

# News-Letter

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The SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP

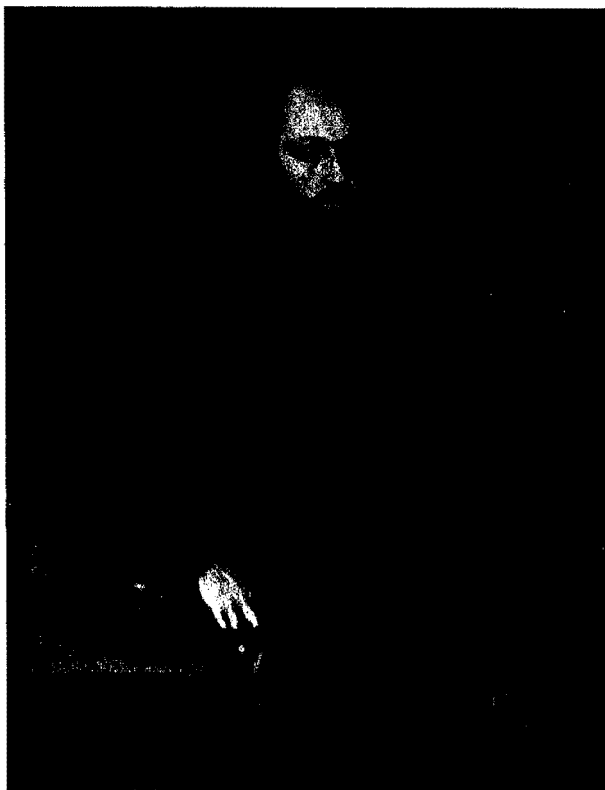
—AMERICAN BRANCH—

VOL. I

FEBRUARY, 1940

NO. 2

## The Secret Personality of "Shakespeare" Brought to Light After Three Centuries



The Ashbourne portrait (above), owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library, and two other famous paintings of the poet have been dissected scientific-

cally for the first time in history — with results likely to change the whole course of Shakespearean research. Solution of authorship mystery at hand.

## Scientific Proof Given that Lord Oxford Posed for Ancient Portraits of the Bard

X-RAYS AND INFRA-RED PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW THAT EDWARD DE VERE, MYSTERIOUS LITERARY NOBLEMAN, IS THE REAL MAN IN THE FAMOUS ASHBOURNE "SHAKESPEARE" AND ALSO IN OTHER PAINTINGS OF ENGLAND'S GREATEST DRAMATIST.

CHARLES WISNER BARRELL'S EPOCH-MAKING DISCOVERIES ARE FEATURED BY SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN AND TELEGRAPHED TO MORE THAN 2,000 NEWSPAPERS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES.

WORK OF AMERICAN SECRETARY OF THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP REPRESENTS A LANDMARK IN ELIZABETHAN RESEARCH AND MAY CAUSE IMMEDIATE REVALUATION OF THE COMMONLY ACCEPTED THEORY OF THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE PLAYS.

Early in the morning of December 13, 1939 — a date not soon to be forgotten by anyone interested in the pictorial record of "Mr. William Shakespeare" — the news operators of the Associated Press began to tap out across two thousand wires leading to newspapers throughout the length and breadth of the American continent, a feature story that began as follows:

New York, Dec. 13—(AP)—X-ray evidence that three world-famous paintings supposedly of William Shakespeare actually are of the Earl of Oxford — interpreted as corroborating the theory that the Earl was the real author of "Shakespeare's" plays — was reported today by Charles W. Barrell, photographic expert and prominent Shakespearean student . . . in an article in the forthcoming issue of Scientific American Magazine . . .

There is no need to repeat the entire news release, for you undoubtedly read it at the time. It marked a culminating point in the history of Shakespearean research, detailing the high lights of the first scientifically conceived and illustrated revelation of the hidden personality behind the painted camouflage of the so-called "Bard of Avon."

Incredible as it may sound, no investigation employing such tools of scientific accuracy as X-rays and infra-red photography had previously been carried out for the purpose of penetrating the oft-suggested secrets lurking in the backgrounds of these ancient portraits.

It has remained for the American secretary of THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP and a skilled group of technicians working under his direction, to bring to light and accurately interpret after exhaustive corroborative studies among Elizabethan and Jacobean art, historical and genealogical records, facts which the foremost "orthodox" Shakespearean authorities have completely overlooked.

Charles Wisner Barrell's work, as outlined in the Scientific American for January, 1940, under the title of "Identifying 'Shakespeare' With X-rays and Infra-Red Photography," vindicates the findings of J. Thomas Looney, who in 1920 published his remarkable volume of literary detection, "*Shakespeare Identified In Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford*." The evidence produced by these two men, covering years of painstaking effort to get at the basic facts in history's most puzzling "missing person" case, is clear-cut, circumstantial — and graphic. Corroborating and supplementing each other, the labors of Messrs. Looney and Barrell seem destined to bring about a revolution in the entire field of Shakespearean biography. Mr. Looney found Lord Oxford's personality reflected in the plays and poems. Mr. Barrell actually shows the lineaments and over-painted symbols of the mysterious literary nobleman in three of the best-known portraits of the Bard — paintings which the foremost Shakespearean art experts of the past two centuries have agreed upon as compositions of Elizabethan or Jacobean craftsmanship.

