, not as 'Sir William,' but only as 'William Alexander, Gent.'" (The present correspondent did not mention that the full title of "Earl of Stirling" was not bestowed until 1633.)

How Mr. Giroux can imagine that the example of this insignificant literary figure bears any analogy to the need for secrecy on the part of a premier hereditary earl of the realm, like the poetical, playwrighting Earl of Oxford, passeth all understanding.

Mr. Ogburn, Prof. Charney, and William Buckley

On the same day (February 3) in which Mr. Giroux's ill-fated letter appeared in the N. Y. Times (see above), national public television stations in most major cities carried William F. Buckley, Jr.'s "Firing Line," with Charlton Ogburn and Prof. Maurice Charney (of Rutgers University) as Mr. Buckley's guests.

Whatever may be said about the merits of the Oxfordian case as presented by Mr. Ogburn, any fair-minded viewer (or, at least, any viewer without Stratfordian stars in the eyes) would have to conclude that Prof. Charney received a drubbing--and not all of it from Mr. Ogburn.

Like many of the targets in "The Mysterious William Shakespeare," the Rutgers scholar shows himself unacquainted with the authorship issue in general. But more alarming--from the standpoint of assessing the quality of Shakespeare studies in U.S. institutions of higher education--was Prof. Charney's seemingly total unawareness that many of the points made by Charlton Ogburn, which the professor promptly dubbed "preposterous," had long ago been conceded by scholars of impeccably "orthodox" persuasion!

In fact, the word "preposterous" was overused by Prof. Charney to the point of risibility, when, for example, he asked Mr. Ogburn why he maintained that Shakespeare could not write. Mr. Ogburn good-naturedly replied, "Because I'm preposterous."

Let us examine some of the instances to which Prof. Charney applied this much-abused adjective:

1) The theory that Ben Jonson composed the prefaces in the 1623 First Folio signed by Heminge and Condell.

2) The theory that the character Sogliardo in Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humour is a lampoon of Shakspere of Stratford.

3) The theory that William Cecil, Lord Burleigh is satirized as Polonius in Hamlet.

The list could go on.

"Was Malone 'Preposterous'?

As to 1), Mr. Ogburn had used this theory as an argument for his belief that Jonson had been principal editor for the First Folio. After Prof. Charney had applied his ubiquitous epithet, Mr. Ogburn mentioned that Edmund Malone had come up with this hypothesis after comparing Jonson's style with that of the prefaces. [Actually, it was Malone's quondam collaborator and later rival, George Steevens, who proposed this theory. It appears in a note he wrote appearing in Boswell's Malone, v. 2, published in 1821, after Malone's death. Ed. note.]

Mr. Buckley helped keep the discussion on track--after repeated professorial attempts to derail it--by persisting in his question to Prof. Charney, "Was Malone, then, 'preposterous'?"

Had there been time on the show, the same question could have been posed to the professor, with the names of a host of Stratfordian scholars substituted: "Were James Boaden, Dr. Furness, Andrew Lang, etc., etc., also 'preposterous'?"

"An Essential Clown"

Opinions may differ as to whether Ben Jonson's "essential clown"--as he describes him--Sogliardo in Every Man Out... is a reference to Shakspere of Stratford. Prof. Charney, however, who claims Jonson as his scholarly "specialty," seems never to have heard of the reference, or that Sir Edmund K. Chambers mentions this interpretation in his two-volume study of Shakespeare. There can be no question that it is Shakspere's attempts to garner a coat-of-arms for his family and himself that is being lampooned in Jonson's play. Interested readers can see for themselves in Sir George Greenwood's invaluable The Shakespeare Problem Restated (London, 1908, pp. 461-463).

Burleigh as Polonius

The most astonishing display of Prof. Charney's insularity from scholarship in his own field was indicated by his apparent unawareness that "many scholars have argued that Burghley is being satirized as Polonius in Hamlet (Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare, Oscar Campbell and Edward G. Quinn, eds., New York, Crowell, 1966, p. 90). That other scholars held this belief is made plain by E. K. Chambers (William Shakespeare, Oxford, 1930, v. 1,p. 418) prompting Mr. Buckley once again to defend Sir Edmund from Prof. Charney's charge of "preposterous."

Space does not permit the numerous other specimens of Maurice Charney's propensity to "shoot from the hip." To his credit, the professor conceded that Mr. Ogburn's book was "fascinating" and beautifully written." The book's beauty must have so bedazzled the professor that he missed its content!

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UPDATE II: RECENT REVIEWS OF CHARLTON OGBURN BOOK KEEP AUTHORSHIP ISSUE ALIVE IN THE MEDIA

"Shakespeare's Birthday" - April 22/23 - was the occasion for two hour-long radio interviews with our Honorary Presidsnt, Charlton Ogburn, on WJNO Palm Beach. Mr. Ogburn's interviewers were Dr. Jo Turk (on the English Department faculty at Palm Beach Atlantic College) and Lord Richard Afton, s British correspondent living in that area. An article about Mr. Ogburn also appsared in the Palm Beach Post.

Such media attention toward our respected colleague owes much, of courss, to last year's publication of his book, Ths Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth & ths Rsality, by Dodd, Mead. A handsome full-page ad for the book appeared in the May 5 issue of the New York Times Book Review, citing praises from book and drama critics such as Kevin Kelly, Charles Champlin, and Prof. E. A. J. Honigman (see Newsletter, Fall 1984), Mary O'Hara (Pittsburgh Press) and Joseph Sobran of the Washington Times and National Review magazine, as well as from Clifton Fadiman and David McCullough, noted historian and host of PBS's fine Smithsonian World program.

The most important notice of Mr. Ogburn's path-breaking work since our last issue, however, is that of Joseph Sobran and Dr. Louis Marder, editor of The Shakespeare Newsletter.

Mr. Sobran gave glowing accounts in both ths Washington Times and the National Review of his own radical turnabout - after reading Mr. Ogburn's book - from scoffing "orthodoxy" to pro-Oxfordian "heresy." His Fsbruary 21 Times piece opens dramatically, "If you happen to own any real estats in Stratford-upon-Avon, I have some simple and urgent advice for you: sell. Sell it all. Sell it fast. Sell it whils you can still get something for it." Having expected at the outset of his reviewing assignmsnt to have "some fun" at Mr. Ogburn's expense, Mr. Sobran progressivsly realized that he was reading "an altogethsr sane, scholarly, and deliciously written literary and historical study" that could not help but force "Shakespears specialists to come to terms with rich and striking parallels" between the plays and Oxford's life. Mr. Sobran's latsr (April 5) National Review article is equally full of insight, and he puts his fingsr on some of the very problems which acceptancs of the Stratfordian chronology imposes, and of which Mr. Ogburn in his view disposes.

Both of Mr. Sobran'e reviews rsveal their author to be a perceptive, well-read, and scholarly "book man," who obviously did not coms to his new viewpoint frivolously. Welcome to our side, Joseph Sobran!

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Louis Marder devotes substantial portions of two SNL issues (Winter '84 & Spring '85) to news and commentary about the new book (as well as carrying the Shakespeare Oxford Society columns funded by Russell des Cognets - in both issues discussing Mr. Ogburn and his critics - and our Society's half-page ad in the Winter issue). In the earlier SNL, Dr. Marder restricts his comments pretty much to reporting the views of various critics (both pro and con), but in the Spring '85 issue Dr. Marder sditorializes for a full page - in "Is the Rsal Shakespeare Mysterious?" (page 2).

We wish we could report that Dr. Marder's generosity in according space to our view was matched by an improved understanding of the authorship issue. Alas, such is

not the case. Althongh praising many qualitiee of the book ("It is fascinating, informative, provocative, stimulating, and mind-boggling."), the SNL editor misrepresents Mr. Ogburn's argument as fully as did the far less charitable Robert Giroux in the December 9, 1984 New York Timea Book Review.

The Sbakespeare Oxford Society Neweletter's response to Dr. Marder will appear in the next issue.

BOOKS ON ELIZABETHAN LIFE

by Harold Patience

American members may be interested to hear that tbe will of John, 16th Earl of Oxford (father of Edward de Vere) is given in full in Elizabethan Life: Wills of Essex Gentry and Yeomen by Dr. F. G. Emmison, published by the Eesex Record Office in 1980.

As regards Edward de Vere, Dr. Emmieon comments as follows:

> "Tbe existence of his Will or administration is not mentioned in the Dictionary of National Biography or other biography. The editor has made a fresh attempt to trace it but it ie not among any of the central of Essex probate courts; although the Earl was buried in Hackney parish church (Middlesex), he died in Stoke Newington (Middlesex) within the probate jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral, whose records yield no reference. Burke's Complete Peerage etates that he died, 24 June 1604, inteetate."

