HISTORICAL FALLACIES AND HISTORICAL METHOD:
A KEY TO THE AUTHORSHIP CONTROVERSY

Gordon C. Cyr

This article was a paper the present writer read at the Ninth Annual Conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society in Washington, D.C. on October 12, 1985. It is hoped that the common fallacies described will assist Oxfordians not only in rebutting the frequent Stratfordian commission of such errors, but also in avoiding themselves the traps to which our opponents so easily fall prey.

In his book, Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought, David Hackett Fischer gives scholars examples of several lapses in sound methodology practiced by even the most eminent historians. Although the authorship of Shakespeare's works is not among the topics discussed in Fischer's book, Oxfordians and other anti-Stratfordians will be pleased to note that the author takes on some of our more egregious opponents (albeit in non-Shakespearean contexts), such as Louis B. Wright, A. L. Rowse, and Conyers Read.

The purpose of this article is to confine the discussion to what Professor Fischer calls "fallacies of factual verification," presented in the second chapter, and to relate these to some of the more common props in the Stratfordian argument.

In a discussion of the fallacy of the pseudo proof ("a verification statement which seems at first sight to be a precise and specific reprentation of reality but which proves, on close inspection, to be literally meaningless"), the author mentions a species of this category as the "reversible reference -- a chameleonic statement which changes its color with its context and which might variously be used to prove the proposition that X is the case or that not-X is the case, as the author wishes."

The example Prof. Fischer gives is from one Bridenbaugh, who maintained that the streets of colonial Manhattan were strewn with trash. His supporting evidence consisted, according to Prof. Fischer, of three reversible references: 1) a law was passed in 1657 against littering in New Amsterdam; 2) that the law was enforced upon John Sharp, a litterbug, in 1671; and 3) that weekly trash removal was effected in 1670. Prof. Fischer reminds readers that each of these three facts could be used to argue that the streets were filled with trash, that they were kept spotlessly clean, or anything in between!

Similarly, Stratfordians are fond of arguing that, because schools were established throughout England, and because Oxford and Cambridge scholars were employed at good wages at Stratford's grammar school, that Shakespeare could have had a good education at that school. As Charlton Ogburn points out, however, the rapid turnover of such scholars, and that notwithstanding the monetary incentive, there may have been little to interest them in staying long.

The fallacy of the irrelevant proof "consists in asking one question and answering another." Prof. Fischer gives as an example an hypothetical historian who attempts to answer the question, "Was Senator X a thief?" And suppose, says the author, that Senator X was in fact a thief. So this historian, an admirer of Senator X, "proceeds
to prove that Senator X had often declared that honesty was the best policy...that Senator X was acquitted by a jury (without mentioning that all the jurors became postmasters immediately after the trial)...that Senator X's mother solemnly swore that her son could never be a thief...that Senator Y was a bigger thief than Senator X and that the Senate itself was a den of thieves...that Senator X only stole from the government...was kind to his children...faithful to his wife...loyal to his party," etc., etc. "All of these statements may in fact be true," writes Prof. Fischer, "and yet Senator X remains a thief." 

Louis Marder rhetorically asks of Oxfordians, "Were Hugh Holland, James Mabbe (?), also in on the 'plot' to conceal the true author of Shakespeare's works?" Dr. Marder then proceeds to answer another question altogether: "These men knew Shakespeare when he was alive. If [sic] Heming's and Condell's interlineation in the will are not evidence that they were friende and knew bia work and knew what they were publishing under his name was his, what is the use of the written word?" 

In the first place, the interlineations (if genuine) prove only that Heming and Condell "were friends" of the deceased (and Stratfordians do not need these interlineations to prove this much; there are at least two other documents establishing Heming's association with Shakespeare). The interlineations certainly do not prove that the deceased was an author. Indeed, like the reversible reference cited above, a good case can be made that the bequest for the purchase of memorial rings (together with the damming omission of books, manuscripts, or literary property) strongly suggests that H. and C. did not consider Shakespeare to be an author, at least when his will was drawn up. In any event, these facts render suspect H. and C.'s claim in the First Folio that they are acting as "literary executors."

What Dr. Marder studiously avoids asking is not whether H. and C. "knew their friend," but whether their statements to the effect that he was the author in the First Folio are truthful. Appeals to the "written word" are useless in this instance, inasmuch as examples of the "use of the written word" to dissemble on much more crucial historical questions are legion.

The fallacy of the negative proof "is an attempt to sustain a factual proposition merely by negative evidence. It occurs whenever a historian declares that 'there is no evidence that X is the case,' and then proceeds to affirm or assume that not-X is the case." 

Recently, Robert Giroux wrote, "There is not a shred of evidence that the byphenated spelling of Shakespeare's name, or indeed any other spelling, represents a nom de plume," Mr. Giroux, of course, has spent no effort looking for such evidence. Nor has any other Stratfordian making a similar pronouncement. But there is evidence, overlooked by Stratfordians, that poets of the nobility, such as Edward de Vere, did in fact make use of pseudonyme -- and even of other people's names, according to The Arte of English Poesie (1589), Robert Greene, etc. -- in publishing their poetry. There are also many indications that the state of playwriting was at low repute in Tudor times, and that someone in de Vere's position who wrote plays had plenty of motives for following such a practice himself. And indeed there is one witness, the author of The Arte of English Poesie, who even testifies that this very same earl was first among the noble poets who concealed their authorship in this manner!

The fallacy of the presumptive proof "consists in advancing a proposition and shifting the burden of proof or disproof to others." The entire Stratfordian case is based upon the presumption that Shakspere of Stratford wrote the poems and plays.
Anti-Stratfordians owe Prof. Fischer a great debt. "For this relief, much thanks!" We should now press our offensive, and make Stratfordians prove their case. And while they are at it, they can also be asked to prove why such plays as The Tempest, King Lear, Macbeth, etc., could not have been composed before Oxford's death in 1604. A further quote from Prof. Fischer's book is in order on this point. "The burden of proof, for any historical assertion, always rests upon its author. Not his critics, not his readers, not his graduate students, not the next generation. Let us call this the rule of responsibility." 11

Prof. Fischer writes, "The fallacy of the circular proof is a species of question-begging, which consists in assuming what is to be proved." 12 Members of our Society have become well acquainted with a typical Stratfordian abuse of this debating tactic in the exchanges between the present writer and the editor of The Shakespeare Newsletter -- in both that periodical and in our own Newsletter.

But anti-Stratfordians should be prepared to expose the shallowness in a far more frequent manifestation of this insidious form of argument: the so-called "references to Shakespeare" allegedly contained in Greenes Groatsworth of Wit and Henry Chettle's Kind Harts Dreame. Here is Samuel Schoenbaum's double-barreled version: "That Greene has singled out Shakespeare for attack is evident not only from the punning reference to Shake-scene, but also from the parody of a line in 3 Henry VI... 'O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide!' By altering one word in 'tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide!' By altering one word in "Gresne has accused Shakespeare of cruelty." 13

This reading rests on several assumptions the author has not proved: 1) That "Shakescene" is a pun on the name "Shake-speare," which did not appear in print until the Venius and Adonis publication of 1595 -- the year following both of the pamphlets' publication -- and which did not appear in the hyphenated form until 1594. 2) That "Shake-scene" is a pun at all. 3) That "Shake-scene" is a term of denigration. (The fault of the "upstart crow" was, after all, not that he was a "Shake-scene," but that he esteemed himself the only one!) 4) That the "upstart crow" was author of 3 Henry VI. 5) That the intent of the parody of this line was to identify the "upstart crow" as the play's author. 6) That the intent of the parody was anything more than the usual practice of quoting a line from a play currently in the public eye (and ear) -- something all of us do from time to time with no thought of referring to the play's author.

Having begged all these questions, Prof. Schoenbaum then proceeds to a characteristic Stratfordian misreading of Chettle's apology: "Chettle confesses that Greene's 'letter written to divers play-makers' has been offensively by one or two of them taken.' The grieved parties were, the context makes clear, Marlowe and Shakespeare. In a celebrated passage Chettle comments sharply on the former and apologize to the latter." 14

In the first place, Schoenbaum does not say how the "context makes clear" that Shakespeare is one of the two grieved parties. If Greene were addressing his remarks to "divers play-makers," warning them of the "upstart crow," how is it possible for Shakespeare to have been one of those if, as Prof. Schoenbaum had maintained earlier, the "upstart crow" is also Shakespeare? And why could not Nash -- supposed by many scholars to be one of those addressed by Greene, and who sounded pretty angry about the Groatsworth pamphlet -- be one of the grieved parties? Schoenbaum makes two other dubious assumptions as well: 1) That only Shakespeare could be described as having a "facetious grace in writing." 2) That the word "quality in Chettle's remarks, "excellent in the quality he professes" means "acting," because
Schoenbaum inserts the words "i.e., acting" in brackets after the word "quality." This is a commonplace in Stratfordian misconstructions. The fact is, "quality" meant any profession, which, as the "context makes clear," is play-writing.

"The fallacy of the prevalent proof makes mass opinion into a method of verification."¹⁵ It is the subtle form of this error Prof. Fischer finds in attempts to "establish a doubtful question by a phrase such as 'most historians agree...'" or 'it is the consensus of scholarly opinion that...'" or 'in the judgment of all serious students of this problem..."¹⁶ Aside from the general Stratfordian invocation of this "mass opinion" on all matters of dispute, one finds among more recent writings some independent attempts either to whitewash Ben Jonson's "anti-Shakespearean" sentiments or to defend him from the accusation that he composed Heinge's and Condell's remarks published in the First Folio.

Gwynne Evans and Harry Levin, for example, object to Charlton Ogburn's suggestion that Jonson had earlier expressed "contempt" for the Stratford man, and that Mr. Ogburn "shores up that dubious allegation with a satirical line about a parvenu Jonsonian character; Jonson's editors do not accept the conjecture that the satire is aimed at Shakespeare."¹⁷ It is interesting that Profs. Evans and Levin do not name these editors, a courtesy which Dr. Harter, at least, extends his readers in a similarly worded observation: "Modern scholarship (See Percy Simpson's edition of Jonson's Works, XI, 40-41) does not accept Jonson as the author of the Dedication and the address 'To the great Variety of Readers.'"¹⁸

The question arises whether "Jonson editors" are really objective enough for such confident assumptions. They can hardly be disinterested in what their subject may have really thought about one whom Jonson was to style "not of an age, but for all time" — even if this just appraisal appeared on only one occasion in Jonson's writings. For once a "foot in the door" is admitted in the form of conceding any possibility that Jonson may have entertained a low opinion of the Stratford man, what becomes of the former's invaluable "testimony" to the latter's authorial skills? Or to his sincerity in uttering them?

No, no. "Honest Ben" could not possibly have been lampooning Shakespeare's (by whom is meant, of course, the Stratford man's) coat-of-arms, nor his petition to the College of Heralds. And he could not possibly have written "H. & C.'s" words for them, because that would considerably lessen their value as testimony.

The plain evidence, however, is all against this wishful thinking on the part of "Jonson editors," whether we choose to call their finding mass opinion, or the more euphemistic designation, "scholarly consensus." Jonson's own words in Every Man Out of His Humour stand against his editors' fond contentions, as does George Steevens's masterly stylistic analysis of Heminges's and Condell's First Folio utterances, which at least two "modern scholars" -- Sir George Greenwood and Charlton Ogburn -- do accept!

Yet another unfortunate exemplar of Evans's and Levin's recourse to this "fallacy of the prevalent proof" is found in their contention that Oxford's death in 1604 precludes his authorship of Shakespeare. "Given the general consensus on dating, this would not account for a dozen of Shakespeare's best plays."²⁰ This argument is also a form of the circular proof fallacy cited above: assuming that which is to be proved.

"The fallacy of the possible proof consists in an attempt to demonstrate that a factual statement is true or false by establishing the possibility of its truth or
falsity." On the Stratfordian side, examples are too numerous to mention. Typical are the conjectures of what the Stratford man did during the so-called "lost yeare" in order to prepare himself for writing the Shakespeare canon: a clerk in a lawyer's office, a soldier in Leicester's army in the Lowlands, a page in a nobleman's house --these are only a few of the wilder "possibilities" conjured up in Stratford. Unfortunately for the "lawyer's clerk" theory, several lawyers have pointed out that for Shakspere to have fulfilled this function, he would have been obliged to sign several legal documents, such as briefs, and that the prodigiously paper-chase of two centuries has failed to produce such signatures.

Prof. Fischer concludes his chapter, "all inferences from empirical evidence are probabilistic. It is not, therefore, sufficient to demonstrate that A was possibly the case. A historian must determine, as best he can, the probability of A in relation to the probability of alternatives. In the same fashion he cannot disprove A by demonstrating that not-A was possible, but only by demonstrating that not-A was more probable than A. This is the rule of probability."22

Oxfordians would do well to pay heed to David Backett Fischer's advice to historians. It applies in equal measure to those among our Society's members engaged in scholarly research in either historical or literary aspects of the authorship issue. Our guest at the Ninth Annual Conference, Steven W. May, gave a wise caution to Oxfordians: We should not follow the example of J. T. Looney and satisfy ourselves merely with "parallela" in poetic formulas, imagery, and word choices between Oxford's known writings and Shakespeare's. We must show that these are exclusive to the "two writers" and not commonplaces among a host of other poets, both amateur and professional. Unfortunately, the latter is the case for some of the examples Mr. Looney chose, as Prof. May so ably demonstrated. It is equally unfortunate that most later Oxfordian researchers have followed Looney in this somewhat-less-than-rigorous approach to word study (a fact which makes Helen Cyr's researches in this direction an important step in the Oxfordian theory's progress).

Important also, when we draw conclusions as to de Vere's possible authorship of a whole body of writings heretofore assigned to authors other than Shakspere, is due consideration of the special burden we are under to demonstrate the probability of such assumptions. It is not enough for Oxfordians to ape the Stratfordians' alip-sod methods and, substituting Oxford's name for Shakspere's, simply say, "Oxford could have done or written such-and-such, therefore he did!"