While his investigation includes complete dissections by photographic science of the Hampton Court Palace Shakespeare, owned by the royal family of Great Britain; the so-called "Janssen" Shakespeare, owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library of Washington, D. C.; and the Ashbourne Shakespeare, also a Folger Library acquisition, Mr. Barrell was obliged by exigencies of space to confine his Scientific American article to a report of research on the Ashbourne canvas. Although his X-ray and photographic analysis of this picture embraces twenty-five plates, only eighteen could be published in the magazine.

Arrangements are now being made to publish the complete narrative of the pictorial discoveries in book form during the coming months. Altogether, the dissecutive studies and comparative photographs taken by Mr. Barrell and his technical associates embrace about seventy-five exposures. These cover the three ancient Shakespeare portraits and the only two inscribed paintings of the 17th Earl of Oxford known to exist today, one dated 1575 and owned by the Duke of Portland at Welbeck Abbey, the other ascribed to Marcus Gheeraedts the Younger and owned by the Duke of St. Albans at Bestwood Lodge. Representatives of both of these noblemen have co-operated very cordially with Mr. Barrell in the course of his studies.

The technicians employed by Mr. Barrell to assist in the investigation included:

Mr. Arthur G. Eldredge, former Professor of Photography at the University of Illinois. Mr. Eldredge is recognized as one of the ablest of American photographers. He is especially skilled in the science of reproducing paintings, having been employed by the late J. Pierpont Morgan to illustrate the famous connoisseur's luxurious volume, *Notable Paintings in American Collections*, as well as his *Book of Chess*. Lately Mr. Eldredge made the photographs for Booth Tarkington's *Some Old Portraits*. In the fine calculations required to balance light, focus and length of exposure, Mr. Eldredge has no American superior. He also understands the secrets of infra-red exposure and development—a difficult branch of photography to master, as applied to the dissection of paintings.

X-ray work on the "Janssen" and Ashbourne pictures was carried out in Washington at the National X-Ray Laboratories, and in London the

Röntgen rays were applied under the joint direction of Mr. A. C. Cooper and the Curator of Paintings at Hampton Court Palace. Mr. Cooper also made most of the panchromatic negatives required on the British paintings of Lord Oxford and "Shakespeare." His advisory supervisor in making infra-red exposures was Dr. S. O. Rawling, F.R.P.S., of the Ilford Research Laboratories, one of the world's authorities on infra-red photography.

Working under Mr. Barrell's supervision, these experts have all contributed materially to the technical success of the investigation. The subsidiary research, which required some two years for completion, was carried out by Mr. Barrell in Washington and New York, with Mr. Percy Allen of London contributing valuable items transcribed from documents in the College of Heralds and the British Museum. Special photographic studies were also made for Mr. Barrell—at Oxford and Wolverhampton, Staffordshire.

Of the two thousand or more newspapers in the United States and Canada that carried the Associated Press digest of the Oxford-Shakespeare portrait discoveries, many featured it on the front page. Associated Press representatives also called on well-known Stratfordian authorities at leading American universities and elsewhere for expressions of opinion regarding the evidences of Lord Oxford's personality in the ancient paintings. But none of the eminent experts interviewed could give any coherent explanation of the strange transformations that science had brought to light.

"Absurd!" or "I don't believe it!" or "There must be some mistake—I never heard of the Earl of Oxford!" were the usual comments. Needless to say, such expressions, bearing witness to the emotional reaction of high authority rather than rational consideration of the evidence on its own merits, could not be handled by the Associated Press editors.

Although six weeks have passed since the first news story was released, no Stratfordian expert has come forward as yet to offer any reasonable refutation of Mr. Barrell's pictorial conclusions.

Meanwhile, there have been many follow-up newspaper items and articles on the Scientific American story, with editorial writers, columnists, book-reviewers and dramatic critics featuring the portrait discoveries as one of the liveliest topics of

the times, despite the superabundance of war news.

During one week, three New York dailies, The Post, The New York Times and The Sun treated the subject editorially. The Sun editorial, a most interesting tribute to the Barrell findings, is reproduced in full at the conclusion of this narrative.

The Christian Science Monitor gave liberal space in two issues to the investigation. On December 21st, 22nd and 23rd, The Cleveland Plain Dealer published a three-part discussion by Harlowe R. Hoyt, under the general heading: "So Edward de Vere Wrote Shakespeare?" Mr. Hoyt covered the main points in the Oxford-Shakespeare case, beginning with Mr. Looney's work and ending with Mr. Barrell's. In Boston, a city that has for years counted many Baconians among its noteworthy citizens, The Post ran an eminently fair and readable résumé of the new Oxford evidence.

On the Pacific coast, Ada Hanifin, dramatic critic of The San Francisco Examiner, not only published the news, but announced that she had been convinced for some years past that Oxford was the real author of the Shakespeare plays and was now glad that the portrait evidence confirmed her own conclusions.