This wae the fifth, and final, volume in Dr. Emmison's Elizabethan Life series, the earlier books being titled:

1. Disorder (1970)
2. Morals and the Churcb Courts (1973)
3. Home, Work and Land (1976)
4. Wills of Essex Gentry and Mercbants (1978)

With volume 5 Dr. Emmison (former County Archivist of Essex) brings to a conclueion his major detailed survey of tbe social and economic world of our Elizabethan ancestors as revealed to us through tbe wealth of Essex archives.

O'ER GREEN MY BAD[1]

by Elisabeth Sears

(The full text of Elisabeth Sears' 20-page monograph, which appears here in a version especially edited for the Neweletter, may be obtained by sending 90¢ for poetage to the Shakespeare Oxford Society.)

In a book published recently by Yale University Press, The Classics and English Renaissance Poetry, the autbor, Dr. Gordon Braden, observes that though it is common knowledge that Shakespeare was strongly influenced by Golding's Englisb vereion of the Metamorphoses, he finds thie rather odd because Golding was Shakespeare's opposite, "even his enemy in a more serious way".

> Golding was a Puritan, tbe declared enemy of taverning, tipling, gaming, playing, and beholding of Bearebaytings and Stageplayes...[2]

Braden adds:

> Golding's favorite author to translate was Calvin - seven eeparate works between 1567 and 1578, the first exactly contemporary witb tbe Ovid. Moral didactism, mixed witb antipapist rhetoric, fills most of his prefaces.[3]

By contrast, John Frederick Nims, in his introduction to the 1965 Macmillan reprint of The Metamorpboses, takes note of Golding's "sharp eye on the life around him, an ear for racy speech, and a gift for energetic doggerel."[4]

Braden remarks on the discrepancy between Golding'e Calvinint attitude and

didactic style and explains tbat for such reasons "Ovid is often coneidered a matter for surprise and sometbing of a puzzle."[5]

Braden follows all tbis with an unconvincing rstionalization of Golding's Janus-like outlook by paseing it off as typical of the Elizabethan period. This may be true of the times in general, but not to that extent in one individual, (with the notable exception of William Cecil, whose piety blew witb tbe winde of State Policy!) However, thie really doee not explain tbe paradox of a dour, self-righteous Calvinist translating the highly imaginative, sensuous, and pagan Metamorpbosee, while simultaneously rendering a eeries of tracts that preachsd against the very frivolity of mind and conduct that are exemplified hy Ovid's work. Thie is a non-sequitur!

There ie also a problem of time involved in this enigma. To translate ooe opus at a time is a great labor. Therefore, it stretchee one's credulity to suggest that one man did two translations at once which were eo inimical to each other and each of which required a great expenditure of time and effort. Would Arthur Golding have had the time or the mental flexibility to grapple with both of these works simultaneously?

Another aspect to coneider is that radical difference in the two styles involved, even allowing for one being poetry and the other being prose. Braden observes that

> Wortham, studying the progress of Golding's prose, finds an alteration in the very concept of translation, a cutting back of expansion and elaborstion (those tbinge that attracted Shakespeare) in the direction of exact verbal correspondence --'Wbat might almoet be called tbe Calviniet principle of translation.'[6]

Braden adds one other telling point to tbis argument:

> ...the moralization (in the Metamorphoees) is almoet all in the two prefacee and Ovid bimself is remarkably unaltered.[7]

Furtber on, Braden deals with mistakes in translation, childish diction, and awkward inaccuracies. He also notes that the "poem is not being recast in any detail or rigor as a Christian allegory, but simply moved to England..."[8]

A youtbful etudent, tbough bighly talented, might make just such errors in tranelation, and might naively envieion tbe stories io his native locale, but eurely not the mature, well-educated echolar, Arthur Golding. Indeed, it becomee increasingly difficult to associate tbe atern Calviniet, Golding, witb the translation of Ovid. lt eeems inevitable tbat we must restructure our thinking on the authorship of this work.

Supporters of the Earl of Oxford in his identity as "Shake-epeare", have often suepected that the hoy-geniue assieted his uncle in the translation of Ovid. Could he have been the eole transcriber of that monumental work? Certainly Oxford'e taleot was evident at an early age. Having outstripped his tutors in learniog, Edward de Vere was eent off to Cambridge Univereity before hie nintb birthday. Since there is poetry surviving today that he wrote in bis early teens, we also know that he began writing very young.

Because the English Renaissance traditions reetricted a nobleman from publishing works under hie own name, an Earl would be obliged to print them either anonymouely, or "alonymously." Both Oxford and hie uncle, Artbur Golding were living at Cecil House in 1565, and tbe publication of The Metamorphosee should have helped the impoverished uncle financially, as well as enhanced hie reputation as a scholar. Tberefore, Golding's name would have beeo a natural choice for this service.

Another reason for masking tbe true identity of the transcriber might have bean Oxford's extreme youth and his situation as a ward of William Cecil. Sir William

could not afford to risk the criticism that might ensue, not the possihle loss of this lucrative wardship should his young charge, The Lord High Chamherlsin of England, publish in his own name the eensuous, pagan Metamorphoeee. On the other hand, printing it anonymouely might have invited questions or speculátione shout the translator's identity. It would he safer to sssign the work diecreetly to another individual.

Surely Golding would have ohjected to heing associated with such a frivolous work, for the apologstic and morally didsctic prefsce seem to indicate that eome sort of compromise was worked out. Perhaps the patronage of the Earl of Leicester, who was then closeet of any to the Qussn, was sought and ohtained for protection from censure; certainly Leicester was the most powerful protector svailahle. Cecil wss alwaye a careful man.

Golding's circumstancss, though, did not seem to improve nor his lifestyle to change sfter the great succees of The Metamorphoses. Even though it went through eight printinge in hie lifetime, he was still impoveriehed and much in nesd of William Cecil's continuing patronage. Could it he that Cecil ahsorhed the profits from the puhlishing vanture along with much of Lord Oxford's other property and wealth?

Returning to Dr. Bradan's ohservations, we find that:

> Much of the evidence of Golding's influence on Shakespeare is relatively circumstantial but there are eo many little hits of similarities, and in many instancea, almoet direct quotations from Golding'e Ovid, that it is impossihle to ignore the cloee relationship.[9]

Braden claims that:

> At the very lesst, Shakespeare ueed the Latin along with Golding... The unsurprieing conclusion of all thie lahor is that Shakespeare could and did read Ovid in the originsl, hut consulted Golding, too.[10]

Braden's commentary keeps returning to Shakespears-Golding similarities, such an run-on lines, "padding" techniques, and use of the word "and" as a "carry-over" to the next line, allowing for the fact that Golding, of course, is experimenting with the fourteener of his times and Shakeepeare with ths pentameter of twenty years latar.

Braden admits that "Golding" did not master the fourteensr, hut aleo emphasizee that no one else did either and that in all prohahility no one sver could. He also notes that "Golding was victimized hy hie meter anó that he made much use of Flickwortar (M. W. S. Swan's term) to pad his linee." Words such as "do" and "did", "right" and "full" (as adverhials), "eo", "Thereat", "thereon", "wherehy", etc. In sddition to theee, Golding used a doubling of adjectives:

> The hearts of divers trim young men hie heautie gan to move,
> And many a Ladie fresh and faire was taken in hia love.[11]

Braden then demonstrates that "removal of the otiose adjectivee in this last example, along with some simple tightening of the locutions, can turn Golding's lines into a tight pentameter couplet:

> Divers young men his heautie gan to move,
> And many a Ladie taken in his love.[12]

Braden claims:

> It looks suspiciouely as though Golding'a lines have the content of pentameters spread scroes fourtesn syllahlee.[13]

Let us now take a look at ona excerpt from the Metamorphoses and watch the process of transition from Ovid to Golding to Shakespeare. This eelection is taken from the very end of the story of Narcissus. First there is Ovid in the original followed hy Dr. Bradan'e litaral translation of the passags.

> Nusquam corpus erat; crocum pro corpore florem

lnveniunt foliis medium cingentibus albis

(III.509-510)

(There was no corpse anywbere. Instead of a corpss tbey found a flower yellow in ths middle, witb white petals surrounding it.)[14]

Between this Latin of Ovid and the English of "Golding" an earlier translation intrudes. According to Braden:

> ...an anonymous translation of Ths Fable of Ovide Treating of Narcisus (1560) ends like this:

Tbsn body was there none, but growing on tbe ground
A yelowe flower wyth Lylly leaves, in sted therof they founds.[15]

In 1560, Edward de Vere was ten years old. Could this be the work of a youthful prodigy? It is ironic that Braden labels the piece:

> Unpromising stuff (!) but it does allow one to see how the poetic torsion might lie not so much in the flower itsslf but, 'thsrof tbey found' being at the position of stress, in the action of discovering it. We may be reasonably sure that Golding looked at this version because he uses the same rbyme-words and one phrase verbatim (!!); but he rsarrangea things to mimic the movsment of awareness bettsr, and adds one crucial small word to sound tbe right nots:

But as for bodie none remaind: in stead thereof they found
A yellow floure with milke white leaves new sprong upon the ground.[16]

(III.641-42)

If we substitute Oxford's name for Golding's in this critiqus, we would assume that the fifteen-year-old Earl is improving on his own earlier attsmpts at translation and poetry, and later, in Venus and Adonis, we can sse the maturing power of the writer. Ths cumbersome fourteeners have been replaced by graceful iambic pentameter.