In this connection, we must take into account the natural presumption that in most cases, an author's name on a title page means that he is the author of that work. The anti-stratfordian rebuttal to this presumption in Shakespeare's case is a special one, and it is based not merely on negative evidence, as we are often told by Stratfordians: 1) Shakespeare's name appears on the title pages of several works published during the Stratford man's lifetime that few scholars believe are of his authorship. 2) No one has succeeded in establishing -- on any contemporary evidence -- that the "William Shakspere" of the title pages is identical with William Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon. 3) No one has succeeded in showing how Shakspere of Stratford acquired the detailed knowledge of a host of arts and sciences displayed in the poems and plays. 4) No one has succeeded in showing how Shakspere of Stratford gained access to the private lives of court personages, got his topographical knowledge of Italy, or acquired the ability to read numerous untranslated sources in a variety of ancient and modern languages. 5) No one has been able to explain Shakspere's total lack of interest in the publication of "his" plays, or of "his" poems (except Venus and Lucrece, assuming that he wrote them), nor his complacent
submission to the wholesale piracies and botched edition of "his" works. 6) Important people who should have been witnesses to Shakespeare's activities are silent during his lifetime (Henslowe, Alleyn, Nashe, Spenser, Bacon, Flesham, Jonson himself, etc.) 7) Shakespear himself is silent on any "literary activities," even in his Last Will and Testament. 8) Indeed, the only clear-cut identification of the Stratford man with the authorship is made seven years after his death, in the First Folio. 9) The First Folio testimony is inconsistent with all the other evidence before us, leading anti-Stratfordians to suspect that document's trustworthiness. And 10), if a nobleman had written these works (is possibility deduced from the internal evidence of the plays themselves), he would have been unable -- owing to the social opprobrium afforded poets and playwrights of the nobility -- to publish them under his own name, and would have been obliged, therefore, to either use a nom de plume or to work out an agreement with someone to loan his name for this purpose.

With this last hypothesis, all of the items enumerated are consistent, which is not, of course, to argue its certainty, but goes a long way to establishing its probability -- at least as against the Stratfordian inference that Shakespear "somehow" overcame these objections, "because he was a genius!"

NOTES
2. Ibid., pp. 40 - 63.
3. Ibid., p. 43.
4. Ibid., p. 44.
8. Fischer, p. 47.
11. Ibid., p. 63.
12. Ibid., p. 49.
15. Fischer, p. 512.
16. Ibid., p. 52.
18. The Shakespeare Newsletter, op. cit., p. 22.
20. Evans & Levin, op. cit., p. 43.
22. Ibid., p. 63.

A CALL FOR ACTION

by Harold W. Patience

1. Enter Mr. Calvin Hoffmann (again!)

I was recently (December, 1984) astonished to find myself witnessing on television not only an interview with Calvin Hoffman but yet another excavation of the Walingham tombs. This search for the Shakespeare manuscripts was a further attempt by the author of The Murder of the Man Who Was Shakespeare (1955) to prove his theory that
the Deptford murder was faked and Christopher Marlowe lived on to produce the "Shakespearean" works. I saw with amusement that the floor of the church had been extensively excavated and sophisticated electronic searching devices were being eagerly inserted into ancient coffins. We observed Mr. Hoffmann patiently awaiting the result of this upheaval, only to have his hopes dashed yet again.

As an Oxfordian by choice I must admit that at first sight I viewed this activity with cynical amusement. Gradually, however, my feelings became tempered with a degree of envy and admiration for Mr. Hoffmann's splendid initiative. His ability to "get things done" is impressive, even though the results are (to him, I might add) disappointing. The object of these comments is to record my hope that the Society will endeavour to emulate Mr. Hoffmann's praiseworthy efforts. In doing so, it must reject all warnings against the wisdom of such enterprises. It must fight the expected obstruction of vested interests in a determined effort to settle once and for all the question of the possible survival of Shakespearean manuscripts.

But where to concentrate operations? For many years I have held a personal belief that the monument in Stratford-upon-Avon church, being the lynchpin of orthodox entrenchment, would be the obvious place for concealment. Remove everything in the town which appears to offer some connection between its famous native-born businessman and the immortal works (but which, in reality, do no such thing) and we find that the monument alone has a positive Shakespeare connection. As Leonard Digges puts it in the prefatory matter to the First Folio:

...when that stone is rent,
And Time dissolves thy Stratford Monument,
Here we alive shall view thee still...

I would not, of course, imagine that the complete set of Shakespeare's works were ever concealed within this mysterious edifice; but that something was placed "within this Monument" I firmly believe.

The important question to be asked here is this: Can we be sure that the monumental structure (as apart from the bust) is the original edifice? In her book Shakespeare's Environment (1918) Mrs. C. C. Stopee quoted the following report from the Stratford archives:

25th November, 1748: A meeting convened in Stratford of those persons who contributed for the repairing of Shakespeare's monument, in order to resolve upon a proper method of repairing and beautifying the monument aforesaid.
10th December, 1748: The report of the second meeting concerned suitable payment for the work involved and "of what materials to repair the monument."

"Before the middle of the 18th century," wrote Mrs. Stopee, we know that the tomb (sic) was 'very much decayed.' Mr. John Ward, the grandfather of Mrs. Siddons, was in Stratford in 1746, and gave the proceeds of a representation of Othello in the Town Hall on 8th September towards the restoration of Shakespeare's tomb (sic). Orders were given to 'beautify' as well as to repair it. We are left altogether in the dark as to the degree of decay and the amount of reconstruction, but that it was considerable seems evident. By 1749 the repairs were completed and the colors re-
The air of ambiguity exuded by the reports, and the comments of Mrs. Stopes, is an annoyance. Is there not a strong possibility that the reported repair work referred only to the bust? Certainly Mrs. Stopes' remark to the effect that the colors were re-painted would seem to apply to the bust, not to the superstructure or pilaster. As part of a monument high up on the wall of a church are pillars of marble and ornamenta of alabaster likely to decay? I personally doubt it, and in support of my argument I example the tomb of the 15th Earl of Oxford in Castle Hedingham church which, although much older than the Stratford monument, still presents to us its pristine condition. There is surely no reason to doubt that the stone superstructure of the Stratford Monument we see today (referred to by Mr. J. Quincy Adams as a 'slab' and by Mr. Craig Huston as a 'stone box') is not original. This being so, and returning to the possibility that manuscripts were placed therein, I refer readers to an excellent outline of the theory in the Appendix of Charlton Ogburn's new book, The Mysterious William Shakespeare - The Myth and the Reality.

2. The Venetian Archives

On 27th and 28th December, 1984, a two-part program entitled Vidal in Venice was shown on British television. The presenter was the writer Gore Vidal, who recently provided the commentary on a Shakespeare Sonnet in that particular TV series. After taking us on a gondola trip around the canals of this unique city Mr. Vidal looked at Venice in the pleasure-loving 18th-century and the 'romantic' 19th-century. Looking at the city today he saw it as "a sort of Disneyland filled with tourists who came to see themselves reflected."

Of greater interest to me, as an Oxfordian, were the sequences in which Mr. Vidal explored the massive libraries of the Doge's Palace and the State Archives of Venice. Here, in countless shelves and on benches, the centuries have preserved a veritable feast for the historical researcher. Also in perfect condition are the code-books and sophisticated coding devices employed by the Secret Service of the Venetian State at the height of its power and glory during the 16th-century. It seems that the Doge and his government (headed by the 'Council of Ten') went to extraordinary length to keep themselves well informed as to events in other European states. Huge volumes, labelled France, England, etc., offer enormous possibilities for Shakespearean research.

Surely, one wistfully hopes, there must exist somewhere in these vast stacks of volumes a few overlooked paragraphs which would shed new light on the Shakespeare Mystery? Perhaps, lying dormant for centuries in that huge book at home? Among those massed volumes what revelations concerning the machinations of state policy, what information concerning Queen Elizabeth's private life, reports and rumors of political scandals, details of the secret workings of the Cecil administration, etc., await discovery?

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The title of this issue's "sermon" is prompted by two articles in the last two years appearing in The Shakespeare Newsletter. The first of these, "Shakespeare's Signatures (?) Seven, Eight, and Nine!" (Summer 1984, xxxiv: 2, No. 182), reported on the latest theories of Prof. W. Nicholas Knight of the University of Missouri-Rolla, famous for the yet-unproven notion that Shakespeare's signature appears on the title page of the Folger Library's copy of William Lambarde's 1568 Archaionomia.

Both at the time of his 1971 announcement and in his 1973 book-length amplification of his theory (Shakespeare's Hidden Life: Shakespeare at the law, 1585 - 1595), Prof. Knight seemed undaunted by criticism that neither the Shakespeare plays' display of their author's lawyerly expertise nor the absence of any document with the Stratford man's signature (either as Knight imagined "move-rmunt" or as "clerk in a law office" fancied by other Stratfordians) could account for Shakespeare's autograph in such an unlikely place. It is sufficient to note that the professor's conjecture has not received wide acceptance, except from the occasionally credulous Samuel Schoenbaum, who conceded, nevertheless, that "it is premature, to say the least, to classify it as the poet's [sic] seventh signature."

And now, Prof. Knight is back with a claim of two more of the "poet's" signatures, this time in two copies of the same book: John Florio's 1603 Englishing of Montaigne's Essays. Let us skip the professor's reasoning on his latest detection, and deal with his conclusion, as described in the SNL article, "... the general similarity of the Montaigne signatures to each other, the similarity of letters of them to the authenticated signatures, the presence of the Charles [Barnard] name, and Shakespeare's known use of Montaigne for Gonzalo's idea of a commonwealth is proof enough to call these signatures number eight and nine in Shakespeare's own hand."

It is fortunate, we suppose, for depositors everywhere to be grateful that Prof. Knight is not an officer in a bank! He seems to have fallen victim here to the reversible reference fallacy described in our last Newsletter: Knight has taken all the techniques a forger would use to improve the appearance of his handiwork — the similarity of letters to authentic signatures, the "boring up" on some relevant genealogy, the selection of an old copy of a book well known as a source for Shakespeare's plays — and from these has inferred a case for authenticity!

The article's author, SNL editor Louis Marder, rightly wonders, "Why Shakespeare would have had two copies of the Essaye is as hard to conceive as Shakespeare putting his name in a copy of Lambarde's Archaionomia." On the assumption of forgery, however, the explanation is simple. The culprit thought to get richer by peddling the same fraud to two dupes rather than to just one. (Since that article was published, the Fall 1985 SNL issue states that Knight apparently "didn't know of another copy of the Montaigne signature which appeared in a copy of Rastell's Statutes — which makes all three of them apparent forgeries.")
But why else should we suspect forgery in these Montaigne *Essays* signatures? In 1978, the Shakespeare Oxford Society engaged Dr. Wilson Harrison, former document examiner for Scotland Yard and author of two definitive books on forgery detection, to investigate the six Shakspere signatures to determine if any of them (or parts of them) could be by other hands. Dr. Harrison's value as an investigator is enhanced, not only by his formidable credentials, but by the fact that he was not informed by the Society of its stand on the authorship issue and by his own disinterest in the outcome of his investigation. His findings were published in the Society's *Newsletter* and summarized in Charlton Ogburn's new book. Dr. Harrison's study is the closest look these signatures have had in modern times.

While he does not deal with any of the questionable signatures under discussion, Dr. Harrison's remarks on "the circumstances of the signing" are to the point in this regard, "The hand of the most accomplished penman cannot be expected to function with the precision of a machine. Even when written under ideal conditions, critical examination will reveal differences in successively written signatures. If, whilst not identical, [two such successive signatures] are found to be uncannily alike, the near certainty that tracing is involved must never be far from the mind of the examiner."

**Did Shakspere Write His Own Will?**

In *The Shakespeare Newsletter* 's Fall 1985 issue (xxxv: 3, No. 187, p. 25), the lead article describes "Remarkable Thoughts on Shakespeare's Life and Handwriting." Remarkable indeed (but not altogether novel) are the theories of Charles Hamilton contained in his book, *In Search of Shakspere: A Reconnaissance into the Poet's Life and Handwriting.* Dr. Warden seems impressed by Mr. Hamilton's credentials as a "handwriting expert," and is thus tempted to a "wanning incredulity" on the author's contentions that "Shakspere" wrote his own will, the three disputed pages of *Sir Thomas More*, the applications for the family coat-of-arms, a page of the Northumberland manuscript, annotations in Bacon's essays, the Welcombe enclosure documents, enotions in the 1587 Holinshed, end twenty-three previously unrecognized signatures!

As mentioned, a lot of this is not new. The theories that Shakspere wrote his own will, the three-page Addition of *Sir Thomas More*, end the cover page of the Northumberland Manuscript were each formidably refuted over sixty years ago by Sir George Greenwood. (Is Charles Hamilton — let alone most Stratfordian handwriting theorists — even acquainted with Sir George's impressive evidence?) Because Wilson Harrison made use of Samuel Schoenbaum's *William Shakspere: A Documentary Life* (Oxford Presse, 1975) in his investigations for the Shakespeare Oxford Society, he looked into the first two of these hypotheses, which were discussed by Schoenbaum. And upon these two supposed identifications favored by Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Harrison stands squarely opposed! "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?" The reasoning for choosing W. Harrison is compelling: 1) Dr. Harrison had no vested interest in the outcome of his examination, and 2) Mr. Hamilton (like W. Nicholas Knight) does. So, peace Dr. Warden, the latter's claims should be taken cum grano salis.

And what does Dr. Harrison have to say about the *Sir Thomas More* fragment? "If this were written by W.S.," he writes, then at that time [c. 1601] he was at least a decade younger than when he wrote the signatures at the end of his life, and, presumably still pursuing an active career in London. In my opinion, six sometimes fragmentary signatures written by an ailing man consti-
tute a poor basis on which to reach any definite conclusion as to authorship. 7
Two years later, Dr. Harrison forwarded to the Society a clipping from the Lon-
don Times about yet another fond Stratfordian handwriting "discovery": A copy
of a letter which Eric Sams believed was "written by Shakespeare" for the Earl
of Southampton in 1592, "acting, at the age of 26, as humble secretary" to the
aforesaid earl. 8 Because Sams's theory was based on the supposed "similar-
ty" of this letter with the Sir Thomas More fragment, Dr. Harrison wrote in his
covering letter (April 25, 1981) that even if common authorship of the two
specimens could be proved, this would not prove Shakespeare's hand in the letter,
inasmuch as the identification of the More lines "with the genuine writing in
the form of signatures rests on very shaky ground indeed." Further, he writes,
"I have never been impressed by long lists of 'similarities' when comparing two
writings for common authorship. In my opinion, a single consistent significant
characteristic not capable of reasonable explanation can outweigh a thousand
most obvious 'similarities'. It is neglect of this overriding principle which
has led to the perpetration of most of the errors which have given handwriting
investigation a bad name." [emphasis ours] The views Dr. Harrison states, of
course, would apply with equal force to the "similarities" alleged by Professor
Knight in the suspect Florio's Montaigne signatures.