The San Francisco Chronicle's erudite Joseph Henry Jackson on December 20th devoted his Bookman's Notebook column to the subject, "Science Takes a Hand in the Shakespearean Controversy." San Francisco is fast becoming an important center of Oxfordian interest. Not so long ago The Argonaut, pioneer weekly of its class, ran a lengthy article on the Earl and his pen-name by Flodden W. Heron. In this connection, we think we may say without fear of contradiction that the city of the Golden Gate is one spot on the Globe today where Oxford would be accorded adequate recognition on his own merits if he should return, incognito, to the 20th century.

Newspapers as far removed as The Daily Herald of Biloxi, Mississippi, and the weekly Dispatch of Warwick, New York, ran the portrait story on their front pages. One of the best "follow-up" articles of all appeared in The Villager of Greenwich Village, N.Y.C. Newsweek Magazine for December 25th carried an illustrated version of the story on their book page.

Walter Winchell also broke the news in his typically breezy style in the column that now enjoys the widest syndicated coverage.

William Shakespeare's real name was Edward de Vere . . . *Walter whispered* . . . Charles Wisner Barrell, American secretary of the Shakespeare Fellowship, will so allege in the January Scientific American, due December 20th. Bill, it appears, was the 17th Earl of Oxford and Lord Chamberlain of England under Queen Liz. For the first time in history scientific tools—infra-red photography and the X-ray—were employed by Barrell to probe the true personality of the Bard.

The lengthy news article carried by The New York Times and later amplified in editorial treatment and correspondence provided an interesting contrast to Mr. Winchell's staccato telegraphese. And from all of these many sources millions of readers of the news have heard that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, not only devoted himself to the writing of plays and poems in the Shakespearean age but actually posed for three of the best-known "life portraits of Mr. William Shakespeare."

The Oxford theory is definitely on the map at last!

Editorial reactions of The New York Sun to the new state of affairs, as expressed in its issue of December 16, 1939, will, we are sure, be appreciated by members of THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP and all other disbelievers in the Stratfordian fables:

## THE ROENTGEN SHAKESPEARE

Who was the model for three paintings generally accepted as portraits of SHAKESPEARE? ("O England! model to thy inward greatness . . .") The American secretary of the Shakespeare Fellowship, CHARLES W. BARRELL, has been taking X-ray photographs of the Hampton Court Palace portrait of the poet, and of the two possessed by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington ("Titan's rays on earth!") Mr. BARRELL presents the evidence of his photographs to support his belief that the Earl of Oxford wrote the works of SHAKESPEARE, and that the paintings were made of the Earl, EDWARD DE VERE, and later altered to remove all identifying signs. ("What, have you got the picture of old Adam new-appareled?")

He declares that the hand of the same craftsman is to be discerned in the alterations in all three portraits. ("Who was he That, otherwise than noble nature did, Hath alter'd that good picture?") He reports that details of the original paintings were carefully changed. ("He wrought better than made the painter.") He implies that the result of these revisions of the portraits has therefore concealed for posterity the name of the true author of the plays and poems published as SHAKESPEARE'S. ("Twere concealment worse than a theft, no less than a traducement, To hide your doings.")

It is known that some thirty years ago a British authority on art charged that the Ashbourne portrait of SHAKESPEARE had been tampered with. ("To spurn at your most royal image And mock your workings in a second body.") The advocates of the Oxford authorship of SHAKESPEARE'S

works have frequently cited evidence in the language and historical incidents of the plays and will naturally make much of X-ray evidence uncovered by Mr. BARRELL. ("I cannot hide what I am.")

### "BY ANY OTHER NAME"

George Ross, in his New York World-Telegram column, "So This Is Broadway," brought out another piece of news in connection with Mr. Barrell's article on the Ashbourne portrait:

"Warren Munsell, Jr., who just sold a play entitled *By Any Other Name*, which tries to prove that the Earl of Oxford wrote Shakespeare's plays, got the biggest break of his life yesterday when the front pages reported the revelations of Shakespearean Scholar Charles Barrell. The revelations were that the Earl of Oxford *had* written the Shakespearean works."

## Dean of Literary Detectives on the War

The author of "*Shakespeare Identified as Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*," Mr. J. Thomas Looney, has been compelled to close his home on Tyneside, near Newcastle, owing to the exigencies of the war, and is living temporarily in the Midlands.

From a letter to Mrs. Eva Turner Clark recently received, we quote the following:

"It comes quite as a 'pick-me-up' to learn that you intend to go straight ahead, and indeed to add new initiative in the cause of Shakespeare authorship. In these days when the mind of the world is engrossed with war interests, with all my heart I wish you success. You of course have an advantage in not being so directly implicated in the international trouble as we are; but even in this country I feel that it would be all to the good if people kept constantly in mind the things of the 'spirit' that are destined to endure, and refused to be absorbed by the forces and movements of rebarbarisation which today hold European civilisation in their grip. I cannot help recalling the circumstances under which I wrote, at the close of the last great war, in the conclusion of '*Shakespeare Identified*', a protest against the materialistic aims then in vogue. . . . Those materialistic aims pursued in Europe during the intervening twenty-one years have borne their natural fruit . . . the consummation of that materialism harnessed to a stupendous national

egoism which has afflicted other nations besides Germany. To me, however, it does not appear to be a struggle between democracy and dictatorship so much as between material force and spiritual interests; between a brutal national egoism and the claims of Humanity; and as an Englishman I am proud to feel that my country stands on the side of Humanity and spiritual liberty, and alongside of France is destined to lead the way towards a recovery in Europe of a true sense of spiritual values.