By this the boy that by ber side lay kill'd
Was melted like a vapour from her sight.
And in his blood, that on the ground lay spill'd
A purple flower sprung up, cbeck'red with white

1.1165-1168)

All in all, tbere is such a remarkably close relationship between each of tbese works (tbe anonymous translation of Narcissus, Golding's translation of Metamorphoses, and Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis) that it is difficult to see it as anytbing but the work of one man; possibly first as a child produgy, tben as a maturing young writer, and at the last, as the genius we call "Shake-speare". An extraordinary overview of the burgeoning of gsnius in Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford?

NOTES

1. Shakespeare, Sonnet #112.
2. An Elizabethan Puritan: Arthur Golding, by Louis Tborne Golding, New York, 1937, p. 67.
3. Braden, p. 3.
4. Introduction to The Metamorphoses; John Frederick Nims, New York, 1965.
5. Braden, p. 9.
6. Braden, p. 12.
7. Braden, p. 12.
8. Braden, p. 13.
9. Bradsn, p. 4.
10. Braden, p. 6.
11. Braden, p. 28.
12. Braden, p. 28.
13. Braden, p. 28.
14. Braden, p. 34.
15. Braden, p. 34.
16. Braden, p. 34.

DEBATERS CORNER

The Shakespeare Oxford Society's editorial staff does not endorse all theories presented by contributors. Therefore, for convenience of readers, ws discuss dissenting vicws side by side. In this case, the Golding-is-Oxford-is Shakespeare theory has been

around for some time, and only recently has new research been applied, as Betty Sears' able presentation of the key arguments pro-Golding/Oxford will attest. However, there is a body of information that tends to support the counter argument, i.e., against the case for the Golding-Oxford-Shakeepeare relationship that needs to be stated. Of course, new evidence may surface someday. But, for now, the current defense does not seem to hold up--at least in the eyes of this observer.

First of all, much is made of the contrast between the Calvinist attitude and the sensuous, pagan nature of Ovid's Metamorphoses. The idea that a "Janua-like outlook" was typical of the Elizabethan period is treated as "an unconvincing rationalization." Actually, there is a lot of evidence to show that at that time "Puritan" was a vague term encompassing a diverse range of people--from political extremists to anti-Catholics who merely felt that the English Reformation had not gone far enough. The writings of the time show that "mythology was a language, a kind of shorthand, which embodiad and illustrated the forces of nature, and, especially human virtues and devices on a superhuman scale...The gods were the evil angels who fell with Satan."[1] Some myths were even seen to be "variante of Biblical truth." And any writer of the period could safely assume his readers to have a familiarity with claseical myth, just as a modern writer today assumes the same for Freudian formulas. Thus, we find Puritans who could bs desply moral in their outlook, on the one hand, and yet capable of working with pagan texts, on the other. Nor is there any evidenca that Golding himself was a "dour, sslf-righteous" person, even though a serious, practicing Calvinist.

It is suggested that "Golding had neither the time nor the mental flexibility" to deal with two or more translations at once. To the contrary, Golding's per-annum publication rate attests to his ability to turn out product rapidly. Do errors in translation neceaearily suggeet a youthful translator, such as Oxford? Daspite the high artistic level, the accuracy in translation for the period would be considered primitive by modern standards. On the other hand, the language, the doggarel of Golding's translation suggests a mature author. Then, too, Golding's concept of tranelation--exact verbal correspondence--is a literal, careful, approach. But Oxford was eseentially a poet, not a translator. Unlike Golding, he would be expacted to "cut looee" from the original, just as Shakespears did. Also, recent statistical studies of Edward de Vere's word ueage reveal etylistic differences with Golding that cannot be reconciled. "Thereat" and "thereon", for example, ara nonexietsnt in the de Vere sample available, and rare in the vastly larger Shakespearean lexicon.

Also, for the theory to work, Oxford'e and Golding's time table would have to be juggled. The dates of their goinga and comings do not match. As to Golding's financial situation --one, there wasn't much money to be made from poetry publishing, and two, as one biographer has said, Golding'e debts were of the order that only the wsalthy could afford. The Golding-in-dabt argument really doesn't work.

All in all, the case for the Oxford-Shakespears authorship of Golding'a translation, as it now stands, hangs and falls on the unprovable assumptions about personality, cultural contexte, rate of output, time frame, style, and interpersonal relations.

--Helen W. Cyr

1. Bush, Douglas. "Claseical Myth in Shakespeare", Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare, edited by Oscar James Campbell, p. 117.

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Georgetown College, Kentucky
Author of The Poems of Edward DeVere, Sevanteenth Earl of Oxford and of Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Eeeex (1980)

A SIGNIFICANT EULOGY
by Harold W. Patience

In the parish church of tbe small Eseex village of Leaden Roding can be seen a brass inscription in the floor, near the vestry, which reads:

> John Jocelyn, esquire, interred here doth lie,
> Sir Thomas Jocelyn's third son of worthy memory.
> Thrice noble was this gentleman by birth, by learning great,
> By single chast (chaste) and godly life he won in Heaven a seate;
> He the year One Thousand and Five Hundred Twentynine wss born,
> Not twenty yearee old him Cambridge did with two degrees adorn.
> King's College him a Fellow choee, in Anno Forty-nine,
> In learning tryde whereto he did his mind alwaies incline,
> But others took the praise and fame of his deserving wit,
> And hie inventione as their own, to printing did commit.
> One Thousand Six Hundred and Three it grieves all to remember,
> He left this life (Poor's daily friend) the Twentyeighth December.

I have stressed important points of thie extraordinary epitaph wbich, whilet shedding light on the literary custome of tbe day, assumes significance when we attempt to penetrate the Oxford/Shakspere mystery.

No great nobleman like de Vere, Jocelyn was merely tbe son of a knight. Yet (incredible as it eounds to us) othere were able to take "the praise and fame of his deserving wit". And take it, apparently, with impunity.

It should be noted that Jocelyn died six months prior to Lord Oxford's own demise at Hackney.

STRATFORDIAN METHODS OF CONTROVERSY

by Gordon Cyr

At the outset of "Is the Real Shakespeare Mysterious?" (The Shakespeare Newsletter, #185, Spring 1985, p. 2), Louis Marder confesses to being overwhelmed by the task of reviewing Charlton Ogburn's The Mysterious William Shakespeare. "How does one briefly review a book," writes Dr. Marder, "which contains 400,000 words when almost every line calls for comment, discussion, and argument?"

But as soon as he departs from pinpointing the few weaknesses of Mr. Ogburn's presentation, the methods Dr. Marder has chosen only succeed in giving his readers a distorted picture of the book's argument. In short, the reviewer appears to have "missed the forest for the trees."

The weapons the reviewer uses to tilt with Mr. Ogburn (and with other anti-Stratfordians as well) consist in the main of the "selective rebuttal" -- in which an item here or an item there is detached from the body of evidence for demolition, misleading the reader to infer that the whole case reste on the one isolated element -- and the "circular argument."

Stratfordians seem to chafe at our calling this second weapon to their attention. "It is not to argue in a circle," the reviewer writes, "...to say that the existence of numerous editions of the plays and poems with Shakespeare's name on the title page and the references and allusions to him as poet and dramatist, prove that he was the author..."

Let us examine why, protestations to the contrary, this constitutes a "circular argument." The tacit assumption is made, to begin with, that the name "William Shakespeare" can only refer to the Stratford man, and that the "references and allusions to him" as poet and dramatist are also to the Stratford man. Thus, a syllogism is constructed which goes something like this: "Major premise: The name 'William Shakespeare' can only refer to the Stratford man. Minor premise: The name 'William Shakespeare' appears on title pages of plays and poems. Conclusion: Therefore, the Stratford man wrote these plays and poems!"

But we need to remind Stratfordians, apparently, that their major premise is the point at issue. Indeed, the eyllogism's conclusion contains this premise in disguise. Therefore, a logician would say that the perpetrator of this syllogiem "argues in a circle," and that the major premise of thie syllogism "begs the question," to wit, "what is the proof that the name "William Shakespeare" can only mean the Stratford man?"

The usual response given to this question is refuge in yet another circular argument: "Jonson, who had discussed Shakespeare with Drummond of Hawthornden with no reference to any secret authorship, mentions from living memory that Shakespeare was the Swan of Avon. No member of the Chamerlain's or King's Men ever suspected or thought that their colleague was too stupid a lout to be the author of the plays he was bringing and producing with them. No stretch of the imagination can wish the names of Heminge, Burbage, and Condell out of Shakespeare's will..."