But this document examiner was even more specific in rejecting John Pym
Yeatsman's 1901 theory that Shakespeare wrote the text of the will in addition to
signing it on its three pages. For his report, Dr. Harrison had made a study
both of the quill pen and of the Secretary Hand Shakespeare used. He found that
Shakespeare's handwriting in all of his signatures showed a smaller ratio between
tall and short letters than that which was typical in contemporary writings using
the Secretary Hand. This difference of ratio he found characteristic of the
will text:

I suggest that you examine the name "Shakespeare" at the top of p.1 of
the Will... Note the ratio of this writing and you will find that, like
the text of the Will, that handwriting has the ratio characteristic of
the Secretary Hand with its wide divergence between the heights of the
tall and short letters, a feature foreign to the handwriting of both of
the legible signatures on the Will... There is no doubt that anyone with
perseverance and application can excavate from this rather voluminous
text fragments...which uncannily match similar chunks...of the two leg-
ible signatures but I venture to suggest that something much the same
could be accomplished by selecting for study similar quantities of more
or less contemporary handwriting which only came into existence after
the death of William Shakespeare [i.e., Shakespeare]. Similar tricks are
in use today when unscrupulous self-styled "handwriting experts" attempt
to demonstrate that palpable forgeries might well be genuine signatures.9

Another reason for rejecting Yeatsman's theory, according to Dr. Harrison,
is that, "One has only to look at the regular rhythms" in the will text's hand-
writing "to be sure that this was never the work of an ailing man who, within
a short space of time was to prove practically unable to write a consistent
signature at the foot of those pages."10

Did Shakespeare Write "By me William"?

In a recent letter to the New York Times Book Review,11 Robert Giroux
claimed that the signature on the third page of Shakespeare's will (which, in
common with other Stratfordians, he mistakenly reads as "By me William Shake-
speare" — in the fees of Edmund Malone's persuasive arguments for a reading
of "Shakespeare" is "beautifully written." This allegation is made, of
course, to counter the negative view of these signatures as "scrawls" held by
many observers (not all of them anti-Stratfordians) — specimens which have
led at least one impartial American document examiner to conclude that the
person wielding the pen was "unaccustomed to writing".13

This forensic specialist, Joseph English, Lecturer in Law at Georgetown
University, was not alone in his opinion that the "By me William" portion of
Mr. Giroux's "beautifully written" signature was not penned by the same hand
that wrote either the "Shakespeare" which follows or the other legible signa-
ture which follows on the will's second page. Sir George Greenwood, for one,
expressed "entire confidence" that this part was "not written by the testator,
but by some law clerk or scrivener on his behalf."14 Three factors struck Sir
George's eye: 1) The surname following is not horizontally aligned, but runs
slightly uphill. 2) The quality of penmanship shown in the three words is
higher than that of the surname and that of any of the other signatures. 3)
The diagonal upstroke initiating the "m" of "me" and the "W" of "William" is
a feature not found in any other of the Stratford man's signatures! [See Fig. 1.]

Figure 1

Here, however, we come across a difference of opinion from that of our So-
ciety's British document examiner, Wilson Harrison. It must be remembered
that Dr. Harrison was under a handicap of the Society's own making. In order
not to prejudice our examiner's investigation of the signatures, we deliber-
etely avoided informing him of either the Society's position on the author-
ship or any other theories about these signatures, including the findings of
our American investigator, Joseph English. As mentioned above, Dr. Harrison
on his own sought out Samuel Schoenbaum's book of documents as a guide, and
this book does not deal with Greenwood's objections, nor for that matter with
any theory about the authorship of "By me William" in the third page signa-
ture.

Further, in his report Dr. Harrison contended that his practice with the
quill pen convinced him that "William" was easier to write than the surname
—simply because of the greater number of vertical letters in the first name
versus the number of horizontal strokes required for "Shakespeare." And he
pointed to a feature common to those signatures where space allowed Shakepere
to be more expensive (not the case with the Blackfriars Gatehouse signatures,
confined to the borders of a seal): a wide space between fore- and surname,
found in the third page signature as well.

When we questioned Dr. Harrison as to whether the three words could have been
written by another hand, he replied,
If W.S. was "assisted" by a bystander to sign his will, I find it hard to believe that the assistant wrote "by me William" end then handed the document over to a sick man to complete and having done so, urged the sick man to attempt to put two extra complete signatures on the other two pages.\(^{15}\)

But what if Shakspere had not signed the last page first? Sir George Greenwood — not only a lawyer himself and a Member of Parliament, but one whose interest in Shakspere led him to a study of Elizabethan law — maintains,

For the Will, it must be remembered, was written on three loose sheets, and the precepts is, and I believe always has been, that in such cases, the testator before executing his will first reads, or has read to him by his solicitor, the first sheet thereof, which he than signs. Thereupon he reads, or has read to him, the second page, and then signs that; and, lastly, he puts his signature to the third sheet, whereupon, in Shakspere's time, witness to the "publishing" of the will frequently added their signatures...\(^{16}\)

If Greenwood is right, his own scenario would have the ailing testator successfully completing the signatures on pages one and two, and then faltering, unable to do more than scrawl a surname after the words drawn up by the "scrivener."

Who was this scrivener? Dr. Harrison is emphatic on who it was not:

...the William was not written by the person who drafted the Will, for at the outset, this person whoever he was, wrote the name of the testator as any attorney was wont to do when drafting a will, so that direct comparison is possible.\(^{17}\)

But Sir George does not contend it was the will's draftsman. He offers his own "guess" as to the candidate: Let "the reader who cares to do so," he writes,

refer to "Facsimiles of Notices of Shakespeare referring to the Enclosure projects of 1614," as shown in Halliwell-Phillipps's Outlines (6th edn., vol. 1, p. 230 [See Fig. 2]), which Notices were drawn up, ee Sir Sidney Lee tells us (Life of Shakspere, p. 466, n.2, and p. 477, n.2), by Thomas Greene, and particularly note the remarkable long "upstrokes" which there appear, some of them with something very like the "needle's eye," only the eye appears to be closed in the facsimiles. A friend has suggested to me that this Thomas Greene may have written the words, "By me William." Thos. Thomas Greene, who used to speak of "my own Shakspere," and seems to have been for a time resident at New Place, was "a cultivated lawyer," says Sir Sidney Lee, "who had acted as solicitor for the Corporation, and had been appointed the first Town Clerk" of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1610 — an office which had been created by James I's new charter. He was evidently on terms of close intimacy with Shakspere.\(^{18}\)

Certainly, the "long 'upstrokes'" noted by Greenwood appear with far greater frequency in the facsimile than they do in any of the Shaksperean signatures except for the one under discussion. Could these upstrokes possibly constitute the "single consistent significant characteristic not capable of reasonable explanation" to which Wilson Harrison alludes in his 1931 letter?
Facsimiles of Notices of Shakespeare referring to the Enclosure projects of 1614.

Figure 2

Dr. Harrison's findings with respect to the wide spacing found between the first and last names would of course have no application here. Shakespeare could be presumed to have placed his surname in the same relationship to his forename no matter who had penned the latter. (The reader should compare also the letters "ill" in the facsimile's fourth line with the same letters in Fig. 1's "William").

Now, this information was not available to us, nor to Dr. Harrison at the time he made his investigation. Whether this is evidence sufficient to change his opinion we have no way of knowing, inasmuch as Dr. Harrison (who now lives in retirement with his document examiner daughter, Elizabeth, in Cardiff, Wales) has indicated to us his reluctance to undertake further examinations into "palaeography."

Members of our Society should also be prepared for the possibility that Mr. Charles Hamilton may use the similarities noted by Greenwood to support his argument that "the post" wrote these enclosure documents himself! We have not read Mr. Hamilton's book at the time this Newsletter has gone to press. But if this does indeed form a part of his theory, he would have some considerable explaining to do as to why the two upstrokes in the first part of the third page will signature find no counterpart in the other two page's signatures. Nor, for that matter, does this feature appear on any other "W" of the six canonical signatures, including the Blackfriars Gatehouse documents, executed only one year before the 1614 enclosure notices.
NOTES


8. "Just another begging letter? Or has the Bard a hand in it?" by Elizabeth Grice. The Sunday Times, April 19, 1981. (See also, "The Latest Shakespearean Mare's Nest: Southampton's 'Secretary'," by Gordon C. Cyr. The Shakespeare Newsletter, February 1981, xxxi: 1, No. 168.)
10. Ibid., p. 10.
13. "If Invited to Write..." op. cit., pp. 5 - 6.
15. Harrison letter, op. cit.

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PROFESSOR MAY ON OXFORD'S ANNUITY

A RESPONSE BY CHARLTON OGBURN

In an article in the Shakespeare Oxford Society Newsletter (Fall 1985), entitled "Lord Oxford Sues for a Patent of Monopoly," Prof. Steven W. May discounts the importance of the annuity of £1000 granted the Earl of Oxford by Queen Elizabeth and confirmed by King James. To this end, he quotes William Harrison, writing in 1587 in his Description of England, as stating that "no man is commonly created baron except he may dispense of yearly revenue £1000." If this information is supported by other sources, my guess would be that it signifies a disinclination on Elizabeth's part to create any barons.

A thousand pounds as an annual income was four centuries ago an immense amount. As B.M. Ward pointed out, there was no comparable case of Elizabeth granting such a sum as an annuity to one of her subjects. That its magnitude was extraordinary was made clear by King James when in 1603 Lord Sheffield protested that a like amount paid him annually as Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire and President of the North was inadequate. The King told him that "never greater gift of that nature was given in England. Great Oxford when his estates was whole ruined got no more of the late Queen." The 16th Earl, Ward found, was granted only £300.
Why, then, was 'Great Oxford' supported by the throne with such unparalleled generosity when, unlike Lord Shaftesbury, for example, he held no public office apart from his membership in the Privy Council? Why did he seek to supplement his income by obtaining a state trading monopoly? We may set aside Prof. May's argument that the thousand pounds a year was so inconsiderable it was 'small wonder' he sought more. Oxford was not a conspicuous figure at Court or in any other expensive society during the eighteen years of the annuity. His way of life was not such to attract attention; he could have put on no great show.

Our answer is, of course, that he was supporting other writers and was directing the affairs of the acting company which was producing the plays he was writing, a kind of Royal Shakespeare Theatre—the Lord Chamberlain's men. We recall that the Reverend John Ward at the outset of his services in Stratford-upon-Avon entered in his diary some notes about Shakespeare, one of which was that he 'supplied the stage with 2 plays every year, and for that had an allowance so large that he spent at the rate of 1000 £ a year, as I have heard' (heard it, surely, before he came to Stratford).* We leave it to orthodoxy to explain why a circumstance so extraordinary and so seemingly highly unlikely should have been reported if it was not in fact the case, and if it was in fact the case, who could the Shakespeare who wrote for the stage and received an allowance of £1000 a year have been if not Lord Oxford?

*Editor's note: Most Stratfordians seem agreed that this thousand pound allowance could not have been awarded to the Stratford man; e.g., 'Ward's estimate of Shakespeare's income must be greatly exaggerated. His entire cash estate was not more than £350.' The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare, ed. by Oscar James Campbell and Edward G. Quinn. Crowell, 1966, p. 936.

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THE CHARACTER OF KENT IN KING LEAR

By Donald La Greca

While reading E. K. Turner Clark's analysis of King Lear, in her Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays, I was struck by the polarity of our interpretations of this supreme drama. Where Clark finds historical and political allusions (especially for the years 1589-90), I find personal ones. For me Lear is a play of intense, personal tragedy. With this in mind I strongly disagree with her statement, 'I consider Kent represents Drak.' (P. 369 n.) Therefore I sought another contemporary of Oxford's who would fulfill the characteristics and qualities of the Earl of Kent. In looking for this prototype, I drew upon J. Thomas Loosely's methodology. (See "Shakespeare" Identified, P. 80.) Simply stated my task was to examine the text of Lear, to draw from it a definite conception of the character and qualities of the Earl of Kent, and then look for a man who fits that description. Once such a man was found it was necessary to connect him with the character of Kent and with the author. Eventually I found that my conception of Kent had been accurately described by S.T. Coleridge.

Kent is, perhaps, the nearest to perfect goodness in all Shakespeare's characters, and yet the most individualized. There is an extraordinary
charm in his bluntness, which is that only of a nobleman arising from a contempt of overstrained courtesy, and combined with easy placability where goodness of heart is apparent. His passionate affection for, and fidelity to Lear act on our feelings in Lear's own favor. virtue itself seems to be in company with him. (Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Vol. IV, edited by W.C.T. Shedd, Harper and Bros., New York: 1884, pp. 138 – 39.)

The first two requirements of Looney'a blueprint had been completed. I had read and examined the text of Lear, and with the aid of Coleridge, I had outlined the qualities of Kent. It was now necessary to find the man. He must be blunt but charming; noble and courteous, but not overbearing in rank or slavish to authority. He must be loyal to his country, his monarch, and his friends. He must be some one worthy to lead men; even nations. (It must be remembered that Kent is one of the triumvirate who, it is implied at the close of the play, will lead England's destinies.) He must be some one who had won the highest respect and admiration of Oxford; the man chosen to be old King Lear's personal champion (and, in effect Oxford's also?) And, in keeping with my hypothesis on the nature of the play, he almost surely must be a man with whom Oxford was personally acquainted, on a familiar, even intimate basis.

I believe that man to have been Peregrine Bertie, the 12th Lord Willoughby de Eresby. Lord Willoughby, as he is generally known, is familiar to Oxfordians through the writings of Eva Turner Clark and Bronson Feldman. They convincingly argued him to be the prototype of Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew.

Kent holds our attention with his passionate plea for Lear to reverse his judgment on Cordelia (Act 1, Scene 1). His declaration to Lear, "To plainness of honor's bound, When majesty stoops to folly," gives voice to Willoughby's point of view. While Commander of the English forces in the Lowlands (December 1589 – March 1589), he was rebuked by the Queen for not consulting her regarding an appointment of the Captain of the Garrison at Bergen. Willoughby wrote back, "How unfit it is for Prince (whose cares are infinite) to be encumbered with impertinent cause." (Three Generations of a Loyal House, by Lady Cecilia Goff. Printed privately under the care of the Rampant Lion Press, London: 1957, p. 35.)

In the same scene, Kent tells Lear,

My life I never held but as a pawn,
To wags against thine enemy
Nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

In September 1589, the Queen placed Willoughby in command of the English troops sent to aid the Protestant cause of Henry of Navarre. Elizabeth wrote to Henry describing her commander,

...His quality and the place he holde about me are such that it is not customary to permit him to be absent from me; ... you will never have cause to doubt his boldness in your service, for he has given too frequent proofs that he regarde no peril, be it what it may... (Goff, p. 55.)