"This is where our interest in Shakespeare and all the greatest of the poets come in.

"Amidst the darkness of the present times we shall do well therefore to make a special effort to keep alive every spark of interest in their work. More even than in normal times we need them today, however incompatible they may seem with the tragedy that overshadows us. My own work, '*Shakespeare Identified*', was largely the result of an attempt to do this during the last war: a refusal to be engulfed by an untoward environment even when suffering most poignantly from the loss of many who were dear to me.

"This then is part of our share in the present day struggle: to insist even in the slaughter and distress of battle fields and bombardments by sea and air on the supremacy of the things of the human soul."

NEWS-LETTER  
THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP  
AMERICAN BRANCH

VOLUME I      FEBRUARY, 1940      NUMBER 2

*President*

Louis P. Bénétzet, A.M., Ph.D.

*Vice-Presidents*

James Stewart Cushman

Mrs. Eva Turner Clark

*Secretary and Treasurer*

Charles Wisner Barrell

Occasional meetings of the American Branch will be held, for which special notices will be sent to members. Dues for membership in the American Branch are \$2.50 a year, which sum includes one year's subscription to the NEWS-LETTER.

The officers of the American Branch will act as an editorial board for the publication of the NEWS-LETTER, which will appear every other month, or six times a year.

News items, comments by readers and articles of interest to all students of Shakespeare and of the acknowledged mystery that surrounds the authorship of the plays and poems, are desired. Such material must be of reasonable brevity. No compensation can be made to writers beyond the sincere thanks of the Editorial Board. Articles and letters will express the opinions of their authors, not necessarily of the editors. They may be sent to Charles Wisner Barrell, 17 East 48th Street, New York, N. Y.

## FUNDS NEEDED FOR EXPLORATION

An adequate endowment fund should be made available without delay to insure the continuance of Oxford-Shakespeare research among sources that have been definitely proven worthy of painstaking exploration.

All major discoveries in this field have been accomplished to date by individuals working on their own time and at their own expense—a situation that has entailed considerable self-sacrifice.

These enthusiasts have fought an uphill battle against entrenched prejudice and the powerful vested interests of professional Stratfordia. To date not one penny has come their way from any of the numerous research foundations that during the same period have lavished thousands upon

proponents of ineffective "orthodoxy." But despite all handicaps, needlessly imposed delays and misrepresentations, the Oxfordian explorers have finally succeeded in excavating the richest vein of biographical and historical ore ever opened before the eyes of living men.

At the same time, these pioneers realize only too well that time and tools of high precision are needed to bring the new-found treasures to the surface intact. Therefore—

Individuals or foundations with funds to allot for the advancement of knowledge are respectfully urged to investigate the Oxfordian discoveries with the idea of insuring the permanence of the facts which they represent.

Oxfordian projects already mapped out along scientific lines must also be assured of completion. Monetary aid rendered for such purposes can be made to return the same substantial dividends of prestige that inevitably accrue to backers of successful expeditions.

## PERCY ALLEN'S BEST BOOK

We are happy to announce shipment to the Secretary of THE FELLOWSHIP of a consignment of thirty copies of Percy Allen's most stimulating book on the Oxford-Shakespeare evidence, *The Life Story of Edward de Vere as "William Shakespeare."*

Written in Mr. Allen's happiest vein and literally crammed with facts and suggestions enough to fill three volumes of ordinary composition, *The Life Story* has hitherto been unavailable for American readers.

The price at which copies can be mailed postpaid in the United States and Canada is \$2.10 apiece.

The Secretary shall be glad to accept orders immediately.

But owing to the small number of copies that will be available, members of THE FELLOWSHIP should lose no time in sending in their reservations for this work by the veteran Oxfordian dramatic critic, novelist and playwright who has personally visited most of the scenes that he describes while following Edward de Vere's strange career.

## DEFINITION

To copy from one book is called plagiarism. To copy from three books is called research.

Harry Hansen

# Rapid Growth of Research Fellowship Means End of Pompous Obstructionists

*Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known . . . the interpretation thereof.*

DANIEL, 5, 8.

Thanks to the foresight and enthusiasm of Mrs. Eva Turner Clark of 470 Park Avenue, New York City, the American Branch of THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP was organized November 10, 1939.

Five active members of the parent organization of London including Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Mary B. Herridge of Ottawa, James Stewart Cushman, Paul Munter and Charles Wisner Barrell, together with seven friends interested in the Oxford-Shakespeare theory of authorship, attended the organizational meeting.

Since that date, less than three months ago, THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP — American Branch — has made rapid strides and now has nearly sixty paid-up members on its roster. Before the present year has passed we confidently look forward to a membership of at least one hundred and fifty active proponents of the new order of Shakespearean research.

Members of the American Branch include, as we go to press:

The library of one of the most progressive colleges in the United States.