Each of the several questions begged in this tirade would require a separate essay in which to discuee them and to expose the illogic underlying them: Under any assumption of what Ben Jonson did or did not know about the authorship, why should we expect a "secret authorehip" even to be discussed, by him or anyone else? The authorship of Huckleberry Finn or Tom Sawyer was by no means a secret -- at least in the senee anti-Stratfordians argue was the case for "Shakespeare's Works." But how often do we find

the name "Samuel L. Clemens" used in any discussion of the author "Mark Twain," whether in Clemens's own day or in ours? Naturally, anti-Stratfordians would expect, if the authorship were a secret, that there would indeed be some contemporaries who would identify the Stratford man with the author. If so, the issue to be resolved would best be phrased: In how much of a position to know all the facts were these contemporaries, and is there the possibility they could have been deceived?

The truly astonishing aspect of the authorship problem is that nobody seems to have made this identification during the Stratford man's lifetime. It seems to have occurred to no one, when he or she was speaking of the Stratford man, that he or she thought of him as an author. Nor did anyone, when speaking of the writer "Shakespeare," appear to have thought of him as the Stratford man. No one, that is, until seven years after the Stratford man's death when the first complete edition of Shakespeare's plays is offered to the public, we find it stated there -- for the first time, by Jonson, Heminge, Condell, Digges, or anyone else -- that the two entities are one and the same! And upon this rock, the Stratfordians must build their church; they have no other.

Moreover, what warrant does anyone have for assuming what any member of the Chamberlain's or King's Men "suspected" or "thought" about the intellectual capacities of the author? Or whatever they may have even known about the authorship? The important thing is that they said nothing about it, at least at a time when their testimony might have counted.

As to the intellectual capacities of the companies' actors themselves, on the other hand, we have first-hand testimony about the low esteem in which these were held by at least one writer: the anonymous author of the Parnassus Plays. In one of these, "Richard Burbage" and "William Kempe" are made to say, it must be admitted, that their "fellow Shakespeare" is a writer who is superior to all the other playwrights of the time, Ben Jonson included. But the terms in which these words are put into the mouths of "Burbage" and "Kempe" make it clear that Parnassus's author is convinced that these "mimic apes" do not have the least idea of what they are talking about, and that anything they might say about their "fellow" should be taken cum grano salis!

Finally, there is the bit about Heminge's and Condell's (and Burbages's) names interlined in Shakspere's will. Stratfordians lay great stress on this item, for reasons that escape the editors. The fact that the bequests to them are interlined means one of two things: 1) that they are forgeries, added after Shakspere's death, or 2) that Heminge, Condell, and Burbage were decidedly afterthoughts in the testator's intentions. If genuine, what more do these prove, than that the testator was a friend of these actors? They certainly do not prove that the deceased was an author, and they equally certainly do not prove the truth of the remarks attributed to them in the First Folio.

If, instead of the shillings bequeathed to these actors for the purpose of buying memorial rings, posterity had found the testator saying the following, "to my good friends, Richard Burbage, John Heiminge and Henry Condell, I leave the care of my papers, books, and writings, to dispose of them as they see fit" -- wording similar to that of Shakspere's son-in-law, Dr. Hall -- there would doubtless be no authorship problem today! It is indeed the absence of such literary artifacts' mention in the Stratford man's will that renders suspect Heminge's and Condell's claims, in the 1623 Folio, that they have the "unblotted manuscripts" of the plays from the author himself.

What other reasons are there for impeaching the truthfulness of this 1623 publication? Not only does the claim that the Stratford man is the author seem at odds with every earlier record of the Stratford man's life, but several other claims made therein are contradicted, either by other records or by other known circumstances: 1) The claim that "William Shakespeare" was

among the "principal actors" in all the plays. 2) The claim that the printer's copy consists of manuscripts free of "blots" or errors. It has been proven that many of the Folio's plays were printed from earlier quarto editions. 3) The claim that all previous quartos were from "stolne and surreptitious" copy and that only the present edition is authentic (see Item 2). 4) Heminge's and Condell's claim that the author had died before he could exercise the "right" to oversee the publication of his writings. (If Shakspere had "retired" by 1612, why could he not have exercised this "right" in the four years left to him? And what happens to the common Stratfordian contention that "Shakespeare" had given up his "rights" when he sold the plays to "his company?")

Further, we must come to grips with the inconsistencies of Ben Jonson's own testimony (quite apart from whether he was the actual author -- as George Steevens, supported by James Boaden, H. H. Furness, Felix Schelling, and Andrew Lang, ably contended -- of Heminge's and Condell's statements). At earlier periods of his life, Ben Jonson saw fit to lampoon Shakspere's application for a coat-of-arms (Every Man Out of His Humour); to criticize the Shakespeare plays for not observing the Aristotelian unities, to accuse the Stratford man of having "from brokage [i.e., brokerage, presumably of plays]...become so bold a thief/As we, the robb'd, leave rage and pity it..." (On Poet-Ape. Emphasis ours. This is an identification which Louis Marder accepts. See "Most Singular and Choice Epithets," SNL #180, Winter, 1983, p. 45.); to complain that "Shakspeer wanted [i.e., "lacked"] art" (Conversations with Drummond of Hawthornden).

Near the end of his life, Ben Jonson made some similar carping criticisms of the man he claimed he "loved...this side idolatry." In spite of this profession, he overlooked "Shakespeare" when, in another chapter of the same book, he listed all the great writers of his day who merited his attention (Discoveries...)!

Yet, on one occasion only, to wit: the 1623 First Folio, Jonson is full of the highest praise for the "art" of the very man he claimed only four years before had lacked such art! Are anti-Stratfordians, then, not entitled to some suspicions, at least, as to the evidentiary value of this one document's claims -- so widly incongruous with the record at every other point?

The circularity of The Shakespeare Newsletter's argument about the First Folio testimony, as cited above, can thus be diagrammed as simply as the "title page" argument: Major premise: Ben Jonson, Heminge and Condell (plus the other insignificant scribblers dredged up for the First Folio) are to be believed. Minor premise: Most of these writers imply that the Stratford man is the author. Conclusion: Therefore, the Stratford man is the author.

- - - -

Underlying most of the objections made to the anti-Stratfordian premise of a "secret authorship" are assumptions that the 1623 witnesses would have had to have been parties to a "plot" or a "conspiracy" to keep the authorship secret. If this assumption were correct, it would make the Stratfordian demand of their opponents to produce a revelatioa of such a plot by Shakespeare's contemporaries an even more unreasonable one than it already seems. But is the assumption correct? There is abundant testimony -- from Puttenham's The Arte of English Poesie (1589) to Lord Selden in King James's reign -- that it was infra dig. for members of the nobility to publish verse or drama under their own names. Stratfordians love to play down this fact, in as much as a concession to it would open the debate to consideration of whether "William Shakespeare" might not be the "own name" of an author who did not wish to put himself in such an undignified position! In truth, Robert Giroux denies this fact altogether, a denial which led him into his "Earl of Stirling" error in a letter to the New York Times Book Review editor last February (see Newsletter, Winter 1985) and The Shakespeare Newsletter #185, Spring 1985, p. 9)

Of more importance to our purpose here is that Puttenham's and Lord Selden's (and, one ehould add, the playwright Robert Greene'e in Farewell to Folly, 1591) remarke on the subject prove that secret and pseudonymous authorehip of poems and playe was a commonplace among the nobility. Such commonplacee, then, scarcely need plots, conspiracies, or "oaths in blood" for their maintenance, as Stratfordians eeem to infer. A certain amount of deception, of course, would be involved, but in the climate described by Puttenham, etc., it would eeem eafe to guess that a simple agreement not to "tattle" in public would be all that was neceesary.

Two other aspects of poetic and dramatic writing seem to be commonplaces of Elizabethan timee: anonymity, and misattributions. (Prof. Steven May, a Stratfordian echolar who has made a epecial study of the Earl of Oxford's poetry, builds a case for Oxford's non-authorship of a number of versee subscribed with his initials!) If Stratfordians aseume that a "eecret authorship" would be bandied about town by the literary gossips of the day, why are we still so ignorant of the authorship of so much Tudor verse clearly fitting into these categories? In truth, authorship in general seems not to have been discussed in those days, which is why Shakespeare's name is hardly ever mentioned (nor anyone elee's for that matter) when their works are talked about. It is at least worthy of note, then, that it is the Earl of Oxford's name which does come up -- at leaet in Puttenham -- when discuaeion takee place of the aristocratic obligation to be secretive in hie activitiee and to publish "without ¢hie own name¢ to it" -- i.e., to uee a pseudonym, or, if not his "own name," then that of another?