Willoughby's qualities of leadership and their recognition by his superiors and peers are shown not only by his commands in the Lowlands and France, but
also by the planned offensive against the Spanish mainland following the de-
feat of the Armada. Francis Drake and Sir John Norris, who commanded the fleet
and troops respectively in this endeavor, "were very anxious that he (Willough-
by) should be in supreme command of the expedition." (Goff, p. 47.) However,
for health reasons, Willoughby declined.

Thus far, Willoughby fulfills Kent in bluntness, loyalty to crown and coun-
try, and the soldierly skills and qualities of leadership of men.

Kent's other outstanding quality is his loyalty to those who are in disfa-
vor with those who wield power. As Kent stood by Cordelia against Lear, and
as he stood by Lear against Cornwall, Regan, and Goneril, so did Willoughby
honor his friendship to those who were in opposition to state power. From his
days as a youth in Burleigh's household he had a deep devotion to the ill-fat-
ed Earl of Essex whom he described "as a man I love and honor above all men."  
(Goff, p. 21.) Willoughby also numbered among his friends Sir Drew Drury, the
leader of the Puritan Party, and the scrivener John Stubbe, whom Willoughby
included as a member of his household until Stubbe's death in 1591.  (Goff, p.
22.) Readers of Bronson Feldman's Growners Quest (12 - IV - 80) will recall
Stubbe as the Puritan who was prosecuted for writing a book, in August 1579,
against the Queen's proposed marriage to the French Catholic Dukes of Alencon.
Feldman writes, "Hatton dug out... a decree of the Catholic despot Mary Tudor
and her consort Philip the Speniard ordering the beating of any writer and
printer of bookes they regarded as demeaning majesty. John Stubbe and his print-
er William Page lost their right hands under cleavers commanded by Kit Hatton."

The mention of Hatton leads to another aspect of Kent's character. Kent
shows a particular hostility to Goneril's retainer Oswald. Coleridge says,
"The Steward should be placed in exact antithesis to Kent, as the only charac-
ter of utter irredeemable baseness in Shakespeare." (Complete Works, p. 139.)
More than that, Oswald can be seen as a caricature of Sir Christopher.

Willoughby can also be placed in exact antithesis to the Queen's dancing
Chancellor. We find the following quotation from Sir Robert Naunton's Frag-
ments Regalia quoted in B.N. Ward's The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford:

My Lord Willoughby was one of the Queen's best swordsmen... I have heard
it spoken that had he not slighted the Court, but applied himself to the
Queen, he might have enjoyed a plentiful portion of her grace; and it
was his saying -- and it did him no good -- that he was none of the Rept-
tilia: intimating that he could not creep on the ground, and that the
Court was not his element. For, indeed, as he was a great soldier so
he was of amiable magnanimity, and could not brook the obsequiousness
and assiduity of the Court. (p. 151.)

Let us now consider some smaller points of Kent's character. Act III, Scene
iv finds Lear determined to "erraign" his daughters. He drafts Kent to be "on
the commission." Shortly after Willoughby arrived in England from his command
in the Lowlands, "he was one of the commissioners appointed to try Philip How-
ard, Earl of Arundel, for treason." ("Peregrins Bertie," Dictionary of National
Biography, p. 405.)

When Lear first comes upon the disguised Kent (Act I, Scenes iv) he asks him,
"What dost thou profess?" Kent replies, "I do profess to be no less than I
seem; ... and to eat no fish." This last expression was a popular phrase to
signify one's loyalty to the government and the Protestant faith. Willoughby
was reared in that faith. His mother, Katherine, Duchess of Suffolk, was an
ardent Protestant. Willoughby was no less, as evidenced by his military serv-
ice to Protestant causee and his friendship with prominent Protestants. In
tthe same conversation Kent professes himself to be "as poor as the King."
Willoughby's tour of duty in the Lowlands had made him a poor man. By 1589
he was deeply in debt. In order to pay his creditors he sold his timber and
his stocks and mortgaged his estates in Norfolk. (Goff, p. 49.) Six years
later (1595) he finally sold his lands. (Goff, p. 71 - 72.) No doubt Oxford
felt a sympathy for Willoughby's financial difficulties; he too had become im-
poverished and had been forced to sell his lands.
Kent's opposition to a despotic government shows itself when he joins the
French invasion force camped near Dover. (Act IV, scenes iii and vi.) This
too has a parallel in Willoughby's career. While not joining England's en-
emies, Willoughby was greatly embittered at not being repaid the monies he had
spent in the Queen's behalf in the Lowlands. On August 28, 1596, he wrote the
Earl of Essex asking him to intervene with the Queen to secure for him the
Governorship of Berwick-on-Tweed. Willoughby wrote, "If your Lordship cannot
prevail I shall a thousand times wish rather to have buried my bones in Cad-
die Mallis (a stretch of land near Cadiz) than return to England so ill-re-
garded." (Goff, p. 74.) His feelings are more strongly put by Sir John Buck,
his longtime friend, who writes to Willoughby, "You write that England hath no
need of the good man at Grimsthorpe (Willoughby's estate in Lincolnshire) nor
he of it." (Goff, p. 75.)

Earlier in the essay I had included as a criterion for the prototype of
Kent that this man must be familiar to and respected by the dramatist. Wil-
lowthby againis suits the standard. He was the brother-in-law of Oxford, mar-
rried to his sister Mary. From at least 1582, when Oxford broke with the Cath-
olic party, he and Willoughby were on the best of terms. (Ward, p. 154.) As
for Oxford's respect for Willoughby, one has only to look at the great lord's
military deeds. He served as Ambassador to Denmark, his military victory over
the Duke of Parma (against superior forces) consolidated the English defeat of
the Armada; his service to Henry of Navarre, and his loyalty to Essex and Stubbs,
all must have won Oxford's deep admiration and affection. Oxford's feeling re-
lected the universal esteem in which Willoughby was held. "Willoughby's val-
our, ... excited more admiration on the part of his contemporaries than that of
almost any other soldier of the age." ("Peregrine Bertie," Dictionary of Na-
tional Biography, II, p. 406.)

Oxford could have had good reason for giving this noble character the title
Earl of Kent. A brief look at the possible source of Lear might shed some ad-
ditional light on this problem. The New Variorum Edition of King Lear (edit-
ed by H.H. Furness) claims that the "direct source" for Lear was "the ante-
Shakespearean drama of the Chronicle History of King Lear." (p. 383.) While
no date or author is given for this older work, it "was dramatized as early as
1593 - 94." (Variorum, p. 383.) During these years Oxford was in retirement.
It is possible that the Chronicle History was an earlier, less refined forerun-
er of King Lear. The two plays have a noticeable similarity. The "blunt and
faithful counselor and friend" of King Lear is named Perillus. (Variorum, p.
401.) The blunt and faithful Willoughby was baptised Peregrine. The first
two syllables of these names are nearly identical in spelling, and are alike
phonetically. If Oxford was the unknown author of Lear, he may have already
had Willoughby in mind.

This change in name from Perillus to Kent could have been a part of Oxford's
revision. This, I believe to have taken place sometime after Willoughby's
death, June 25, 1601. Kent's declaration that, "I have years on my back forty-
eight ..." (Act I, scene iv) could be a clue to a more definite date. Wil-
loughby was born October 12, 1555. If Oxford reviewed the older Lear sometime after the autumn of 1603, he could have included that line based on how old Willoughby would have been had he lived. It is possible that Oxford, saddened by the untimely loss of the "Brave Lord Willoughby," re-wrote the role of Perillus as a homage to the man Bronson Feldman described as "... a general more feared by the Spaniards than any English officer of the age." (Secretes of Shakespeare, Lovelore Press, Philadelphia, 1972, p. 14.)

The name of Kent appears three time in the family history and career of Lord Willoughby. It is possible that these episodes suggested the name of Kent to Oxford. Peregrine's father, Richard Bertie, married his mother in 1552. On Good Friday, 1554, he was summoned before Bishop Gardiner, the Catholic lord chancellor. The bishop tried to persuade him to have his Protestant wife convert. In June Bertie sailed from England, but soon returned fearing for Katherine's safety. On January 1, 1555, he managed to get her away from London and a disguise. While awaiting a ship to leave England safely, they hid in Kent. The Berties finally reached Wesel where Peregrine was born and so named in memory of his parents' peregrination. ("Bertie, Richard," Dictionary of National Biography, II, p. 407.) This story was doubtless told to Willoughby by his parents and may well have been known to Oxford.

The second episode concerns Willoughby's sister Susan who married the Earl of Kent, Reginald Grey, who died in 1573. (Ward, p. 154.) The last connection can be found in Willoughby's French campaign. He commanded four thousand English troops in support of Henry of Navarre. The quality of the troops in general was poor, "with the one exception of Captain Lvereon's Kentish regiment" who "when put to the test had risen to the occasion magnificently,..." (Coff, p. 58.)

Perhaps Oxford felt that such an earldom was an honor which Willoughby deserved but had never received. In any case, it seems likely that in the characterization of, first Perillus, and later Kent, Oxford was setting down a character who walked in company with virtue and thus attempted to do justice to Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby.

POSTSCRIPT

[Editor's note: Mr. LaGreca offers the following additional material, which serves to amplify the evidence presented in his article.]

The source for the Stubbe behaving, under orders from Christopher Hatton, is from Sir Harris Nicolae, Memoirs of Sir Christopher Hatton (London, 1847), pp. 140 - 41. Stubbe wrote to Hatton, while in prison and using his left hand (December 1, 1579), of his (Hatton's) "round dealing" and "severe sifting out of that fault that bred me all my woe." Also, Eva M. Tenison, in her Elizabethan England (Vol. VIII, pp. 226 - 27), demonstrates that Stubbe was with Willoughby during his service in the Lowlands. When Stubbe entered his household is not certain, but there is no doubt that he was a trusted member of it.

Finally, regarding the connection of Willoughby to the name of Kent, I again rely upon E.M. Tenison (Vol. VIII, p. 216). She tells us that the family of Peregrine's father, Richard Bertie, claims "ancient Saxon origin" and "appear in the role of Kentish territorial magnates" under the name of DeBerty and De Berghstede. The birthplace of Richard Bertie was "Bertiested (now Bearsted) in Kent."
IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to report the death of CALVIN HOFFMAN on February 4th of this year, of congestive heart failure. The most noted proponent of the theory that Christopher Marlowe was the author of Shakespeare's plays and poems, Mr. Hoffman lectured widely on his hypothesis, and he managed -- for thirty years following the publication of his book, The Murder of the Man Who Was Shakespeare (1955) -- to gain considerable publicity for it. At the Shakespeare Oxford Society 1982 National Conference, Mr. Hoffman was our guest speaker, and he entertained the attending members with his experiences with Stratfordians, as well as offering some valuable advice to doubters of the Stratford mythos.

After the conference, Calvin was a frequent correspondent, and although neither he nor we could convince each other of the merits of our respective candidates, his gentlemanly qualities never failed him in his discourse, and our differences were always aired in an ambience of mutual respect. We were indeed at one, moreover, in our mutual conviction that Stratford-on-Avon's most famous citizen was not a credible author of the great works attributed to him.

A fine gentleman and friend is gone. He will be sorely missed.

We were also given the sad news last January of the death of RHODA HENRY MESSNER, whose regular participant -- with her husband Vern -- at each year's Shakespeare Oxford Society National Conference, until illness in the last three years curtailed her traveling activities. Mrs. Messner's contributions to the Oxfordian cause were many. She is author of a biographical novel on the 17th Earl of Oxford, Absent Thas From Felicity (Corinthian Press, Shaker Heights, Ohio, 1975), reviewed in our S.O.S. Newsletter (Summer 1976, p. 4). Our Society's Newsletter also published -- in three installments -- Mrs. Messner's reply to Dr. Louis Marder's seventeen answers to many questions addressed to him by Baconians (Fall 1976, Winter 1976-77, and Spring 1977).

In notifying us of his wife's passing, Vern Messner made a contribution to the Shakespeare Oxford Society. We are grateful to Vern for his generosity, and we extend to him our deepest sympathy for his loss. It is indeed our loss as well.

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AT LAST! AN EARL OF OXFORD T-SHIRT!

Much to our delight, we happened to notice an ad in a recent New York Review of Books for T-shirts (in all standard sizes), with the de Vere arms and the legend "Oxford, the Earl!" imprinted on them. Headlined "DRIVE YOUR ENGLISH PROFESSOR CRAZY!" the ad urges readers to "sport the arms of the real Shakespear, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford!"

The T-shirts (as well as the advertisement) are the brain-child of Mr. Howard Wamsley of New York City. Mr. Wamsley has corresponded with us, inquiring about the possibility of running the ad in our Society's Newsletter. (The ad had run in several issues of the New York Review of Books.)

We are happy to run Mr. Wamsley's ad in this issue (see p. 14). In the event it does not reproduce too well, we should here inform you that the T-shirts are of the "best quality white" in sizes "S, M, L, XL," and that the cost is $10.00, postage and tax included, money back guarantee. Orders should be addressed to Oxford, the Earl, Box 20395, London Terrace Station, NYC 10011.
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NOTICE

S.O.S. Member Charles Boyle has a need for slides (color or black and white) for his lecture series on the Oxfordian theory. Members who have slides for sale please contact Charles K. Boyle, 208A Washington St., Somerville, MA 02143 (Phone: 617 - 776 - 7782).

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EDITORIAL

WILL "SHALL I DIE?" FLY?

Two important developments have taken place in the scholarly world within the last year and a half. First, the discourse between at least some Stratfordian commentators and the authorship skeptics appears to have taken on a more civil tone (see E.A.J. Honigmann’s "Sweet Swan of Oxford?" New York Review of Books, January 17, 1985, and Richmond Crinkley’s "New Perspective on the Authorship Question," Shakespeare Quarterly, Winter 1985). This is a welcome development, even if these more courteous opponents have not yielded an inch in their position with respect to the authorship of Shakespeare’s works.

And second, the remaining Stratfordians have suspended their attacks on us "anti’s" -- at least for the moment -- in order to do battle with one another: over American scholar Gary Taylor’s "discovery" of a poem he fondly imagines is the genuine article, to wit, a work by William Shakespeare.