The oldest college library in the United States.

The librarian of one of the ancient chartered companies of London.

One of the world's foremost rare book experts who has owned at various times more copies of Shakespeare's First Folio than any other living person.

The business manager of one of America's finest theatres.

Two playwrights.

Two popular novelists.

A distinguished motion picture producer.

The senior member of a famous and highly successful firm of book publishers.

Five college professors, one of them formerly a Shakespearean editor and now literary adviser to a great publishing house.

A typographical expert.

Three American attorneys of international reputation.

One prominent barrister of British Columbia.

Two well-known musicians.

The foremost American engraver of armorial devices.

A famous American physician and Shakespearean scholar.

A well-known New York advertising man.

An executive officer of the United States Forest Service.

One of the most widely read dramatic critics on the Pacific Coast.

Contacts made with leading American newspaper and magazine editors, art directors and writers assure THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP on this side of the Atlantic full and fair consideration of all its aims and accomplishments. We are definitely "on the map" and henceforth our point of view cannot be ignored by anyone who undertakes seriously to evaluate the evidence relating to the personality behind the creations of "Mr. William Shakespeare."

Editorial barricades that have heretofore been guarded by dyed-in-the-wool Stratfordians have been breached if not entirely removed. Anyone with a thorough grounding in Oxfordian research who can write an interesting article or give voice to a stimulating talk can now secure a hearing.

Stratfordian professors who have been able to pocket a few extra dollars in the past by advising magazine editors, play producers and book publishers against printing or producing Oxford-Shakespeare evidence will find this source of income closed. They will either have to convince editors, publishers and producers that they know more about the theme they are asked to criticize than the person who wrote it, or compromise their own reputations for omniscience. For years it has been the practice of many of these "authorities" to condemn all Oxfordian literature out of hand without bothering to read it. Their stock phrases "absurd" and "quite impossible" have now lost weight.

The 1940 editor, publisher and producer is going to demand a bill of particulars from those who seek to demolish Oxfordian research with a pompous pursing of oracular lips.

## Ben Jonson and the First Folio

*A Review by Lieut.-Col. Montagu W. Douglas, C.S.I., C.I.E.  
President The Shakespeare Fellowship of Great Britain*

Sir George Greenwood reached the positive conclusion that the plays of Shakespeare must in the main be attributed to a gifted aristocrat of the Elizabethan Court; and that the evidence of Ben Jonson, the supposed "sheet anchor of the traditional belief", as contained in the documents prefixed to the first Folio, must be rejected.

Dr. G. H. Rendall, following his own line of argument, arrives at a similar conclusion. He shows that Ben Jonson was in close touch with those most concerned with the production of the Folio; more especially, with Mary Lady Pembroke, whose house at Wilton was the resort of the leading literary figures of the period. The Folio was dedicated to her sons, the "Incomparable Paire", one of whom, William, had for a time been engaged to Oxford's daughter Bridget, while his brother, Philip, married Susan, his younger daughter.

In 1615, when Ben Jonson was at the height of his fame as producer of Plays and Court Masques, the Earl of Pembroke succeeded to the office of Lord Chamberlain. And in 1616, the year of the death of Shakespeare of Stratford, there occurs a marked gap in Ben Jonson's productive activity. This may reasonably be connected with the commencement of the editorial labours involved in the compilation of the Folio, under the direction of the Pembroke Group. Sir George Greenwood, though he rejected any suggestion that the Plays as a whole were attributable to Bacon, admitted his possible collaboration in the compilation of the Folio. Dr. Rendall examines in detail with his usual scholarly discernment the preludes to the Folio, and finds that the dedicatory epistle and address as well as the tributary odes, were the work of Ben Jonson, and form part of a definite scheme to mislead the interested public. He traces further the ties of intimacy which linked Ben Jonson to Holland, Digges, and I. M. (James Mabbe) and their obvious subjection to his authority as Editor.

There is no evidence of any "idolatrous" appreciation, or even of personal friendship between Ben Jonson and Shakespeare; and he made no

sign by ode or other recognition, on the occasion of the death of the latter. The exuberant tributes of the Folio were in the main advertisement to promote the sale of the work. It was not a commercial speculation, and the heavy expenditure, far beyond the means at the command of the publishers, must have been met by Patrons.

Dr. Rendall discusses the motives, which prompted the venture; and finds no personal interest in the collection and publication of plays by the Stratford man. The motives must be found in family and filial desire to perpetuate the works of their distinguished relative the Earl of Oxford, whose reputation as Poet and Playwright in the opinion of the best Elizabethan critics was second to none.

The question arises as to why the authorship should have been further concealed, seeing that Oxford had died in 1604 and Shakespeare of Stratford in 1616. The "present writer" has suggested that this was in deference to Edward de Vere's own wishes, expressed in the Sonnets:

"Do not so much as my poor name  
rehearse" . . . S.71

"My name be buried where my body is" S.72

"I once dead to all the world must die" S.81

Dr. Rendall, to whom the question was referred, replied:

"In your summary, I attach more weight than you assign to the canons of social and literary convention. Few things are more binding than *étiquettes*; and we must remember that the 'Son and Heir,' as well as the family group of the Patrons, and the Earl of Southampton, were still alive, and deeply compromised in name and fame by disclosure of actual authorship."