Meanwhile, if pro f is required that "William Shakespeare" was a "cover name," we have it in the 1599 Paesionate Pilgrim. Scholare seem agreed tbet only a few piecee in this collection, aecribed on ite title page solely to "William Shakespeare," are of Shakespeare's authorehip, moet of the reet being assigned -- on these ecbolars' authority -- to Richard Barnfield. If the publisher (Jaggard) were not ueing the name "Shakespeare" as a cover for at least one author'e verses, why did Shakspere and Barnfield not protest Jaggard'e unauthorized use of this name, as Thomae Heywood did for Jaggard's later edition of Pilgrim, which included one of Heywood's own poems? And if"Shakespeare" was used as a cover name for Barnfield'e veree, why not for any other author as well? Finally, if it is Shakspere whom Ben Joneon attacks as "Poet-Ape" (as, at least, Dr. Marder eeems to think), in which sonnet he is deecribed as a play-broker (who would "buy the revereion ¢i.e. "revieion¢ of old plays"), why should we assume he had anything more to do with the playe than to lend hie name to their publication? And why should we not also aeeume, as Jonson apparently did, that tbis "poet-ape" proceeded from this activity to tbat of etealing plays (or parts of plays; it is not clear which), which he would then paes off as his own?

It should be clear by this time to anyone not viewing tbe authorship issue through rose-tinted glasses manufactured in Stratford-super-Avon, that the mere mention of the name "Shakespeare" in Elizabeth's time in connection with literary matters cannot be regarded ae proof of identity, given all the circumstencee mentioned above. Stratfordians are able to use this argument, as we have shown, only by aseuming the point at issue. But they have another variant of this circular reasoning when they come to dealing with the Oxfordian theory in particular.

For thie variant, Stretfordiane (like Robert Giroux -- see Neweletter, Fall 1984) call to the witneee stand one Francie Meree, author of Palladis Tamia (1598), who therein liets both the Earl of Oxford and Shakespeare among those "beet for comedy," ae well as lieting Shakeepeare separately as best in other literary genree, sucb as tragedy, historical playe, and verse. The SNL review under discueeion expreeeas the Stratfordian view of Meres's testimony most succinctly: "We Stratfordiane ask how comes it that Oxford and Shakespeare

were one person if they are mentioned there as two different people?"

This question assumes, of course, that Meres had personal acquaintance with the writers he discusses and that he in fact knew that Oxford and Shakespeare were two different people. But Meres makes no such claim, and on the basis of what he wrote (as against what we only think he meant), more than one assumption is clearly possible:

1) He knew that Oxford and Shakespeare were two separate people (the Stratfordian view).
2) He did not know that they were two separate people.
3) He believed them to be two separate people, even if in fact they were not.
4) He knew that "Shakespeare" was a pseudonym for the Earl of Oxford, but included the earl's name separately out of respect for the author's desire to conceal his hand in the particular poems and plays that Meres listed (only one of Ogburn's hypotheses. Note that Meres's listing of Oxford is remarkably unspecific about the earl's comedies.).
5) He knew that "Shakespeare" was a pseudonym, but not whose.
6) He knew that "Shakespeare" was a pseudonym, but believed that someone other than Oxford, e.g., Bacon, Derby, Marlowe, or a group of writers, was the author.

The reader will observe that four out of these six possibilities require that Meres had no personal acquaintance with these authors. But there is independent confirmation that Meres's knowledge -- at least about Oxford -- is second hand at best. And who provides us with that confirmation? Why, none other than Louis Marder himself! In his attempt to downgrade Oxfordians' citation of the earl's contemporary reputation as a playwright, Dr. Marder opines that Meres derived his reference to Oxford from Puttenham, the reputed author of The Arte of English Poesie, the 1589 publication we have had occasion to mention above. This seems to be a reasonable enough inference. But in using it, Dr. Marder saws off the branch upon which he thinks himself comfortably perched: the assumption that Meres knew for a fact that Oxford and Shakespeare were two separate people!

- - - -

We now come to the other type of Stratfordian rejoinder found in the SNL review: the selective rebuttal. In order to overcome the paucity of linkages (except for the First Folio, and it should be mentioned, the inappropriate scribblings -- composed by nobody-knows-whom engraved upon the Stratford monument, erected and paid for by nobody-knows-whom and nobody-knows-when) between the Stratford man and literary activities of any kind, Stratfordians must needs downgrade the very necessity for a rival candidate's need to conceal his or her authorship. Consequently, the fiction must be maintained that there is nothing in the Shakespeare works that would have placed their author's life or liberty in peril.

To promote this blinkered view, the reviewer writes, "I do not find it easy to believe that...Hamlet and Ophelia are derived from Oxford's marriage to Anne Cecil, or that Oxford's escape from the pirates in 1576 is mirrored in Hamlet's similar escape, that the 'politic worms' eating Polonius is a reference to Burghley's remarking that he was born during the Diet of Worms, that Horstio is Oxford's cousin Horace (Horatio) being exhorted to tell the truth about him..."

Oxfordians will take notice of the omissions from this catalog of parallels: 1) the phrase "politic worms" is coupled in the play with the pun about the worm being "your only emperor for diet" -- which nails this allusion to the Diet of Worms, when Emperor Charles V was crowned; 2) the description of Polonius as "fishmonger" and its relation to "Cecil's Fast," Burleigh's law encouraging the fish industry; 3) the similarity of style between Polonius's advice to his son and to Burleigh's Certaine Preceptes -- designed for his own son, Robert, and not published until 1618; 4) other of Polonius's lines in Hamlet constituting a parody of a letter

from Burleigh to Queen Elizabeth -- a letter which the Stratford man could certainly not have seen; 5) the 1603 quarto's designation of Polonius as "Corambis" and the pun this name makes on Burleigh's motto. The list could go on and on.

But it would be futile to add any more items to the heap of parallels between the Shakespearean corpus and Lord Oxford's curriculum vitae. Mr. Ogburn has more than enough in his book to convince any unprejudiced reader. No, the SNL editor knows these facts already, either from the book under review or from the pages of his own newsletter (see "Polonius as Lord Burleigh: Oxford's revenge on his father-in-law?" SNL, #167, Dec. 1980, p. 48). For any Stratfordian to admit, however, that Shakespeare had Queen Elizabeth's right-hand man in mind when he created the character of Polonius would force said Stratfordian to answer the obviously awkward question, how was it that a person of the modest social credentials possessed by Shakspere was allowed to produce, let alone publish, a play satirizing such a public figure on the stage, in which the hero not only murders him, but speaks contemptuously of his corpse? How did it come about that, in an age when John Stubbs had his hand cut off for publishing a pamphlet daring to advise the Queen against her proposed marriage to the Duc d'Alencon, the middle-class Warwickshire citizen never suffered even a day's imprisonment? It must be remembered that portraying a public official on the stage -- at least in the public theaters -- was a crime, punishable by at least a loss of liberty -- a fact which Ben Jonson, George Chapman and others discovered to their own discomfort.

For the Stratford bourgeois implausibly put forward as Hamlet's creator, substitute the Earl of Oxford, and all the problems mentioned above disappear. Oxford had the motive, as Burleigh's put-upon ward and son-in-law, and the intimate knowledge of Burleigh's habits and correspondence to commit his satire to paper. Oxford enjoyed the friendship, the confidence, and the protection of Queen Elizabeth herself, who presumably would have been willing to put up with more from him than she would tolerate from others. She of course would not have allowed even such a favorite as Oxford to publish such a play as Hamlet. Nor did he, whether he used the pen-name "William Shake-speare" or not. The corrupt text and numerous errors which disfigure the First Quarto Hamlet (1603) prove that his was a pirated, unauthorized publication that no author could ever have sanctioned. The vastly improved text of the Second Quarto a year later, with the name "Corambis" changed to "Polonius," certainly suggests a clumsy effort at "damage control" ("one cannot unring a bell," as lawyers say of excluded testimony which has already been heard by the jury).

These considerations (and many more) seem to us to make a strong circumstantial case at least against the possibility that Shakspere of Stratford could have been the author of Hamlet. Yet, in The Shakespeare Newsletter's editorial reply to our Society's column in the summer issue ("What does it mean to 'argue in a circle?'", SNL #186), a Stratfordian lawyer -- a Mr. Luis Kutner of Chicago -- is cited to the effect that, "circumstantial evidence without supporting evidence is compounding fiction." This, in our view, is special pleading. By "direct evidence," Mr. Kutner means that we Oxfordians should produce an Elizabethan "blabber" about the "secret plot" he believes we think existed, despite the improbabilities involved in fulfilling such a request. Lawyers for the Stratfordian side also seem to think that the First Folio testimony counteracts the circumstantial case against their candidate the record otherwise presents. We have already discussed the possibility of perjury. We would only add a factor every lawyer, including Mr. Kutner, knows very well: testimony by dead witnesses is not subject to cross-examination. Another thing Mr. Kutner knows very well is that many cases are decided on circumstantial evidence, and that such evidence, if there is enough of it, is considered more reliable than the arguably more error-prone observations of "eye witnesses."