Briefly stated, Taylor bases his hypothesis on 1) an attribution of "Shall I Die? Shall I Fly...?" to William Shakespeare appearing in a copy of the Rawlinson Manuscript; 2) his own belief that "none of the other attributions [in Rawlinson] is demonstrably wrong;" and 3) his own word study, in which he finds a preponderantly high number of words and word clusters appearing in the poem were used by Shakespeare in the canon.

(continued on page 4)

FOLGER LIBRARY FORFEITS $10,000 RATHER THAN ASSIST IN TRIAL OF SHAKESPEARE’S IDENTITY

By Charlton Ogburn

The Folger Shakespeare Library has turned down a clear, outright gift of no less than $10,000 rather than use its good offices to bring about a fair trial of the question of Shakespeare’s identity. The decision was made known by Dr. Werner Gundersheimer, Director of the Library, in a letter of last December 18th in reply to a proposal by the Friends of Shakespearean Scholarship that the Library sponsor such a trial. In judging Dr. Gundersheimer’s rejection of the proposal it must be borne in mind that the administrator of the Library under the will of the founder, Henry Clay Folger, is Amherst College and that acquiescence in such a trial by any college or university would be an amazing departure in academia.

It was specifically proposed to Dr. Gundersheimer that the Folger Library publish the terms of the suggested trial in its newsletter. These, as communicated to him, called for the selection of a panel of three persons qualified by intellectual attainment and of unquestioned objectivity to consider the matter of the identity of William Shakespeare and render an opinion. To that end, the Friends of Shakespearean Scholarship would submit to the panel the latest and most comprehensive book dealing with this matter and presenting the case for an alternative to the Stratfordian attribution, The Mysterious William Shakespeare: The Myth and the Reality, by Charlton Ogburn, published in October 1984 by Dodd, Mead & Co. Repre-
sentatives of the orthodox sides would be invited to submit to the panel the work or works that in their opinion most effectively establish their case and the panel would be asked to give an opinion as to which of the opposing presentation seemed to its members the more persuasive.

The proposal further stipulated that the Friends of Shakespearean Scholarship would pledge $16,000 provided the orthodox supporters would pledge an equal amount, the funds to be disbursed as follows:

$10,000 to be donated to the Folger, regardless of the action of the panel.

$2,000 to be paid as an honorarium to each of the three judges.

According to the proposal, these disbursements would be made from the funds pledged by the side against whom the final decision was rendered. Thus, if the panel should decide that the orthodox case is the more persuasive, the $16,000 pledged by the Friends would be immediately payable and the amount pledged by the other side would be canceled. Similarly, if the panel should decide that the Oxfordian case was more persuasive, the $16,000 pledged by the orthodox supporters would be immediately payable and the amount pledged by the other side would be canceled. As the letter to Dr. Gundersheimer went on to say, in either case, those involved on both sides — and the panel of three judges — would have the satisfaction of having been instrumental in making an historic contribution to the cultural interest of the English-speaking world and of having assisted a most worthy institution in the field of Shakespearean letters: the Folger Library.

In making this proposal to Dr. Gundersheimer, the spokesman for the Friends concluded with the statement that "we would appreciate your publishing this proposal in the Folger newsletter in the hope that it will produce a response from those who firmly believe that the orthodox position is the only tenable one."

As a library, the Folger is of course one of the crown jewels of the nation's capital. Every lover of Shakespeare is deeply in its debt. For those engaged in Shakespearean studies and research in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, the resources and facilities it offers, with the helpfulness of its knowledgeable and practiced staff, not to mention its extremely pleasant amenities, are beyond price.

As I had occasion to write Dr. Gundersheimer, "With O.B. Hardison as director, the Folger extended a welcome and gracious hospitality to members of the Shakespeare Oxford Society. An unorthodox book on Shakespeare of which I was co-author was put on sale in the Bookshop, and this happy precedent was followed under your administration with my book The Mysterious William Shakespeare ..., for which I believe you wrote me of my gratitude." Finally, in its Winter 1985 issue, the Shakespeare Quarterly, a publication of the Folger Library, carried an article by the former Director of Programs at the Folger and currently successful theatrical producer, Richmond Crinkley, fully exemplifying Dr. Crinkley’s qualities as gentleman and scholar in its generous treatment of dissenters and in the importance it allowed our contribution to an understanding of Shakespeare. All the same, one reads with incredulity Dr. Gundersheimer’s reply to one of our number who wrote to him expressing surprise at the Folger Library’s "adherence to the attribution of the authorship of the works of William Shakespeare to the man from the Avon." The Director wrote that "The Library takes no institutional view of the matter."

Would that were so! The truth is, of course, that only in the ways cited above has the Folger ever departed from its role as an integral part of the orthodoxy establishment — and there is no sign that Dr. Crinkley’s article, which appeared in the last issue of the Quarterly edited by John Y. Andrews, is to be taken as a precedent. A replica of the Stratford monument, with the repellent bust, dominates its reading-room and the Streatfordian’s coat of arms — the one purchased, according to Ben Jonson, by Sogliardo/Shakespeare “for thirty pound, by this breath” is employed by the Library as its own, appearing as such on the cover of the Quar-
terly. The Folger has been made the vehicle of misrepresentations of the issues of the Shakespeare controversy and of unconscionable slander of the anti-Stratfordians, which no spokesman for the Library has ever, as far as I know, said a word to disavow. The Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare is still, I believe, being sold with an introduction to each of the component volumes in which Louis B. Wright as Director of the Folger Library ridicules the "anti-Shakespearians," as he calls them with characteristic deceit, as naive snobs: "The author of their favorite plays, they imply, must have had a college diploma framed and hung on his study wall like one in their dentist's office." However, we are all familiar with the venom with which Dr. Wright during the twenty years of his incumbency of the directorship sought to poison the minds of the public against the anti-Stratfordians, which, the public must assume, still stands for the Folger's view. The public must assume, too, that Samuel Schoenbaum speaks for the Folger, of which he has been a member of the board, when he dismisses "the thousands of pages" of dissenting opinion he claims to have read as "rubbish, some of it lunatic rubbish." (This is the same uncritical purveyor of Stratfordian dogma of whom Barbara Nowot, Director of Academic Programs at the Folger Library and new editor of the Shakespeare Quarterly, was quoted last January as having declared that "be he single-handedly taught us more about the life of Shakespeare than anybody else who ever lived," which must deepen our regret that it was not about Shakespeare's life that Professor Schoenbaum has taught us.) Suffice it to say for the rest that by the present, at least, no dissent has ever been permitted on the Folger's lecture platform or in the pages of the Shakespeare Quarterly.

It is all too bad.

Incidentally, some members may be interested in knowing that virtually the same proposal for trial of the identity of William Shakespeare that was made to the Folger Library by the Friends of Shakespearean Scholarship and rejected by it was also made several years ago to a senior editor at the National Geographic Society, which would have received $10,500 for its educational and research activities whatever the decision of the panel of judges. The Society in its publications, it was pointed out, had put Shakespeare of Stratford forward categorically as the indisputable Shakespeare and had even given the iniquitous Louis B. Wright (a member of the board of the Society) a platform on which to address himself to the subject; thus it was hard to see that the Society had any legitimate ground on which to shun the challenge: aither it believed what it asserted, or, if it did not, owed the public a reconsideration of its position. Shun the challenge it did, however, and the National Geographic Society is still giving its readers the conventional view of Shakespeare with unequivocal positiveness.

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S.O.S. TENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE TO BE HELD THIS YEAR IN BOSTON

At the request of members who wanted an alternate site to Washington, D.C., so that conferences could be held each year (with odd-numbered year conferences held in Washington), the Shakespeare Oxford Society is making arrangements for our conference this year to be held in Boston, Massachusetts. The conference site will be

Omni Parkar House
60 School Street
Boston MA 02108
(617) 227-8600
TELEX: 710/321-6707
A block of rooms is being held for persons attending the Shakespeare Oxford Society Conference until September 10, 1986.

RATES:

Single  Doubles
$130     $150

Friday, October 10

7:30 PM — Dinner and social time

Saturday, October 11

9:30 AM to 4:00 PM — Meetings

Make your plane now! Details on the conference program, guest speaker, and registration will be announced in a separate mailing before the hotel's September 10 deadline.

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EDITORIAL: WILL "SHALL I DIE?" FLY?

(continued from page 1)

In the December 20, 1985 issue of the (London) Times Literary Supplement, Gary Taylor defends his argument, amplifying on these three points. In the same issue, there appear rebuttals: an article by Robin Robins and letters by Donald W. Foster of Santa Barbara, California, and Pater Beal of London. Unlike many among the un-persuaded Stratfordians, these three writers do not find their objections on the subjective issue of literary quality. They persuasively argue that the attribution to Shakespeare in the Rawlinson Ms. is meaningless when we do not know who made it, when, or on what basis; that, pace Gary Taylor's confident assertion, many attributions in the Rawlinson Ms. are subject to doubt (Prof. Steven W. May also made this point in connection with Rawlinson attributions to the Earl of Oxford, when Prof. May was guest at our S.O.S. Conference last year); and that some of Taylor's word findings are hardly unique to Shakespeare, being found in Spenser as well as in the verse of other contemporaneous poets. Some of these word usages that do have a "Shakespearean" ring to them, these critics point out, could be accounted for on the grounds of imitation, or borrowing, especially if the date of the poem's authorship — like many of its fellows in the Ms. — is in the seventeenth century.

Helen Cyr, whose latest study of word combinations common to the Shakespeare canon and to Oxford's known verse was published in the Spring '86 issue of The Shakespeare Newsletter (XXXVI:1, No. 189, p. 11), took care to eliminate any common word or word combination if it appeared even once in any of the concordances she studied. She thus expresses great skepticism over Taylor's method in this controversy, and she tends to side with Mr. Robbins's reasons for rejecting Taylor's attribution.

But there is an even more compelling objection to Mr. Taylor's presentation. With his hypothesis comes the claim "that the poem must be regarded as presumptively Shakespeare's, until proved otherwise." Taylor's rider is unacceptable. He has fallen victim here to what historian David Hackett Fiescher calls "the fallacy of the presumptive proof": the attempt to shift the burden of proof for or against
a particular proposition onto others. As we cited Prof. Fischer in a previous issue (Winter 1986, page 3), "The burden of proof, for any historical assertion, always rests upon its author. Not his critics, not his readers, not his graduate students, not the next generation. Let us call this the rule of responsibility." It is surprising to find a Stratfordian commentator of Samuel Schoenbaum's reputation sanctioning Gary Taylor's flagrant violation of this rule.

NEW FOWLER BOOK ON OXFORD'S LETTERS RELEASED

The Shakespeare Oxford Society was pleased to learn this summer that longtime Society member William Plumer Fowler's twelve-year labor has come to fruition with the publication of his book, *Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters*. Mr. Fowler's book consists of two volumes bound in one, and costs $35. We hope that S.O.S. members will purchase Mr. Fowler's book, which can be mailed to them if they will communicate with Peter Randall, Publisher, Portsmouth NH 03801. We will be mailing further information on *Shakespeare Revealed...* to members in the near future.

We are pleased to present below an article by William Plumer Fowler containing many intriguing interpretations of possible word-play in Shakespeare's plays and poems -- interpretations which are, of course, Mr. Fowler's own. Other views on this same subject will be published in future issues of the Newsletter.

SHAKESPEARE'S BURIED NAME EXHUMED

By William Plumer Fowler

The name Shakespeare today shines supreme in all literature and drama. No tourist's first trip to England is complete without a visit to the Shakespearean Mecca at Stratford-on-Avon. Shakespeare has been crowned as Britain's National Poet, with an idealized bust in Westminster Abbey; and there are Shakespeare festivals every year throughout the English-speaking world. Yet how are we to reconcile all this with the poet's expressed wish in Sonnet 72?

My name be buried where my body is
And livs no mora to shame nor me nor you.

Or with his worde in Sonnet 81?

Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gona, to all the world must die.

These statements are wholly incompatible with the universal acclaim accorded the name Shakespeare. So it behooves us to see what can be done to exhume his "buried" name. Is it possible that the name "Shakespeare" is a pseudonym, and our Stratford idol a straw-man or blind?

The so-called Baconian theory of the 19th and early 20th centuries has passed like a murky cloud from the Shakespearean horizon, in large part dissipated by the failure of its protagonist to reach the heights of poetic imagery, idealism, and honor attained by the poet Shakespeare. We remain indebted, however, to the Baconians for their effective demonstration of the total inappropriateness of the
character of the Stratford grain dealer and tax-sale purchaser, William Shakspeare (1564 - 1616), to that expressed by the poet-dramatist Shakespeare. The Stratford man's parents, as well as one of his two daughters, were illiterate, and he himself could barely sign his name, as witnessed by his six surviving scarcely signatures (with no two alike) that are the only specimens we have of his handwriting — in some of which he does not get beyond "Willm Shakspe" or "Wm Shakspe." There is no evidence that he ever attended school, although Stratfordians contend that he must have, despite his struggle to help his impoverished father in his business as butcher and grain dealer, and to support a wife and three children, after he was 18 years old. The only specimens of his identifiable literary compositions are in a dictated muddled deposition, in his equally confused dictated will, and in the crude rhyme he is said to have composed for inscription on his gravestone:

Good Frend for Jesus SAKE forbear
to digg TE Dust Enclosed HERE
t
Blesse be TE Man Y spares TE s Stones
t
And curse be He Y moves my Bones.

Despite the appeal of this poor boy's success story from rags to riches and literary preeminence, the parts just do not fit together. It is impossible to show that Shakespeare ever left England, or how, despite his native Warwickshire dialect, he was able, on going to London for ten years or so, to be thoroughly familiar with the speech, sports, and customs of the nobility, and to be able to write some of the most polished English verse and powerful drama extant. Nowhere is it explained how he could have been carrying on a grain business and raising a family in Stratford, and at the same time writing two superlative plays a year while managing a theater in London, 90 miles away and a three-day ride by horseback over rutted roads, or how he gained his exact familiarity with places in Italy. The inconsistence of his life with that of the writer of Shakespeare's plays and poems are overwhelming.

All too little attention has been paid to the iconoclastic 1920 publication entitled "Shakespeare" Identified in Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford (now in its third edition) by a British schoolmaster with the unfortunate name of J. Thomas Looney (pronounced Lo-ney) whose followers, however, have been slowly but steadily growing in number. At Dartmouth College, for instance, from 1938 to 1948, Professor Louis Paul Benezet (Class of 1899), Chairman of the Education Department, gained only a handful of converts to the Oxford theory among his students, the faculty, and staff, and was wholly unsuccessful in making a dent in the orthodox views of the English Department. His two pamphlets, The Shakespeare Hoax and Shakespeare, Shakespeare and de Vere, and his excellent book, The Six Lovers of Shakespeare, are out of print and nearly unobtainable today. The only copy of either pamphlet I have been able to locate is one of Shakspeare, Shakespeare and de Vere, owned by his Oxfordian convert, Eddis Chamberlain (Class of 1936), who has kindly provided me with a photocopy.