Finally Dr. Rendall draws attention to a "wholesale and drastic omission" in the exclusion of the Sonnets from the Folio text. These poems bear such traces of the life and handiwork of their author, Edward de Vere, that their inclusion would have rendered futile any effort to conceal the authorship of the Plays.

We have in this pamphlet a formidable attack on the citadel of orthodoxy "the evidence of Ben Jonson." Coming from a scholar of Dr. Rendall's judgment and standing it deserves consideration.



## Shakespeare Read Books Written in Greek

Steevens, one of the early commentators on the Shakespeare plays, says of the following lines from *Titus Andronicus* (I.i.179):

The Greeks upon advice did bury Ajax,  
That slew himself: and wise Laertes' son  
Did graciously plead for his funerals.

"This passage alone would sufficiently convince me that the play before us was the work of one who was conversant with the Greek tragedies in their original language. We have here a plain allusion to the *Ajax* of Sophocles, of which no translation was extant in the time of Shakespeare. In that piece Agamemnon consents at last to allow Ajax the rites of sepulture, and Ulysses is the pleader whose arguments prevail in favour of his remains."

Professor John Churton Collins, in *Studies in Shakespeare* (ed. 1904), has gone deeply into the Greek allusions in all of the plays and finds, besides the passage quoted above, innumerable parallels in thought and expression, so many indeed that he states, "If Shakespeare had not read the *Ajax* and been influentially impressed by it, there is an end to all evidence founded on reference and parallelism. Reminiscences of it seem to haunt his dramas."

Collins also comments on the following dialogue from *Troilus and Cressida* (III.iii.):

*Ulysses.*                      A strange fellow here

Writes me: That man . . .  
Feels not what he owes but by reflection.

*Achilles.*                      This is not strange, Ulysses,  
The beauty that is borne here in the face  
The bearer knows not, but commends itself  
To other's eyes; nor doth the eye itself,  
That most pure spirit of sense behold itself  
Not going from itself, but eye to eye oppos'd  
Salutes each other . . .

*Ulysses.*                      I do not strain at the position,  
It is familiar, but *at the author's drift*,  
Who . . .

"A strange fellow," says Collins, "is Plato," as is "the author" in the later reference.

Collins then gives a literal version of the material portions of the parallel passage from Plato (too long to include here) which suggested

to the dramatist the dialogue quoted above, and says that Plato was only accessible in Shakespeare's time through a Latin version translated by Ficino, published at Bale in 1551; another edition of Ficino's version, published at Venice in 1581; and a translation by Janus Cornarius, published at Bale in 1561. Collins believes that, while the Stratford youth did not know Greek, he did know enough Latin to read these translations and in that way became familiar with the best of the Greek classics. However, he mentions only Plato as being accessible through a Latin translation and does not say that the *Ajax* of Sophocles was thus accessible.

Another passage which has attracted the attention of students of the Greek language follows (*Merchant of Venice*, III.ii.57.):

Now he goes,  
With no less presence but with much more  
love  
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem  
The virgin tribute, paid by howling Troy  
To the sea-monster.

Hunter says, "There is something very Greekish in this; something which seems to show that Shakespeare was acquainted with the structure of the Greek drama, and he shows his acquaintance with it at the proper time, when Portia compares herself to the virgin devoted by Laomedon to the sea-monster."

All three commentators quoted above attribute the authorship of the Shakespeare plays to William Shakspeare of Stratford who is conjectured to have "left school" at the tender age of twelve, became a butcher's apprentice, married at eighteen, and had three children by the time he was twenty. With domestic responsibilities resting heavily upon him, how, when, or where could he have found the opportunity to study the difficult Greek language? Could he even have studied the Greek classics in a Latin version? In view of the way this Stratford man spent his last years — as a maltster, in money-lending, and in small suits at law — can we imagine that he ever had an inclination to do so? He permitted his daughter to grow up without learning to read her native English or to write her own name, as pointed out by Mr. Barrell in the December

NEWS-LETTER. Is that fact consonant with an unusual love of knowledge on the father's part, such as the study of Greek indicates? No, no, no! a thousand times, No!

The plays clearly demonstrate that their author was familiar with the Greek classics. All of the probabilities indicate that William Shakspeare of Stratford was not familiar with the Greek classics. We have, then, to look for the man who was.

The dramatist of the Elizabethan period, highly acclaimed by contemporary critics, who could and did know Greek and Latin (French and Italian as well) was Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.

Lord Oxford spent his youth in the household of Sir William Cecil (later Lord Burghley) and Lady Cecil, both of whom were noted Greek scholars, especially the latter, a daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, one of the Governors to King Edward VI, who, it is said, "taught his daughters what he taught his Prince." Lord Oxford had for tutors several outstanding scholars, who must have been familiar with Greek. He was a purchaser of ancient classics at an early age. Furthermore, upon the birth of his first child, while he was travelling in Italy, he sent as a gift to his Countess a Greek testament upon the fly-leaf of which he had written a Latin poem, a series of

puns on the words *vera* and *veritas* suggesting among other things that her motto be *Ever Lover of the Truth*. While the poem was in Latin, with which easier language Lord Oxford was doubtless more familiar, the fact that it was written in a Greek testament indicates his interest in the older language.

In Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, noted Elizabethan dramatist, we have an author clearly equipped with knowledge of the Greek classics, knowledge he had gained through residence with the Cecil family whose special delight was the study of Greek; knowledge he had gained through such famous men as tutors as Sir Thomas Smith, the well-known statesman, scholar and author, his uncle Arthur Golding translator of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and other classics, and Lawrence Nowell, Dean of Lichfield, brother of the learned Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's. Two old account books record Lord Oxford's purchases, at the age of nineteen, of a Geneva Bible, Plutarch's works in French, two Italian books, Tully's and Plato's works, with other books and papers. These books, which show the scholarly mind of the purchaser, are all books which students of Shakespeare recognize as entirely familiar to the author of the plays.

Eva Turner Clark

## Best Wishes From Abroad

It has been a pleasure to receive letters from several members of THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP of Great Britain, expressing keen approval of the organization of the American Branch. With the uncertainty of day to day conditions in war-torn Europe, the knowledge that the case for Oxford as "Shakespeare" will be continued in this part of the world preserves the sense of intellectual continuity that is an outstanding characteristic of many inhabitants of the British Isles.

Lieut.-Col. Montagu W. Douglas, as President of the parent association, backs his hearty endorsement of our aims with a written contribution.

Extracts from a most interesting personal communication from Mr. J. Thomas Looney, our beloved dean, also appear elsewhere in this issue.

Captain Bernard M. Ward, who ranks next to Mr. Looney in the regard of Oxfordians generally for his achievement in writing the authoritative life of Edward de Vere, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, has been heard from, we are glad to say.

Captain Ward was called into active service at the outbreak of the war. But a physical disability, dating from World War service, has recently put him on the inactive list. He expects to be made available for "light duty" in the immediate future. Captain Ward's many friends in this part of the world would like to see him assigned to a study of the military tactics of Shakespeare or some similar duty at the Folger Library in Washington or the Huntington Library in San Marino, Cal.

Despite severe financial reverses, aggravated by poor health and the loss of his twin brother, Mr. Percy Allen, Honorary Secretary of THE FELLOWSHIP in London, expresses warm approval of the public interest that is being aroused in the Oxford-Shakespeare case over here. He also speaks of a desire to get out a new edition of his *Life Story of Edward de Vere*. We confidently predict that Mr. Allen will soon be back in harness, lecturing to large audiences with his accustomed vigor and conviction.

## "Elizabethan Mystery Man" A Digest of Oxford Case

To meet the need for cheaply priced literature on Edward de Vere and his well-proven relationship to the creative career of "Mr. William Shakespeare," August Gauthier of 17 East 48th Street, New York City, has issued Charles Wisner Barrell's digest of Oxfordian evidence, *ELIZABETHAN MYSTERY MAN*, in pamphlet form.

The booklet takes its title from the essay which aroused so much comment when it originally appeared in *The Saturday Review of Literature* in 1937. A recent editorial in the *New York Times* referred to this outline of the Oxford authorship evidence as "an enlightening summary."

Mr. Barrell has revised and amplified *ELIZABETHAN MYSTERY MAN* and combined it with a previously unpublished paper called "Shakespearean Detective Story," founded upon the interesting discoveries of Dr. A. S. Cairncross relating to the creation and stage production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in 1589 or earlier. As orthodox authorities conjecture the masterpiece to have been written between 1601 and 1603, the Cairncross findings represent a revolution in Shakespearean chronology. They also show the utter impossibility of the Stratford man's responsibility for the creation of *Hamlet* — unless he wrote it while working as a butcher's apprentice in his native village.

Two rare and valuable reproductions are used to illustrate Mr. Barrell's pages. The first is a full-page plate of the Duke of St. Albans' portrait of Edward de Vere, evidently painted by Marcus Gheeraedts the Younger about 1586. Prior to its appearance in the *Scientific American* for January, 1940, as one of the comparative pictures used by Mr. Barrell in his article "Identifying 'Shakespeare' With X-Rays and Infra-Red Photography," the St. Albans portrait had never been publicly reproduced. It is one of the key exhibits in the Oxford authorship case and will be prized by collectors generally.

The second illustration is another full-page plate of the exceedingly rare First Quarto title-page of *Hamlet* from the Henry E. Huntington Library copy.

The subject matter covered in this handbook can be gathered from the page headings, which run as follows:

The Portrait of Edward de Vere 17th Earl of Oxford.

The Face That "Shakes a Spear."

The Poet-Peer's Background.

Oxford's Theatrical Affairs.

The Earl's "Shakespearean" Style.

The Dual Personality.

Hamlet's Encounter With Pirates.

An Actor Steals the Play.

The Thief Bides His Time.

"My Invention" Of a Pen-Name.

Lord Oxford's Hand in "Shakespeare's" Works.