But, in fact, Oxfordians do have such direct evidence to support the strong circumstantial case Mr. Ogburn has presented -- with parallel after parallel throughout the

whole Shakespeare canon with the earl's life circumstances. We have, as we have shown above, the "direct testimony" of Puttenham in The Arte of English Poesie that as of 1589 Oxford either "used a pseudonym or someone else's name when writing poetry, that he was forced to write in secret, that he was "best" among the nobility who wrote comedies, and that he was "first" among those who wrote "excellently well, if their doings could be found out and made public with the rest."

Therefore, Oxfordians can claim -- contrary to Samuel Schoenbaum's dismissal of our case as, "a row of zeroes adding up to zero" -- that by the rules of "common sense" and of "putting two and two together," the circumstances favor our candidate's authorship of at least a large portion of what we know as "Shakespeare's Works" over that of the Stratfordians' candidate. We can show motive, opportunity, and (pace scholastic special pleading to the contrary) chronology. The Oxfordian theory is thus found to be "Copernican," in that the planetary orbits of Shakespearean research can now be explained more simply, whereas the infinity of bibliographical, biographical and other cruxes of Stratfordian "Ptolemaicism" have only produced thousands of books and theses, many thousand more of guesses and hypotheses -- but no resolutions to date.

* * * * *

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LORD OXFORD SUES FOR A PATENT OF MONOPOLY

by Steven W. May
Georgetown College

The 1000 pound annuity which the crown granted to Oxford on 26 June 1586 provided the Earl with no more than a minimally adequate income. As William Harrison explained in his "Description of England" (1587), "no man is commonly created haron except he may dispend of yearly revenues £1000" (ed. Georges Edelen, p. 100). Small wonder then that the Earl vigorously pressed a number of suits in an effort to augment his income, the most intense of which was his struggls for the tin monopoly during the mid-1590s. As early as 1592-3 he was seeking the monopoly on oils, wools, and fruits (Ward, pp. 306-311), and it is now clear that, prior to this and psrhaps even before he received his annuity, Oxford had devised a monopoly for himself as "Gauger of vessels for beer and ale."

The basic proposal involved checkiug the quality and quantity of drink as it was sealed into vessels by the brewers. The patentee, Oxford, was to receivs from the brewers one penny for every barrel so inspected amd two farthings for sach smaller container. The crown had apparently denied Oxford's suit by 17 May 1587 whsn one Sir Rohert Styvard or Styvart submitted a revised but similar proposal. It too was refused. A third attempt was undertaken by Julius Caesar, the Elizabethan lawyer and one of her Majesty's Masters of Requests. The Office of Requests sorted out those petitions to the Queen and Privy Council submitted by poor and out-of-court suitors. By virtue of his office there, Caesar apparsntly read Styvard's pstition, then devised his own variation upon it. Among his papers im the British Library (Add. MS. 12497, ff. 409-410v) are his notes differentiating the Earl of Oxford's suit from that of Styvard. Caesar recorded that both were denied because they violated an act of 23 Henry VIII charging the Wardens of the Cooper's Guild with the responsibility of gauging all such vessels for a mere one farthing apiece. But then Caesar took up Oxford's idea, proposing to gauge all the vessels at a cost of just four pounds per year from tbe Queen. There was a catch, however. He also asked for all forfeitures due for violations of the act of 23 Henry VIII, presumably, fines paid by brswers caught sealing their vessels without due inspection. "And this being never sued for by ths Erle," he concluded, "maye withowt his ill taking it . . .be graunted unto Cesar." That it was not is shown by Sir Thomas North's letter which Caesar preserved (f. 411), sxplaining that his suit "will bardly be harkened unto" because it offsrs the Queen no increase in her own revenues. But sven this may not have ended the effort to implement Oxford's plan, since an anonymous petition to the Queen dated 1592 in the Salisbury MSS (HMC Part 4, pp. 260-261), asks for the sams sort of monopoly as was originally proposed by Oxford, the fees however to be two psncs per barrel and a half-panny for the smaller vessels.

Beyond the need for additional income, the Earl's gambit as would-be gauger of these vessels tells us something ahout his status at court during thsse years. Caesar is careful to distinguish his suit from Oxford's, in part so that ths Earl would not be offended should the monopoly be granted to another. Meanwhile, Oxford's on-going efforts to secure one monopoly after another point to the inadequacies of his annuity.

Even more interesting is the fact that his search for a viable and lucrative monopoly went on with undiminished fervor after his marriage in 1591 to Elizebeth Trentham. Among other unknowns in the life story of De Vere, the exact financial arrangements which eccompanisd the Trentham match are worthy of further investigation.

SCHOLAR OF OXFORD'S POETRY HIGHLIGHTS NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

by Gordon Cyr

The Shakeepeare Oxford Society's Ninth Amnual Coaference took place October 11 and 12 et the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Weshington, D.C. Although we missed the presence of some stalwart participants in paet conferences, such as our Honorary President, Charlton Ogburn, Morse Johnson and Warren Hope, the eveat was blessed by many new members whose enthusiasm and support for the Oxfordian cauae were poaitively contagious!

Among the items of buainess discussed were e proposal from the chair (Gordon Cyr, Executive Vice-Presidént) that the meetings be held every two years rather than every year. There were several offers to assist the Executive V.P. in the matter of hosting alternete year meetings in the voluntser's own area. The E. V. P. agreed to work with volunteers in this respect for next year's meeting. Announcements included the sad news of longtime member Eleanor Brewster's death earlier this year (see In Memorian this issue), the glad tidings of Warren Hops's recently acquired Ph.D. in English literature from Temple Univereity in Philadelphia, and the forthcoming publication of William P. Fowler's new book, Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters. Dr. Hope (who was Editor of the Newsletter from 1981-1983) will be an important "first" in American Oxfordian research: an anti-Stratfordian member in good standing in academic English Literature circles.

Ruth Miller's announcement was read to the audience--that a tour of Castle Hedingham was planned for June 6, 1986 sponsored by the Essex County Archives. Interested persons should contact Ruth Loyd Miller, P.O. Drawer 1309, Jennings, Louisiana 70546.

Helen Cyr, S.O.S. Secretary, announced that the complete file of back issuss of the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter (June 30, 1965 - Spring 1985) has been put on microfilm and is now available to members (see advsrtisement in this issue). Cyr also described the next project which will be the badly needed indexing of the Newsletter.

The first conference session was principally occupied with Helsn Cyr's report, "New Developments in the Oxford-Shakespsare Word Study." Since the issue of her earlier "Lexical Choices...", Cyr has been engaged in iavestigations of word combinations (or "clustere") common to Oxford's poetry and Shakespeare's works. For her inquiry she took the precaution of checking each item with concordancea of other Elizabethan writers, a procedure which helped her eliminate some of the parallels discovered by previous Oxfordian researchers. Although she has come up with an impreasive number of examples showing that several "Shakespearean" word combinations were onee for which the Earl of Oxford also had priority, Cyr cautioned members of the audience that further eliminations could occur with additional investigation.

Saturday morning's session began with Gordon Cyr's paper, "Historical Methods, Historical Fallaciss, and the Authorahip Question" (to be published in full in the next issue). This presentation was based on an applicetion of David Hackstt Fischer'e principles described in his book Historians' Fallacies to the arguments ussd by Stratfordian commentators in defense of the received authorship theory. Some of Prof. Fischer's examples of feulty reasoning found among various eminent historians were quite amusing, and Oxfordians wers shown many ways they could rebut some of the more egregious props in the Stretford mythos.

After a "coffee break," the principal

guest of our conference, Prof. Steven W. May (on the English faculty of Georgetown College, Kentucky), read his paper, "The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford: New Directions; New Opportunities." Prof. May is known to our Society's members as author of "The Poems of Edward DeVere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford and of Robert Devereux, Secoad Earl of Essex," in Studiss in Philology (Univ. of North Carolina Press) vol. lxxvii, no. 5, 1980. Though not an Oxfordian himself, Prof. May admits to being a "fan" of the earl, basing his admiration on Oxford's acknowledged verss -- an admiration he says has increasad since the publication of his 1980 article. Moreover, he began his conference preseatation by admitting he believed "it to be within the realm of possibility that Edward DeVere, Seventsanth Earl of Oxford, wrote some or all of the works ordinarily attributed to William Shakespeare," evsn though he had to qualify this with the "bad news" that the informatioa currently available does not warrant such a conclusioa. The rest of Prof. May's paper dealt with both biographical and literary findinga he had made since his publicatioa, or at least ones he could not include in that article. Oxford emerged, in May's talk, as an innovstor, whose eight poems published in the 1576 Paradise of Dainty Devices "create a dramatic break with everything known to have been written by Elizebethan courtiers up to that time." Prof. May also elaborated on his reasons for accepting or rejecting poems hitherto thought by Oxfordians to be canonical. He stressed that all such conclusions are tentative and could be upset by new evidence. And if Oxfordians are disappointed to find a few of their favorite poeme taken away from the earl, they were cheered by Prof. May's vigorous defense of Oxford's authorship of "My mind to me a kingdom is," as against ths Rawliason MS attribution of this poem to Sir Edward Dyer. The Newsletter editore are also cheered by Prof. May's reasoas for assigning Oxford's known poetry to the years 1570 - 1575, a date which allows Oxford clear priority in the use of the Shakespearean "word-clusters" discovered by Helen Cyr (see above).