In 1928, Captain B.M. Ward published his book, The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, a splendid biography of Oxford (1550 - 1604) with but the briefest mention of Shakespeare, because his publisher feared it would hurt the book's sales. J.T. Looney, in "Shakespeare" Identified, lists the striking correspondences between Oxford's known poems and Shakespeare's, and between Oxford's life and events in Shakespeare's plays and poems; and Captain Ward tells of the unexplained thousand-pound annuity
paid to Oxford from the British Exchequer from 1586, two years before the Battle of the Armada, until Oxford's death in 1604. Oxford, on his father's death in 1562, became England's Great Lord Chamberlain and highest ranking earl. He was the product of a noble yet literary family, with two uncles who were recognized poets and a third who was translating Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' at the time he was presumably tutoring Oxford, who was a precocious student of history and the classics. Oxford received a superior education at the School for Royal Wards, followed by three years' study of law at Gray's Inn. Oxford, besides receiving his education from outstanding tutors, was matriculated at Cambridge University at the early age of 8, and was awarded an M.A. degree from Cambridge at 14, and a similar degree from Oxford University at age 16. He served in 1569 as aide to Sussex in the military expedition to suppress the rebellion in the north of England and into Scotland; and in 1585, he for two months commanded the British Horse opposing Spain in the Netherlands. He fitted and commanded his own ship to oppose the Spanish Armada in 1588. Oxford spent sixteen months in foreign travel, including visits to the French Court, to the Rector of Strasbourg University in Germany (where he picked up a smattering of German, though communicating with his host in Latin) and spent the bulk of his time in Italy, with possibly a short visit to Egypt. At one time he maintained three troupes of actors as well as a school for poets and dramatists. He was in touch with all affairs of state as well as with foreign courts. Starting in 1593, Oxford appears to have used the pseudonym William Shakspeare, or Shake-speare, which name has been confused with that of the fourteen years' younger Globe Theatre worker, William Shakspere of Stratford.

Mr. Looney demonstrates inter alia how Oxford in his "Echo Verae" (the Rosetta Stone of the Oxford theory) plays on his own name, and motto "Vero nonnulla verus" ("Nothing TRUEr than TRUTH") in a poem signed "The Earl of Oxforde," here quoted in part:

Sitting alone upon my thought in melancholy mood,
In sight of sea, and at my back an ancient hoary wood,
I saw a fair young lady come, her secret feare to wail,
Cled all in colour of a nun, and covered with a veil;

....

From sighs and shedding amber tears into sweet song she brake,
And thus the echo answered her toEVER word she spake:

O heavens! who was the first that bred in me this fever?* Vere.
Who was the first that gave the wound whose fear I wear for ever?* Vere.
What tyrant, Cupid, to my harm usurps thy golden quiver?* Vere.

....

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

Of the 50-odd surviving poems identifiable as written by the Earl of Oxford

*In the Rawlinson Ms., these words are spelled "fevere, avere, quivere, delivera."
before he was 26 years old, this poem is one of the seventeen signed either as
(1), E.O." (6), or "Ver" (1). It appeares that the Earl of Oxford used both "E.O."
and E.VER (as well as ME.VER — a syncopation of his childhood nickname of "Med"
Ver) aa cachets or clues for his name, which accounts for so many characters in
Shakespeare's plays with names ending with the pronunciation "eo," although most
often apelled "lo," aa Benvolio, Malvolio, Horatio, Antonio, Dromio, Mercutio,
etc. Thus, in the early play Romeo and Juliet, this master of multiple meaning
goes so far as to sign his "eo" cachet at the vary end of the play (V,3,309) when
the Prince (giving a positive twist to his negative statement) summarizes:

For NEVER was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

This woeful "story" is backed up in the last scene of Hamlet (V,2,350) in Hamlet's
dying words to Horatio:

Horatio, I am dead.
Thou liv'st. Report me and my seuee eright
to the unsatisfied;

and (V,2,355),

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things stending thus unknown, shall liva behind me!
If thou didst EVER hold me in thy heart,
Absert thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story.

That is, e "story" of more woe "than this of Julist and her Romeo."
This thesis is developed still more adroitly in four of Shakespeare's sonnets,
starting with the seventy-third, a sonnet of great intrinsic beauty:

Sonnet 73

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leavee, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Rare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilights of such day
As after sunseet fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rast.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave are long.
Notes that the carefully concealed "E. Vere" in the final line's "leave ere" also gives the answer to the riddle propounded in the first quatrain as to what time of year is beheld in the aging poet, viz., winter, in French, "l'hiver," with its aspirate "h" and pronounced like the poet's cecchet, "E. Ver"; and including in two tongues both the time of year perceived and the poet's name. While the after-sunset "twilight" in line 5 supplies the first syllable of "E. Ver" in eve, for evening, and the "growing" referred to in the third quatrain supplies in its Latin, "fervere," the last syllable of "E. Ver." It is to be noted that Oxford was fluent in the three languages involved in this triple and trilingual wordplay: English, French, and Latin.

This sonnet is followed immediately by its companion sonnet, Sonnet 74, which succeeds it both in the 1609 Quarto edition and in practically all other rearrangements of the sonnets, in light of the two sonnets' double rhyme-link: west-rest and errest-interest and day-away and away-etey. The "E. Ver" concealed in "leave ere" of the last line of Sonnet 73 serves as an introduction to the ensuing:

Sonnet 74

But be contented: when that fell errest
Without all bell shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very part was consecrate to thee:
The earth can have but earth, which is his due;
My spirit is thine, the better part of me.
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body being dead;
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered.

The worth of that is that which it contains,
And that is this, and this with thee remaine.

This is a no less adroit riddle, with the fourth line's "memorial" (referred to in line 3 as "in this line") being found in the word "review" in the ensuing line 5. This word, when reviewed or read backwards, gives E. Ver's last name, "Ver," as his memorial, joined to one for Southampton as we pronounce the last syllable, "iew," like the H. UU. of Southampton's initials (for Henry Wriothesley*) at a time before the separate letter "w" had evolved.

Moreover, the word "review," when re-viewed or read backwards, produces the statement addressed to Southampton, "We I (Roman numeral one) Ver," indicative of the hidden biological relationship between Oxford and his first-born (though un-acknowledged) son.**

The sonnet's reference to "The coward conquest of a wretch's knife," is to Oxford's possible lameness from a bad wound received in a duel with Sir Thomas Knvyet, a member of the Howard faction.

The "Echo Verse" clearly establish Oxford's habit of playing on the "Ver" in his name, Edward de Vere or E. Ver, and thus, in Sonnet 75, the third of the sonnets, he actually gives away the secret:

*pronounced "Rose-lis" (Fr.) or "Rose-lily."
**Not all Oxfordians, of course, subscribe to this hypothesis. [Editor.]
Sonnet 76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride,
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, EVER the same
And keep invention in a noted weed,
That EVERY word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?
O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent;
For as the sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is told.

And so, near the end of Love's Labour's Lost (I,2,893) we find the introduction to the concluding "Song of Spring":

VER, begin.

Even more notably in Hamlet (I,2,160 & 163) when, on Hamlet's greeting the newly-arrived Horatio with

I am glad to see you well.
Horatio — or do I forget myself;

Horatio replies,

The same, my lord, and your poor servant EVER.

To which Hamlet (speaking for the dramatist and referring to his cachet, "E.Ver") aptly retorts,

Sir, my good friend — I'll change that name with you.

This use of the cachet is further established in another scene from Hamlet (I, 5,189) where Hamlet, developing Jacques's urge expressed in As You Like It to "Cleanse the foul body of the infected world," laments,

The time is out of joint: O cursed spite
That I was born to set it right!

Whereas, in The Winter's Tale* (IV,3,50) Autolycus (Oxford's comic doubla) exclaims,

O that I was born!

to which the Clown, the Old Shepherd's son, (as William of Stratford) chimes in truthfully,

*(Fr.) "Le Conte d'Hiver" or "The Story of E.Ver."
I' the name of me.

In Sir Denys Bray's The Original Order of Shakespeare's Sonnets, the last-quoted Sonnet 76 (Bray's 93) is followed immediately by the forceful Sonnet 123 (Bray's 94) in view of the two rhymes occurring identically in both to form an unquestionable link: change-strange and old-told.

Sonnet 123

No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change!
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressing of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old;
And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told.

Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For thy records and what we see do lie,
Made more or less by thy continual hasts,
This I do vow, and this shall EVER be:
I will be TRUE, despite thy ecythe and thee.

This terminal couplet is reinforced in Twelfth Night (IV,3,32) where Sebastian, invited by the Priest to go off to be married to Lady Olivia (who has mistaken Sebastian for "Cesario" -- really Sebastian's disguised twin sister, Viola) replies,

I'll follow this good man, and go with you,
And, having sworn TRUTH, EVER will be TRUE.

These references reflect Oxford's Latin motto, "Vero nihil verius," with its English translation of "Nothing TRUEr than TRUTH."

The foregoing are only a few of the many instances throughout Shakespeare's sonnets, plays, and poems, of Oxford's concealed name clues, inserted as opportunity offered and discoverable by the careful and thoughtful reader. Thus, with a little digging, we have been able to exhume Shakespeare's "buried" name, that is, the bard's true name, Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who signed nearly fifty of his letters with the name Edward Oxford, or Edward Oxford, and whose initials, "E.O.," are the same as those for the Earl(e) of Oxford(e). His given name, Edward de Vere, is reflected in the cachet E.VER or NE(d)VER (Ned being the only nickname for Edward in Shakespeare's works). We now begin to see that Henry James was not too far from the truth when he wrote of being "sort of haunted by the conviction that the divine William [of Stratford] is the biggest and most successful fraud ever practised on a patient world."
IN MEMORIAM

We regret to announce the death of ROSE FEINSTONE, widow of noted philanthropist Sol Feinstone, on July 24. Mrs. Feinstone was a warm supporter of her husband's many charitable and educational activities, which included — in addition to the Oxfordian theory (for the furtherance of which Sol Feinstone made many generous contributions to the Shakespeare Oxford Society) — endowments of schools and college libraries throughout the United States, and the David Library of the American Revolution, located at the Feinstones' home in Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania.

Upon Sol Feinstone's death in 1980 (reported in the S.O.S. Newsletter, Fall 1980), the directorship and presidency of the David Library passed to his son, the noted actor Ezra Stone. The Shakespeare Oxford Society extends to Mr. Stone our deepest sympathy for his (and our) loss.

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DEDICATION

(Paraphrased without celestial consent from the dedication to the Earl of Southampton in Venus and Adonis.)

Right Honourables Helen and Gordon Cyr:

I know not how I shall offend in dedicating this edition of the Shakespeare/Oxford Newsletter to your Lord and Ladyships. Nor how anti-Stratfordians will censure you for choosing so weak a prop to perpetuate your faithful and masterly contributions. Only if your Honours are ultimately pleased will I account myself successful and vow to take advantage of all idle hours till I have approximated the high standards your long-time labors have established. And if the first issue of my editorship proves inept, I am resolved to make its successors worthy of their parents. I leave it to your honourable survey, which I wish may always answer your own wishes and the hopeful expectations of all Oxfordians.

Your Honours in all verity,

Morse Johnson

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MINUTES OF THE 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SHAKESPEARE OXFORD SOCIETY IN BOSTON ON OCTOBER 10 AND 11, 1986

The Omni Parker House in downtown Boston was the site for the 10th Annual Conference of the Shakespeare Oxford Society October 10 and 11. A dinner planned for early arrivals at the conference the evening before the main events was somewhat marred by the loud music (live) near our party's table, but acquaintances were made and lively conversations took place despite the decibels.

The Saturday morning sessions began with a business meeting chaired by S.O.S. Executive Vice-President Gordon Cyr (Helen Cyr was obliged to be absent, owing to the press of other business). Thanks were extended to Elizabeth Sears of Killington, Vermont for her assistance in coordinating the conference. The reasons for meeting in Boston were briefly discussed: members expressing their desire at last year's conference for staggering the meetings every other year with members from other areas acting as conference chairpersons. There was also a Treasurer's Report from Phillip Proulx and a reminder that the Society had microfilms of the complete series of Newsletters from 1966 - 1985 for sale at $8.50 including postage.

An important development had taken place prior to the conference. A communication from Boston Book Annex to the Society noted that our conference was being held in Boston and calling our attention to the fact that they had an archive of materials from the collection of Charles Wisner Barrett for sale, including research notes,
correspondence, photographs, pamphlets, as well as many books long out of print. The store had cataloged all this material and made up a nine-page list, which was photocopied and handed out to conference participants. The Society is not interested in the whole collection, but a good portion of it should prove valuable. Cyr and Morse Johnson looked at the collection preceding Saturday's events, and checked off some items which the Society is interested in purchasing. Members were invited to submit their requests for items and were promised that the Society would try to accommodate them consistent with the S.O.S. priorities of preserving the archives.

Lord Charles Vere's visit to the United States was discussed, along with his discovery that the Shakespearean Authorship Trust in England is apparently defunct, and that Lord Vere wishes to start a chapter of the Society at Oxford. Lord Vere is a direct descendant of the 15th earl of Oxford through Horace Vere and the 19th and 20th earls (not a direct descendant of the 17th earl, whose son Henry, the 18th earl, died without a male heir).

An announcement that Morse Johnson would be the new editor of the Newsletter was made.

After a short coffee break, Morse Johnson gave a short talk about his correspondence with Stratfordians, and his often futile efforts to call them to account for their mistakes uttered in the public prints. Morse had unsuccessfully attempted to get an article published by The American Scholar, but his submission was rejected two days prior to the conference. After his talk, several members made valuable suggestions for publicizing our conferences in advance, which were noted with appreciation by the Executive Vice-President.