For distribution among people who require a brief and accurate outline of the evidence connecting Edward de Vere with the Shakespearean works, this pamphlet is excellently suited. It is bound in a careful approximation of the ancient "Reading tawny" color that Lord Oxford's retainers — including his theatrical troupes — wore in Elizabethan days.

The price of *ELIZABETHAN MYSTERY MAN* is 25 cents a Copy, or Five Copies for \$1., postpaid only in the United States. For foreign mailing, add 5 cents for One or Five Copies.

## COLLECTORS, GIVE EAR

We are proud to announce that Number One, Volume One of the *NEWS-LETTER* has been deposited in the famous collection of "first copies" owned by the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers of London.

This is the same chartered company which controlled the printing crafts in the days when Edward de Vere Earl of Oxford was known as the patron and familiar friend of many popular writers.

Mr. F. D. Bone, Honorary Librarian of the Stationers' Company has sent us part of *The Saturday Magazine* for August 15, 1840, containing an interesting article on Hedingham Castle, Essex, Edward de Vere's birthplace. It is illustrated with a fine woodcut of the ancient stronghold of the Earls of Oxford — which Lord Burghley forced De Vere to relinquish about 1590. Some years later the property was restored to the Earl's widow and her son.

"I like to believe that some of the early Shakespeare plays were written here," Mr. Bone comments. A great many other people are coming to the same state of mind, we may add.

## THE NEAPOLITAN PRINCE

Ner. *First, there is the Neapolitan Prince.*

Por. *Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk about his horse.*

Merchant of Venice, I.ii.38.

Dr. Johnson suggests that "perhaps in the enumeration of Portia's suitors there may be some covert allusion to those of Queen Elizabeth," but he does not attempt to identify them.

In Queen Elizabeth's day, the Kingdom of Naples was part of the vast empire ruled over by Philip II. Philip's illegitimate half-brother, Don John of Austria, following his success as leader of the Armada which was victorious against the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, spent most of his time for the next five years at Naples. He surrounded himself with a small but luxurious court at which the famous Venetian ambassador, Lippomano, was in attendance for nearly a year.

In a long report to the Doge and Senate of Venice on the Kingdom of Naples and the state of its defences, Lippomano sketches the character of the Prince to whom he had been accredited. Sir William Stirling-Maxwell gives the account in his *Don John of Austria*, from which is taken the following excerpt: "The Lord Don John of Austria . . . is of middle stature, well made, of a most beautiful countenance, and of admirable grace. . . . He dresses sumptuously, and with such nicety that it is a marvel to see him. Active and perfectly skilful, he has no rival in the management of horses, and in jousting, in all kinds of military sports and tournaments." He had, indeed, taken a prize at one of the most famous tournaments on record, that at Piacenza, in 1574. Even in his childhood it is reported that, while he disliked his studies, "riding on horseback both in the military style and in that of the manege is his chief delight."

In 1576, Don John was sent as Governor to the Netherlands, one of the Spanish dominions, with a scheme for the invasion of England and a marriage with Mary Stuart, with whom he would then occupy the English throne. "In the marriage of Don John the Pope Gregory XIII took a most paternal interest. He was at first greatly taken with the idea of matching him with Queen Elizabeth, an idea which appears to have originated in one of the personal and political coquetries of that Princess herself. In this connexion the Pope saw the restoration of England and her Queen to

the Roman communion, and in the Papal balance that great advantage to the Church, of course, far outweighed the mere rights of the Catholic Mary Stuart. . . . The Nuncio at Madrid was therefore ordered to urge upon the King the propriety of employing Don John as a missionary-husband for the conversion of Elizabeth and her realms." (Stirling-Maxwell).

It is unnecessary to inquire further into Don John's activities in the Low Countries, for nothing came of the scheme outlined above. It is enough for us to know that he was the Neapolitan Prince, that he was a lover of horses, and that at one time his marriage with Queen Elizabeth was suggested, for us to identify that Prince as Don John of Austria.

Eva Turner Clark

## AN OXFORDIAN'S HAPPY THOUGHT

Flodden W. Heron, who with Ada Hanifin of the San Francisco Examiner and George Frisbee, the Elizabethan rancher of Sonoma County, keeps the new Oxfordian lamps burning brightly on the Pacific Coast, has evolved an interesting hobby.

This is called The Book-Stamp Plan and combines the association of "first-day covers" of the now famous American Authors series of stamps with cheap editions or second-hand copies of books written by the same authors. It is an ingenious idea and seems destined to be taken up in a big way by boys and girls all over the country. Readers of the NEWS-LETTER who wish to know more about this inexpensive and clever way to build a library of assured future value should write direct to Mr. Heron, Mills Building, San Francisco, California, for literature on the subject.

Mr. Heron hopes in time to persuade the Postmaster General to issue a series of stamps showing famous American actors in Shakespearean roles.

## THE EARLE OF OXFORD'S MARCH

On Saturday, December 16th last, three pieces by William Byrd, "The Earle of Oxford's March," "Pavana," and "The Bells," were performed for the first time in this country by the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra under the direction of John Barbirolli. "The result," said a critic, "is a worthwhile addition to the repertoire, for Byrd's brief creations are typical products of his genius which flowered in the middle of the sixteenth century. The performance was an admirable one."