In the afternoon sesnion, a last-minute change in the ngenda was made to accomodate Joseph Sobran, a new member of the Society who, ss book reviewer for the Washingtom Times and other publications, had begun reading Charlton Ogburn's The Mysterious William Shakespeare as a "scoffer," and midway through became an Oxfordian! Mr. Sobran described for the audience why he became convinced that Mr. Ogburn was "on the right track," and detailed some of his encounters with Stratfordians since his "conversion." He said that the first half of the book (the "negative case" against Shakspere) did not conviace him, nor did some of the arguments from "style." Though Mr. Sobran felt that verbal "idiosyncrasies" could be like fingerprints -- which will continue to show up through a person's stylistic development -- it would be difficult to prove that "early Beethoven" wrote "late Beethoven" without our access to the connecting links.

More persuasive to Mr. Sobran were the numerous biographical events of Oxford's life that Mr. Ogburn found strewn throughout the Shakespeare canon, such as Oxford's Minola character in The Taming of the Shrew. Or the capture of Oxford's ship by pirates, seemingly reflected in Hamlet. When a disinterested reader gets a certain numher of coincidences, in Sobran's opinion, they cannot be as airily dismissed as thsy were when the speaker confronted Samuel Schoenbaum one day, and was told, "a row of zeroes still adds up to zero." Mr. Sobran countered this image with the arugment that "it was more a matter of multiplying fractions," and pointed out that the only "hard coincidence" the Stratfordians had come up with was the Kathleen Hamlett inquest into her drowning in Stratford. Other scholars of what Sobran called the "upper Stratford school" have also tried to estahlish biographical links in the plays and poems to the Stratford man, but without convincing results. The queet is a valuable one, So-

bran says, because every author he has ever studied derives his or her work from two areas: 1) the author's life, and 2) the author's reading. The "converging probabilitiee" in the two arsas are more certain for Oxford than for Shakspere. If they should be proved to lead to Oxford's authorship, then Shakspere's and Oxford's paths must havs crossed at some point, a conclusion with which Oxfordians cannot quarrel, however difficult or impossible it may prove to establish this.

The conference concluded with Helen Cyr's "Report on The Shakespeare Identity Crisis: A Reference Guide," a Shakespeare Oxford Society publication in progrese now scheduled for releane in early 1986.

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IN MEMORIAM ELEANOR BREWSTER

Ws regret to announce the death, July 7, 1985, of one of the moet productive of Oxfordians, Elsanor Brewster. Ms. Brewster was author of two valuable books on Oxfordian topics, Oxford, Courtier to the Queen (1964) and Oxford and His Elizabethan Ladies (Dorrance, Philadelphia, 1972). Though born in Brokklyn, Ms. Brewster lived most of hsr life in Connecticut, from where she frequently travelled to England for reaearch on her favorite topic, the authorship of Shakespeare's works. Elsanor Brewster was a longtime member of the Shakespeare Oxford Society and of the Shakespearean Authorship Society of England, with whose members she was in frequent contact. Up to the end of her life, Ms. Brewster was a regular correapoadent with the editor, offering many valuable suggestions and much wise counsel. She will be greatly miseed.

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"MAKE THEE ANOTHER SELF FOR LOVE OF ME"

by Edmonn Lafew

One point of concensus has remained between the majority of Shaksperians and Oxfordians despite all their asperities in the last 65 yeare in the case of Shakespearee Sonnets, Noe. 1-17. That is, the poet addreesed Henry Wriotheeley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, to persuade him to accept Lady Elizabeth de Vere as hie bride. Ths lad's guardian and the girl's grandfather, the great Lord Burghley, had contracted thsir marriage with the Dowager Countesa of Southampton but the boy would not consent. Thie theory survived the near-complete historical blank between Southampton and either Shakspere or DeVere. On the base of Venus and Adonis's double-tongued dedicstion and the fulsome one of Lucrsce, the Stratfordians erected an elaborate romance of the poet and his patron. They have eupposed that he wrote the succeesive Somnsts with Wriothesley as their object. Only the purest ignorance accounts for Oxfordians who contin ue their foolish consistency. Gerald W. Phillips proved that basis more short than waste or ruining 53 years ago, but both sides neglected his work, to the especial shame of the Verists. For Elizabeth'e supreme Coucnillor had proposed the union three yeare before Venus and Adonis circulated in public, and while he'd sponsored John Clapham's Narcissus (dedicated to Childe Henry in 1591) these seventeen sonnets emerged under no sanction and nn definite direction.

Nnt even the Stratford faithful can defend the idea of their rustic idol writing in his own voice to an earl, since the post'a paternal--dare I say, patronizing--approach tn hie theme must have only affronted all parties. (If a relation of the boy or girl had commiesioned Shaksper to compose sonnets assuming their peraona, we have precedent.) But this pays no heed to the sincere, urgent, but haughty character of these sonnets which we can justly attribute to the girl's father, Edward De Vere whose poetic skill had been long know. No other than he would have taken this mootsd match to his heart, though none cnn name

the cause! All assume the poet's fully unreasonable affection for the young Earl: indeed, he appealed to the boy's self-esteem--as Clapham's allegory of Narcissus was well-founded; not that supposed of Venus and Adonis, however--yet this required no equal estimate in the poet's mind. Since Southampton took no interest in his betrothal, one may deduce that these sonnets had scarcely come to his hand but they slipped through his fingers: this accounts for the author of V&A parodying this group of Sonnets, and Meres' description of 'sugred sonnets among his private friends.'(Herford Rendall, before Phillips, remarked the "correspondences," only Phillips recognizing the misattribution of the long poem.)

Follow: 18 months prior to Burghley's brokering the marriage in Dec. 1587, Oxford had lost his wife, leaving him at age 40 with three daughters but no son. The 17th Earl, descended in the male line from a liegeman of William the Conqueror, had no heir to his title, offices, and estates. Marriage had brought him brief comfort and may have provoked such a tirade as Hamlet's against it (III,i,122-157). His 'prophetic soul' could scarcely foretell his wedding the young and fair Elizabeth Trentham, Her Majesty's Maid of Honor, in two more year, nor her delivery of Henry de Vere on 24 Feb. 1593. It appears (certain) that Henry Wriothesley entered De Vere's biography the second time, five weeks later, standing at the fount as godfather to Oxford's first heir on 31 Mar. in Stoke Newington. This event lends a key to the dedication of V&A. The future fellowship of the two noble Henries upholds this conclusion, as does the delay in christening the boy, although the document escaped discovery.

I cannot imagine the Earl striving to further Burghley's plan for the sake of an alliance with the House of Wriothesley. Glancing at their history shows no honor that a DeVere might covet, whose ancestor had dethroned the last Plantagenet and altered England's future . Yet these seventeen sonnets reveal the poet's desperation to see the youth marry this young lady and father offspring, particularly a son. While he flatters him abundantly, he makes no mention of her qualities, her noble blood, her dowry... nothing! (Not the mode of any pen for hire, who must gratify his patron, if not the recipient.) As the marriage had been contracted, he would find no point to designating the intended bride. Both father and fiancee knew the girl's apparent virtues, but De Vere was almost a stranger to his daughter bred in Burghley's domain. In the remaining 137 sonnets this topic never recurs , denoting his sudden disdain of the Wriothesley progeny: no felicitation--nor more appropriately, consolation--for his wedding to Elizabeth Vernon in Aug. 1598 or their daughter born in Nov.[2] Or rather that the Bard had no more interest in Southampton and therefore the other sonnets concern him not at all. I find tacit agreement that none of Sonnets 1-17 can be ranked with Shakespeare's finest, but once released from the theme of Southampton's beauty and conceit, he springs forth superb poetry. One then ought not presume a single figure inspired both kinds. For readers in the dark: the "fair youth" was the unacknowledged son whom Phillips poeited in his Tragic Story of "Shakespeare" (London, 1932) and Barrell certified as Edward Vere (b. 1581) in Shakespeare Fellowship Newsletter (12/41 - 10/42). How regrettable that two such Verists could not see "division grow together" in what would appear one cause!