Cyr then talked about his and Helen Cyr's attendance at the Shakespeare Association Conference in Montreal last March and reported on many interesting contributions by scholars outside of the field of Shakespearean commentary, unencumbered by the often blinkered perspective so familiar to us anti-Stratfordians. He then passed on some cautionary words from Helen Cyr on what to look for in word studies and what traps to avoid. He read off two sets of quotations from works in the Elizabethan period, and said, "If we were to stop there, the Marlovian authorship theory would be proved. Because the first of each pair of quotations was from a play of Marlowe and the second from Shakespeare." But, he said, it was important not to stop there, and to look - not for mere echoes, but for mannerisms peculiar to an author. He emphasized that the importance of Helen Cyr's study was that she found in such a tiny sample of certifiable Oxford verse so many word clusters only found in Shakespeare, and that what appeared in Louis Marder's The Shakespeare Newsletter publication of her article (Spring 1986, copies of which were handed out to the audience beforehand) represented a cut-down version of her original findings, for reasons of space. Don't be fooled by borrowings, Cyr said, because writers cribbed from each other all the time in the Tudor era, as could be seen when they peruse the new book the Shakespeare Oxford Society is about to issue:

THE SHAKESPEARE IDENTITY CRISIS - A Reference Guide is Helen Cyr's latest labor of Shakespearean scholarship. The Executive Vice-President handed out
portions of the typescript copies for the audience's viewing. He stated that the book is designed for the lay person to show the weaknesses of the Stratfordian case. No candidate is mentioned, and most of the sources for the book are from Stratfordians. Only facts are presented, he said, and in such a way that the case is condemned from the Stratfordians' own mouths. One of the largest sections of the book is the part called "Doubt-Raising Evidence - Inconsistencies, Inaccuracies, and other Cruxes."

And the smallest section - one-half page, in fact - is, as one might expect, the section entitled "Evidence Connecting the Actor with the Author - Is There Any?" Cyr then read from one of the Appendices: "The Status of Playwriting...and the 'Batillus'," which discussed the economics, the low status of writers, use of pen-names, concealed authorship, and many other aspects of literary life which show that concealment of authorship and the use of "fronts" for authorship not only could be carried out very easily in those days, but was indeed a commonplace. The book will be for sale shortly and the price announced in a future Newsletter.

After lunch, Charles Boyle presented a portion of the slide show he presents to his colleagues in the theater: A dramatic presentation of the fascinating story of Edward de Vere and his relationship to Elizabeth, Lord Burleigh, and the Shakespearean drama. Several slides Mr. Boyle is preparing were not ready for presentation at the conference. But those that were made, along with Mr. Boyle's lively accompanying talk, a powerful and exciting presentation.

The main event of the day took place next: an appearance by William Plumer Fowler of New Hampshire, who attended a Shakespeare Oxford Society conference for the first time since his presence at the Society's first meeting in 1976, following the death of our former president, Richard C. Horne, Jr. Mr. Fowler, in defiance of his 86 years, gave an animated discussion of his new book, Shakespeare Revealed in Oxford's Letters, and of the twelve years he has spent in pursuit of the Oxfordian cause and in writing his book. Afterward, Mr. Fowler gave very interesting and articulate answers to many questions from the audience, and a warm tribute was extended to him by Robert O'Brien.

The conference concluded with a recital of Elizabethan music and song by tenor John Fleagle, whose presentation was graced by an informed discussion of such pieces as The Earl of Oxford's March (anonymous, attributed to William Byrd). O Mistress Mine, Greenleaves, and songs by Thomas Campion, John Dowland, etc. It was a very musically performance, the songs sung in a warm clear tenor, with excellent diction and skillful lute accompaniments, the instrumental compositions performed with verve and precision. The conference thus adjourned on a festive note.

Gordon Cyr

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THE EARLE OF OXFORDS MARCHE
Ross W. Duffin, Associate Professor of Music
Western Reserve University

The Earle of Oxords Marche is almost certainly by William Byrd (1543-1623). It appears, under that title, in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, the famous keyboard manuscript copied 1609-1619 by Francis Tregian. The ascription by Byrd is supported by the earliest surviving appearance of the music in a manuscript now known as My Ladye Nevells Booke (1591). There, it is inserted before the famous programmatic work, The Battell, and bears the title The Marche before the Battell. All other works in that manuscript are by Byrd, and it even seems to have been prepared under his editorship.
This march appears in other sources as well, including Thomas Morley's First Booke of Consort Lessons (1599), where it is entitled My Lord of Oxenford's Maske. What is interesting about this version to me is that the "Morley Consort" or "broken consort" for which the collection is arranged, figures prominently in theatrical productions of the time.

The only reference I know to a Galliard for the Earl is in Antony Munday's The Banquet of daintie Conceits (1588), in which ditties are provided to 22 tunes, including the Earl of Oxenford's Marche and the Earle of Oxenford's Galliard. Many of the tunes named are known today and a good number of those appear in the broken consort repertoire, either in Morley's collection or in one of the other mixed consort collections edited in Musica Britannica, Vol. 40. Unfortunately, there seems to be no Galliard in those volumes which relates musically to the Earl's March. Nor is there one among the keyboard works of Byrd as a companion to the keyboard March. The most likely candidate, I thought initially, was Byrd's The Galliard for the Victorie which was added to The Battell at the same time as The Marche mentioned above. This piece, however, does not fit the verses given by Munday for the tune of the Earl's Galliard. Perhaps the most interesting bit of knowledge to be derived from Munday's Banquet is the fact that the tune of the March was current before the earliest surviving source of Byrd's keyboard version, and that it was already associated with the Earl of Oxford in spite of Byrd's (or his copyist) first title.

This, of course, re-opens the question of the authorship of the music which may or may not be by Edward de Vere. As John Farmer says in dedicating to Oxford his First Set of English Madrigals (1599), "...for without flatterie be it spoke, those that know your Lordship know this, that using this science [music] as a recreation, your Lordship have overgone most of them that make it a profession." Personally, I suspect some relationship between the Earl and William Byrd since their names keep cropping up together. There's The Marche and if women could be fair (to a text by de Vere, 1588). There is also Byrd's lease (ca.1574) of Battalls Hall in Essex, a transaction which ended badly for Byrd in 1582. Byrd's Essex connections were strong throughout his life as were his ties to the recusant community, particularly the group led by the Petre family. He was also a prominent figure in the Chapel Royal from 1570 to ca. 1592, and still in evidence there from 1592 to his death in 1623. It would be interesting to know if there are other ties between these two great masters of England's golden age.

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"I heard a great peer of this realm and a learned say, when he lived, there was no King in Christendom had such a subject as Oxford (which) hath continued ever since in the remarkable surname of deVere, by so many ages, descents and generations as no other kingdom can produce such a peer in one and the self same name. ..." (Lord Chief Justice Randolph Crews in 1626)

A new and worthy champion of the cause of Edward deVere as the poet-dramatist Shakespeare has entered upon the scene. He is Lord Charles Vere, a 21 year old descendant of the 15th Earl of Oxford and of Edward's cousin Horatio--or Horatio--Vere, a descendant also of the 19th & 20th-- and last--Earls of Oxford and grandson of the present 13th Duke of St. Albans, whose title he is in line to inherit through his father, the Earl of Burford. Hamlet--surely the dramatist's self,--as he
faces death in anguish lest "a wounded name./ Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me," implores Horatio "to report me and my cause aright/ To the unsatisfied." The real-life Horatio's heir is resolved to carry out the injunction laid upon his ancestor and, we are gratified to report, appears to be uncommonly well-qualified to do so.

Lord Vere came to our knowledge through letters he wrote to Charlton Ogburn in which Ogburn was "increasingly impressed by his correspondent's maturity, keen intelligence, facility in expression and knowledge of our field of common interest." Before matriculating to Oxford, he made his first trip to the United States and visited the Ogburns from the 2nd to the 5th of September. Charlton writes that Charles turned out to be a good-looking, blond, grey-eyed, trim and well-built young man of about five feet eleven. This was probably, he adds, "the first time in history that the South Carolina town named after the 2nd Duke of Beaufort had provided a first introduction to North America. The talk about the Earl of Oxford and plans for dealing with what his supporters are up against did not flag, while the air-conditioning permitted a small cocktail party. His Lordship, moreover, did have a swim in the ocean, the road to the beach leading through the village of Frosgmore, where a campaign to change the name to one more genteel-sounding has been at least arrested by the disclosure that the original Frosgmore not only is the site of the royal mausoleum but is mentioned three times by Shakespeare, in The Merry Wives of Windsor. As Vera [Charlton's wife] observed, however, Beaufort served its unique guest principally as Williamsburg does visiting foreign statesmen, as a respite between jet flight and the strenuous activities ahead."

After leaving the Ogburns, Lord Vere visited the esteemed Oxfordians Ruth and Minos Miller at their home in Jennings, Louisiana where he was the guest of honor at a number of festive receptions and gave several media interviews. The Millers also had a highly favorable impression of him. They requested that this Newsletter contain a report that Lord Vere is helping to finance the deVere Society at Oxford by the sale of "most attractive" silk screen prints of Castle Hedingham for $250 each (post-paid). He left some with them and 15 are still on hand. Orders can be sent to Judge Minos Miller, P. O. Drawer 1309, Jennings, La. 70546.

David Lloyd Kreeger, a singularly potent advocate and sharer of our purposes, who with warrant, was introduced to the Prince and Princess of Wales as "Mr. Arts and Culture in Washington" (See page 9), had been looking forward to meeting Lord Vere. So had Roger A. Caras, a prolific author and commentator high up in ABC-TV, who had undertaken to lay on for him a constellation of intellectual luminaries at East Hampton, Long Island. His Lordship reciprocated their interest in these meetings, but unfortunately they had to be put off till a later occasion since circumstances forced him, to the general regret, to cut short his trip.

From Hartford College Lord Vere has written that he is proceeding with his plan to set up a deVere Society at Oxford to pursue the matter of the Shakespearean authorship and is having posters prepared for the purpose. He has given Ogburn very great pleasure by promising to have copies of the full-page advertisement for The Mysterious William Shakespeare in the New York Times Book Review on the noticeboard of every Oxford college and reporting that Blackwell's bookshop of Oxford has agreed to display the ad and to order a preliminary ten copies of the book, which would be the first to go on sale abroad.

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"(The tunic) is so strangely illustrated that the right-hand-side of the forepart is obviously the left-hand side of the back part and so gives a harlequin appearance to the figure which it is not unnatural to suppose was intentional, and done with the express object and purpose." ("Gentlemen's Tailor," London 1911)
"... to my fellows John Hemynges, Richard Burbage and Henry Condell xxvii, viiijd, apiece to buy them rings."

(Charlton Ogburn recently received a lengthy letter from Robert Detobel of Frankfurt/Main, West Germany, an ardent and most erudite Oxfordian. He set forth a number of interesting and significant deductions, some supplement familiar ones but others, as far as I know, are original. Herewith an example of each but first his appraisal of his command of English.)

I would like to apologize for some mistakes which may appear in this letter: English is not a language in which I often write. In fact, I am a one-horsed rider in it, a zealous, sometimes frenetic reader, who, however, seldom writes or speaks English. Nevertheless, the stock I have gained from reading should suffice to make clear what I mean.

I am inclined to grant a little bit more credit to Mr. Honigman's [an English Stratfordian] objection to the "backwater" argument. If it is true that Stratford was a backwater and offered a very adverse climate for the flourishing of culture, especially poetic talents, Dr. Honigman's pointing to Quineys, Sturleys etc. is in itself right. But to me the most remarkable and the most striking consequence of that objection is that in stretching it a little bit more it sweeps away one of the centerpieces of Stratfordian opposition to any other candidate for the Shakespearean works. Of course, there were in and about Stratford some people with a solid cultural background. Now, Stratfordians are used to get rid of any other candidate by arguing that this presupposes a cover-up on such a scale that we have to discard it absolutely. In other words: it is against the very human reason to rely on such a cover-up: too many propitious conditions had to be fulfilled; none of the initiated persons had in any thinkable way broken his silence. Now, this must have been the case if one wants to maintain the candidature of the man from Stratford. Then though Shakespeare of Stratford had published his works under his own name, nobody, even not the literate men, among them those whom Honigman cites in favour of his refuting the backwater argument. Quiney and Sturley were at some time Shakespeare's partners. Richard Field, printer of "Venus and Adonis" was born in Stratford and must have had contacts to his relatives in Stratford. William Combe, another intimate business partner, held readings at the Middle Temple; another Combe, Thomas (?), visited the Middle Temple; Shakespeare's cousin, Thomas Greene, also. Not to speak of Dr. Hall, the son-in-law, or Shakespeare's daughter, or his granddaughter, Lady Bernard. All remained mute about the great poet to whom they had intimate relations and whose works appeared in London without any secrecy, in plain openness; and nevertheless each reference of them to the great poet is missing. They all kept silence. One of the most silliest arguments of Stratfordians to explain this away is that Shakespeare had plenty of reasons not to speak of his work in an environment as hostile to the theater as Stratford was. But why then did Shakespeare retire to Stratford just at the moment, at the very moment his plays began to appear under his name in London? Why should William Combe, Thomas Combe, Thomas Greene have remained mute on the author, of whom a work was for the first time played at the Middle Temple? We know with certitude that Combes, Greene, Quiney and others were regularly in London. It is inconceivable that none of them should never have heard anything about a great playwright called Shakespeare. And they knew Shakespeare of Stratford very well. This "cover-up"
is far more formidable than the cover-up. Stratfordians are unable to conceive of. And what about the missing of any allusion in literary circles in London at the time of Shakespeare's death? A good many epitaphs for Ben Jonson exist, epitaphs which are directly referring to his decease, not simply his death. Nothing comparable exists with respect to Shakespeare though Burbage, Hemmings and Condell - at least these three - must have been informed, Shakespeare having bequeathed them a small sum of money as it was the tradition among "fellows", "associated players", a nearly sacred tradition which Shakespeare had forgotten in the first draft of his will (as he had forgotten that he could write).

I pick up this remark in order to come to what I consider to be perhaps the greatest flaw in Shakespeare's will. In his book "The Profession of Player in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642" (Princeton 1983! 1984?) Prof. Gerald Eades Bentley writes:

"Throughout the period the ranking players in the adult companies were the sharers, so called because their remuneration was not a weekly wage, as in the case of hired men, or valuable training as in the case of the apprentices, but a share in the receipts for each performance by the company. Other terms for the same status were in common use: 'patented member' because only the sharers were named in the royal patents for the companies; 'fellow' in the first sense given in the Oxford English Dictionary, 'one who shares with another in a possession, official dignity, at the performance of any work: a partner, a colleague, or co-worker. 'Fellow' is the term commonly used by the leading players in referring to each other. Shakespeare's usage in his will was characteristic" (p. 25).

Well, I think it was not so characteristic!