I conclude that Edward de Vere in middle life, yet to his mind disabled beyond mere age, sought the hope of renewal in the prospect of a grandson who should carry on his lineage and inherit Castle Hedingham, which he alienated to his three daughters and Burghley in 1594. After his own remarriage restored some brightness to hie outlook in Dec. 1591, this necessity pinched him no longer. The espousal of Vere and Stanley in 1595 roused from him no prayer for generation because a lawful son of Vere had arrived two years before. Perhaps he re-

sponded to the pleasure of this Indian Summer in improvising The Merry Wives of Windsor, one of hie last comic works and notebly free of the eomber aspects in most Shakespeare comedies.

Notes

1. As Shaw, an highly pseuliar Shaksperian, belisved the Countees of Pembroke did for her son'e benefit: Preface to the Dark Lady of tbe Sonnets (where he also credits Jonson with William Browne's epiteph for her.)

2. Though their amour's semblance to that of Claudio and Juliet in Measure for Measure must have struck him even more tban us: he'd drawn the play from the conss-quences of his affair with Anns Vavasor. (If Wriotbealey plays any role in Shakespeare you will find it in Mercutio and Gratiano.)

THE WORK OF THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY

Because there are so many new members (rscruited with tbe publicity attendant on Charlton Ogburn's new book), this is an appropriats time to revisw for thsir benefit the role and the achievements of the Society. Sucb a review will also remind members of longstanding wby we need their financial support to pusb forward witb new projects.

CLEARINGHOUSE. Of course, evsryone knows that thrangh the Newsletter the Society functions as a clearinghouse for the eccumulation of data and thsories. Not so well known is the fect that tbs Society also answers refsrence questions from the general public and from members. The Society offers edvieory service to msmbers engaged in rsesarch: proofrsading manuscripts, correcting serious errors of fact in the light of new information unearthed or reinterpretsd.

REBUTTAL. The Society formally rebuts erronsous public statements, oral and writtsn, mads by leading Sbakespearsan ecbolare, eitber through direct contact (telepbone or lsttsr) or via the Society's sponsored column in tbe quarterly, The Sbakespears Newsletter (sponsored courtesy of Russell dse Cognsts).

MICROFILM PROJECT. To better esrvs tbe reference function of ths Socisty, we have just completed the collating and microfilming of tbe Newslstter, 1965 - 1985. The nsxt stsp will be to do the same for the old Shakespeare Fellowship publications.

NEWSLETTER INDEX. In June 1986 the Society will begin tbe indexing of the Newsletter from its beginning to the present. A plan for continuous update has aleo been developed. This work is necessary for scholars to have easy acceee to information published in past issues. Many important findinge have become "lost" for tbe lack of an index.

MAINSTREAMING WITH ACADEME. The Society is working to achieve ths highest standards of bistorical research and is reviewing Oxfordian researcb, past and present, that doee not hold up under scrutiny, i.e., "cleaning up our act". (Through its rebuttal program, the Socisty is trying to encourage orthodox scholars to do the same!) The Socisty is also taking steps to join Sbakespearean societies in order to become better acquainted witb Shakespeare scholars, the ultimate goal being to persuade the Stratfordian community to concede that there is indesd an euthorsbip problem.

PARTICIPATION IN SHAKESPEARE DATA BANK PROGRAM. Tbe Society has "signed on" to participate in the Shakespeare date bank projsct, coordinated by Louis Marder, editor of Tbs Shakespeare Newelstter.

RESEARCH. In addition to tbe creative work being done by individual msmbers, tbe Socisty itself sponsore research. For example, Richard C. Horne, former S.O.S. president,

uncovered the fact that in 1603 ths 17th Earl of Oxford was a member of the Privy Council. In recent years ths Society has continued to be involved in important rssearch efforts.

RESEARCH/SIGNATURES. In 1977-79 the Socisty employed two leading forsnsic specialists, "document examinsrs", one American, one British, to study the six extant signatures of "Shakespeare". The sxperts applied the sams precise techniquss of msasurement and knowledge ahout the psychology of signature writing that they would ordinarily employ in their court case work. Their findings: extrsme irregularitiss among the six signatures, indicating one of the following: physical incapacity, lack of versatility with the process of handwriting, or as one examiner put it, "lack of a clear image as to the formulation of the letters."

RESEARCH/ASHBOURNE PORTRAIT. The Socisty participated in clearing up some false assumptions ahout one of the "Shakespeare" portraits, the Ashbourne portrait, in ths custody of the Folger Library. The same conservator that the S.O.S. had called in for a lecture on tschniquss of sxamination and the possibilities for determining the true idsntity of the man whose likeness was ovsrpainted on the Ashhourns work, turned out to he ths sxpert hirsd later hy the Folgsr to clean the very same painting. With the careful rsmoval of the surface grime and overpainting, the portrait's suhject was at last ahle to he identified hy the Folger Lihrary. And the Shakespears Oxford Society independently verified with firsthand examination (at ths invitation of the Folgsr) what was rsvealed in ths underpainting and independently confirmed the identification of the "sitter." Ths portrait's subject was definitely not Edward DeVere.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE OXFORDIAN RESEARCH ha.e been suggested and inspired by the recent succesees of Steven W. May, Georgetown College, who has discovsrsd considsrable new material connscted with the Elizahethan courtisr poets.

PUBLICATIONS. The Society is ahout to come out with a new publication, The Shakespeare Identity Crisis: A Reference Guide. A future work scheduled for publication is The Oxford Documents (a compendium of documsnts connected with Edward DsVsre).

RESEARCH/WORD STUDY. With stylometrics being so much in the news of late, the Society tackled a study to determine the feasibility of comparing Oxford's few extant writings with the Shakeapeare canon. Although the present Oxford sample is small, the study revealsd some unusual likeneeses hetween ths two bodies of text. A follow-up word cluster investigation is now underway and has already revealed some common Oxford/Shakespeare parallels not yst found in the corpora of other contemporary Elizabsthan writers.

--Helen W. Cyr

DEBATERS CORNER

Although the editors find themselvsa in agreement with many of ths arguments "Edmonn Lafew" presents in his articls, published in this issue, we question the initial assertion that a "majority...of Oxfordians" agres with a "majority" of Stratfordians that the firet ssventsen "marriage sonnsts" urgs the 3rd Earl of Southampton to marry Oxford's eldest daughter, Elizabsth Vers.

No poll, of course, has been conducted among Oxfordians to establish this view's allegedly majoritarian support. But that a numher of important Oxfordians have held a different opinion is hsyond dispute. The staturs and experisncs of some of thsse workers, hoth living and dead (with Charlton Ogbnrn among ths formsr and Capt. Bernard M. Ward among the latter!), rsnder thsir hypotheses at least worthy of attention, however individual Oxfordians (in-

cluding the editors) may disagree with them.

The article's author has not adduced sufficient evidence, moreover, to prove that this interpretation is the correct one on the subsequent sonnets' omission of "generational requests" to Southampton (or to anyone else). A plausible explanation is indeed the one which Lafew puts forward: Oxford's fathering of a legitimate male heir in 1593 removed the necessity of urging some nobleman to marry a daughter. But this male heir's fortuitous arrival also harmonized with the theory of Oxford's illegitimate fatherhood of Southampton and with the corollary view that it was not Oxford's own daughter whom the sonneteer had in mind as Southampton's marriage partner.

The objections put forward here do not, certainly, prove the contrary of Lafew's argument. However, the language of exaggeration ("purist ignorancs," "foolish consistency," and "to the especial shame of the Verists") is surely unjustified by the nature of the evidence offered. As former president, Richard C. Horne, wisely counseled one Oxfordian in early 1970,

> "Personally, I try to keep from taking a vulnerable position, that could furnish ammunition to our enemies to discredit the cause. I do not intend to write a book, am not bound to defend the conjecturse and hypotheses of others from friandship, or sense of obligation, to them. This does not mean that I underestimate the value of conjecture, for without it we would not have many of our discoveries and inventions. It is also a valuable basis for a start for proof. Privately, and as an individual, I have a few working conjecturee which are pleasing to me, sometime helpful, but I reepect those of others, which could be right and mine all wrong."

There is little evidence also for Lafew' inference that Venus and Adonis constitutee a parody of the "marriage eonnets," and that consequently the two texts must be of different authorship. This was s view advocsted many decades ago hy the late Oxfordian, Gerald W. Phillips. But the Newsletter editore can only find that Mr. Phillips's contentions deserve the well-known Scottish verdict: not proven.

Finally, we must side with Charlton Ogburn in his finding that Merry Wives of Windsor is an early comedy of Oxford's, in conceding the likelihood that certain additions of a topical nature (such as the "Cosen Garmombles" pointed out by Enoch Powell) could have been added much later. Mr. Ogburn's reasoning is too detailed for our inclusion of it hsre, hut we urge all of our Society's members to read it for themselves in The Mysterious William Shakespeare. All that we can eay is that his arguments convinced us.

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