First: According to Prof. Bentley, the terms "patented member", "sharers". "fellows" refer to a status which was perhaps not legally fixed as in our time but which had the same juridical character. The terms "fellow" cannot be merely understood as "friend"; in connexion with players it ought to be understood as possessor of a share, more precisely: as present, actually - not formerly - possessing a share.

I.e.: where these terms appear in a legal document, they must be understood formally and strictly. If the term "fellow" is used in a will, it ought to be understood as an equivalent of: "patented member", "sharer" - just like e.g. a member of the American Board of Governors (FED) can speak of his colleagues, while a former member can only speak of his former colleagues when giving a comment on the economic policy. I hope I've made clear what I mean.

Secondly: Such a share consisted in two parts: fixed capital and current, circulating capital in some way. The sharers had to pay a certain sum, in return they became owner of part of the company's stock: books, costumes, daggers, etc. The current part was a share in the receipts.

This share was hereditable (see the case Thomasina Oystler vs. John Hemmings (Hemynge)): there are other examples.

The sharer could also part with his share; he had then to be paid a certain sum (examples of suits concerning the exact amount exist and can be found in Bentley's book). He was then no longer a sharer/patented member/ fellow.
I could give examples, but I prefer to quote G. E. Bentley who is rather an orthodox (but palpably besieged with doubts). "It was customary for this financial stake of a sharer in the company to be recognized as a part of his estate, and a payment was supposed to be made to him when he left the company or to his wife at his death." p. 32-33
But the shares could also be passed on the legal heirs.

Thirdly: It was also the custom between players to bequeath to the colleagues - "fellows" as well as non-sharers - to buy a ring or some other piece in remembrance of the deceased. Such a clause can be found in nearly each preserved will of a player: Hemings, Condell, Tooley, etc.
Just like we find in Shakespeare's will.
It is now possible to formulate the following rules:

1. We can normally expect in the will of a player - be he a sharer or not - a clause by which he bequeaths a small sum to his colleagues.
2. If that player is still a sharer at the moment of testating he will mention other sharers as fellows, non-sharers otherwise.
   Conversely: If no longer a sharer he will not speak of his colleagues as "fellows."
3. The using of the term "fellows" implies that the player is still a sharer. And this implicates necessarily that we must find in the will some clause providing for what should happen with the shares.
Examples (all taken from Bentley's "Jacobean Stage" and Caroline Stage, Vol. II, p. 631 et seq., Oxford 1941):

a. Thomas Basse:
   "unto his loving friends Christopher Beeston...Richard Perkins...Michael Bower and William Beeston... to each of them a Ring of the value of ten shillings a peece to wear in remembrance of him.
   Year 1634. Basse was not a sharer. Beestons were. No question of shares. No question of fellows.

(Subsequent omissions designated by . . . are all additional examples)

c. Richard Benfield
   "And my intent is that the sums of money so bequeathed to my said friends (i.e., 40 shillings) Robert Woodford, Edward Swanson Thomas Pollard ... John Shanke, Edward Goodale...shall buy them several rings to wear for my sake." John Shanck was a sharer. Benfield was not. Goodale at any rate a player. The term is "friend", not "fellow". Benfield was not a sharer. No mention made of shares.

f. Henry Condell
   Bentley gives only a summary, wherein no shares are mentioned. No fellows either. But elsewhere Bentley states (in his short biographies of players) that Henry Condell was no longer a sharer in the last period of his life. So the logic holds. Condell's will corroborates the three rules.

h. John Honyman
   I give and bequeath the one half of moysty of all my goods, whether ready money debts apparel books or what somes shall grow due unto me from and amongst my fellows the Players or any other thing whatsoever equally to be divided by my dear and loving mother...Item I give to every one of my fellows the Players a Ringe of ten shillings price...A sharer, a fellow, shares mentioned, rings.
So I think the three rules very fairly corroborate: Sharer = fellow, "fellow" is strictly reserved for such players who are still sharers (Condell was not since some date after 1619 or rather: no longer). Further: if mention of "fellow", there is also mention of "shares" and vice versa. In most cases the custom of bequeathing some money for purchasing remembrance rings is observed; John Shark is one exception, the sole I could discover in Bentley's list. But he seems to have lived in anger with his fellows (his repeated reference they shouldn't try to deceive his wife).

Only Shakespeare's will doesn't comply with this regular pattern: he called Burbage, Hemings, Condell his "fellows", but there is no trace of what happened with his shares. Chambers thought, he parted with them, but then he was no longer "fellow". As the rule was strictly followed, some error was made.

Of course: the standard clause was inserted, written afterwards between the lines. As part of the cover-up. To make the clerk introduce a clause by which Sh. bequeathed a small sum of money to his "fellows" was certainly no great problem in Stratford, but to make additional provisions for things as shares which Shakespeare possessed no longer (and I think he never possessed) was too delicate. So, in comparison with other player wills, the difference appears; the cover-up could not be rounded up to perfection. There is a flaw in the usage of the term "fellows". It is, contrary to Prof. Bentley's statement, not characteristic. Characteristic is the simultaneous presence of "fellows" and "share dispositions".

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"Mr. Kreeger is more likely to pull it off than most people."

FROM THE WASHINGTON TIMES (11/4/86)

Cultural pooh-bah David Lloyd Kreeger - the wizard who makes things happen when others cease to try - is about to unveil his latest, greatest feat as arts patron. Under his aegis, The Washington Opera will stage, on Saturday, Nov. 15, the world premiere of Gian Carlo Menotti's "Goya," starring the world renowned tenor Placido Domingo.

When the "Goya" hoopla is over, Mr. Kreeger will move on to his next, far more personal, project: sponsorship of a spring debate on "Who is Shakespeare?" at American University Law School, with either U.S. Supreme Court justices or federal appeals court judges deciding the best argument.

He believes, after much study, that an English nobleman named Edward De Vere wrote all that glorious poetry and drama. He says there is no question that he is right, and he hopes to have his opinion verified in a public tribunal.

As a member of the university's board of trustees, he has had no problem arranging the site. A spokesman for the Supreme Court says that while it would be extremely unlikely that all the justices would agree to take part, individually they sit on moot courts from time to time. But "Mr. Kreeger is more likely to pull it off than most people," she notes.

* * * * *
Dear Dan:

What makes me boil over is the denigration of the greatest writer we have ever had, a conscious artist in the highest sense, a magician with words, one of the most finely educated and cultivated minds of his time. You have given him to the public as little better than a dim-witted yokel. I consider this monstrous.

"He did not have the slightest sense of his own greatness, or the faintest inkling of having already reached a stature of which Jonson wrote: 'He was not of an age, but for all time.'" So this unbelievable article ends.

Good God, don't any of you up there know anything about Shakespeare? What do you think he meant when he wrote, "Not marble nor the gilded monuments/ Of princes shall outlive this pow'rful rhyme," and "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see/ So long lives this . . ."? How can be say to the young friend of the Sonnets, "Your name from hence immortal life shall have" and "Your name shall still find room/ Even in the eyes of all posterity"? Because "Such virtue hath my pen"! When Cassius in 
Julius Caesar reflects

\[
\text{How many ages hence}
\vspace{1mm}
\text{Shall this lofty scene be acted o'er}
\vspace{1mm}
\text{In states unborn and accents yet unknown}
\]

...can you presume to doubt that, as Professor Harry Levin of Harvard wrote, "Shakespeare showed prophetic insight into his own future"? All this means nothing to you?

In one of the earliest recorded performances of a play of Shakespeare's, Henry the Sixth, Part 1, his fellow playwright Thomas Nashe wrote that it moved to "tears ten thousand spectators (at several times)." While the famed Stratfordian was still alive, Venus and Adonis, published in 1593, was so popular it went through seven additions and Lucrece, published the next year, five, possibly larger ones. In 1598, in the first mention of the name Shakespeare as that of a playwright, Francis Meres said he was the best of the English for both comedy and tragedy, that the "sweet witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare" and "that the Muses would speak with Shakespeare's fine-filed phrase if they would speak English." Shakespeare's plays delighted both Queen Elizabeth and King James, on the word of Ben Jonson, and the latter monarch on his accession to the throne had seven of Shakespeare's plays performed, one of them twice. But none of the exalted recognition Shakespeare received penetrated to the sheep's brain with which Mr. Rosten endows him, to the Digest's satisfaction. Those drama-addicted, poetry-hungry Elizabethans were well aware of the dimensions of Shakespeare's incomparable talent, of his unequaled achievement. Does not even Mr. Rosten have to acknowledge that his contemporary Ben Jonson, voicing a view that could not conceivably have been his alone and must have been widely
held in the dramatist's lifetime, proclaimed:

Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show,
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe,
He was not of an age, but for all time!

But the greatest observer of humanity of all time had no inkling of this! None of it filtered into his feeble wits: thus, Mr. Rosten and the Digest.

Nor does this travesty you have foisted on the public stop with that. I cannot believe you have to be told how arduous is the ordeal, how often agonizing, of creative writing that brings into the world that which is new and vital and such as to enlarge our resources of the imagination and understanding, that peoples our world with characters having a life that transcends mortality. To sustain the demands of such a life work, as you must know, requires an invincible belief in oneself and conviction of the importance of what one is doing, an indomitable and inexhaustible ego, if that's how you'd like to put it: all that to sustain the lifelong struggle. In all cases, Mr. Rosten and the Digest would say, except that of the writer of the greatest masterpieces of all; him you would deny any recognition of the price he had to pay-- and how steep that price could have been, read Deems Taylor on Wagner in your own files to find out. Shakespeare came by the greatest works of all in the manner, we are to suppose, of Joan of Arc bearing with upturned eyes those heavenly voices. If he boasted of the immortality of his writing with a confidence no other writer I have heard of ever attained to, or had reason to, we are to believe that though he had no comprehension of the worth of what he had written he was sure that it would prove undying because he had had it from On High. Is that what you believe? Come on, tell us!' I fear I shall await an answer in vain.

Very truly,
Charlton

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AN IMPROVISED COLLOQUI

Participants:
Professor F. W. Brownlow, Mount Holyoke College (commentary in "Chronicles of Culture" (Sept/86) on the reviews by Jane Greer and Joseph Sobran of The Mysterious William Shakespeare in "Chronicles" (Feb/86)).

Jane Greer (Responses in "Chronicles" (Sept/86) to Brownlow's commentary).

Charlton Ogburn (The Mysterious William Shakespeare).

Dr. S. Schoenbaum (Shakespeare's Lives).

Frederick von Schiller (Characterization of 'bread and butter scholars' ('der Brotgelehrte') as translated by Dr. Anni Guttmann).
Brownlow: "... the question arises, why should Chronicles writer Jane Greer and Joseph Sobran of the National Review be taken in by the anti-Shakespearean nonsense? Are they untaught? Badly taught?"

Greer: "When a staunch Stratfordian takes it upon himself to refute Ogburn's book point by point (and there are hundreds of points), I will be delighted and very much interested, and feel safe in saying that Charlton Ogburn will be, too. This is, after all, supposed to be fun, a quest of love; there is no 'loser,' and every literature-lover will be a winner no matter what the truth is found to be."

Brownlow: "Once someone allows the thought to take root that Shakespeare was someone else, he has stepped into an abyss of unreason and there can be no argument because there is nothing to argue about. Shakespeare's identity is axiomatic... The anti-Stratfordians are merely destructive and belong in the freak department of the library."

Ogburn: 'Now, the insistence of the Stratfordian academics that the dissenters' views are devoid of the least merit or justification unworthy of the smallest consideration, is bound to be met with raised eyebrows by anyone aware of the number and respectability of the dissenters...yet they cleave to a policy of total denunciation of dissent and dissidents. Why?... the only answer I can give is that they assess the risk of any other course to be greater. In this view, they feel, consciously or unconsciously, that their case depends absolutely upon absolute acceptance: give admittance to the tiniest doubt, and doubt proceeding from one element of incongruity and implausibility in the structure to another and growing by what it feeds on, must speedily consume the whole."

Schoenbaum: "The heretics [anti-Stratfordians] have all along sought not dialogue but converts."

Greer: "Mr. Brownlow is not looking for a response or dialogue: he is in fact, doing what he can to discourage it. He obviously hasn't read Charlton Ogburn's book and doesn't intend to."

Brownlow: "To dispute it [the Stratfordian attribution] is as weird as to dispute the heliocentricity of the solar system after observation proved it in (I think) 1838...what is your magazine doing joining ranks with freaks? It's no use advocating ancient tradition on one page and knocking it down on the next."

Schiller: "Every new idea in his ['bread and butter scholar'] particular field of study disturbs him, because it burdens him with new work, while it may render his past work worthless. Every important innovation frightens him, because it upsets the old structure of his knowledge which he has labored so hard to master. It entails the risk of his losing his life's work. Nobody has been more vociferous in opposing reformers than the big groups of bread and butter scholars. And
no one has been preventing progress of useful resolutions in the realm of knowledge as much as these. Every light that has been kindled by a man of genius, in any art or science, shows how wanting they are.

Therefore they put up a fight that is bitter, insidious and desperate, because by defending the system of their schooling they defend their whole existence. For this reason no enemy is more unforgiving, no colleague more envious, no person more eager to turn you into a heretic than is the bread and butter scholar.

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RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EDITOR

The ultimate acceptance of Edward DeVere as the authentic William Shakespeare by the world of letters has no more comprehensive, indispensable and powerful cutting edge than Charlton Ogburn's classic The Mysterious William Shakespeare (Dodd, Mead 1984). While it has gone into a second printing and has enlisted hundreds of Oxfordians, its continuing and persuasive impact requires increasingly widespread recognition and distribution. In my opinion, all Oxfordians should feel a compelling obligation to assist in achieving a pervasive momentum. May I vigorously recommend that every committed adherent should purchase at least one copy before the end of this year - from a bookseller or call toll-free 1-800-251-4000 - as Christmas gifts or tax deductible contributions to cultural institutions.

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NOTICES

Dues, contributions and orders ($8.50 incl. pkg. and postage) for microfilmed Newsletters (6/30/65-Spring/85) should be sent to Shakespeare/Oxford Society, P. O. Box 16254, Baltimore, Md. 21210

All materials submitted for proposed publication in the Newsletter should be sent to Morse Johnson, Suite #819, 105 W. 4th Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Members are encouraged to submit same. Personal letters, newspaper clippings, excerpts from Journals, et al. are also welcome.

A list of the members of the Shakespeare/Oxford Society will be mailed to each member early in Jan/87. Those who do not wish his or her name and/or address to be included on that list should notify by letter addressed as in the above paragraph by 1/5/87.

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