

# News-Letter

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### The Author of "Shakespeare" Identified

#### Comments on Professor Campbell's Article in Harpers

*The following article, not written for publication, is the reply of Mr. J. Thomas Looney, author of "SHAKESPEARE" IDENTIFIED IN EDWARD DE VERE, THE SEVENTEENTH EARL OF OXFORD (1920), to a query from one of our members, Miss Lois Adelaide Book, of Columbus, Indiana. Miss Book sent to Mr. Looney a copy of Professor Oscar James Campbell's article, "Shakespeare Himself," published in Harpers Magazine for July, and asked his opinion of it. Miss Book generously wishes to share Mr. Looney's incontrovertible argument with fellow members of The Shakespeare Fellowship and the NEWS-LETTER is proud and happy to be able to publish it.*

Professor Campbell's article recalls to my mind a comment of Disraeli's upon a book he reviewed: "For those who like this kind of thing, this is just the kind of thing that they will like." Those who wish to believe that the Stratford man wrote the plays, and would be much upset if they thought there was strong evidence that Oxford was the dramatist, will, no doubt, be able to draw some comfort from the Professor's pleasant and skillful skimming over the surface of things; but he is not likely to make much impression on serious students of the problem.

His method is, of course, just that of counsel for the defence of a criminal faced with a mass of mutually corroborating evidence against his client, and making the best of what he feels to be a weak case. That is, he points to the inconclusiveness of this, that, or the other piece of evidence, viewed by itself, and seeks to divert attention from the manner in which the different elements in the evidence all fit in with one another. It is the business, however, of judge and opposing counsel to recall attention to this aspect, and so his method seldom imposes upon a jury. If this common legal trick were able to secure the acquittal of any one accused of a criminal act, we might just as well close our criminal courts and dismiss a large proportion of the detective staffs.

"Mr. Barrell's logic," says Professor Campbell,

"runs somewhat as follows: The Ashbourne portrait of Shakespeare is really a likeness of the Earl of Oxford. Therefore the Earl of Oxford wrote Shakespeare's plays." (p. 173, column L.)

This is, of course, a quite inadequate statement of the situation. Mr. Barrell had become convinced that Oxford was "Shakespeare" before he undertook these investigations, and on the strength of evidence which has completely convinced many other competent students. Further, by an examination of the general body of "Shakespeare" portraits, Father Beauclerc had convinced himself that the Earl of Oxford furnished the general basis of Shakespeare portraiture. It was with this knowledge and under these circumstances that Mr. Barrell applied X-ray investigation to the Ashbourne portrait. On his major assumption that the Earl of Oxford was "Shakespeare" he went to the Ashbourne portrait and found there just what he expected to find. Precisely the kind of evidence which has clinched many a case and secured the conviction of many a criminal. Under such circumstances, it has to be considered whether it was mere accidental coincidence that led some portrait fakers to alight upon a portrait of Oxford in making a fraudulent Shakespeare portrait, or whether the thing was done deliberately by those who believed Oxford to be Shakespeare. The latter is the simpler and more rational hypothesis, especially when the

same thing is found to be true of other Shakespeare portraits. (I had already pointed to similar strikingly parallel facts respecting the Grafton portrait. See final Appendix to "Shakespeare" Identified.)

In the second column on p. 174 of his article, Professor Campbell recognizes that the appearance of the Oxford theory is rapidly ousting all competitors, and had he known something of the mental calibre of many of the men who now support it, it should have made him realize that it rests upon a body of evidence vastly stronger than anything he represents in his article. In brief, I accuse him of a deliberate attempt, not to present the Oxford case fairly and squarely, as honest opponents of ideas do with the cases they controvert, but to set it forth so flimsily, and even grotesquely, that hardly any one but an imbecile could very well believe in it if it rested on nothing more substantial. This is the kind of argumentation one associates with political maneuvering rather than a serious quest for the truth on great issues and it makes one suspect that he is not very easy in his own mind about the case.

Certainly his method should make us very cautious about accepting any of his statements that are not properly supported by references, chapter and verse. This applies specially to what he says of competent penmen who "attest" documents by placing their "marks." All the normal probabilities are against such supposition, and we should therefore require to know all the facts of each case before accepting the statement and allowing it to influence our judgment. I admit that I have known people who *could* sign their names but who preferred to make their "marks." But in all such cases they have been old and thoroughly illiterate people who had almost forgotten how to write and could only have produced a signature of a deplorable character and with extreme difficulty; in whose cases it has been an act of kindness to excuse a signature and accept a "mark." That a person who wrote letters fluently but did not sign his name is the kind of case that would demand thorough enquiry: it certainly cannot be accepted at its face value. The fact is, of course, that a few centuries ago many very intelligent people, quite capable of *composing* excellent letters, were unable to write and frequently made use of a friend to write at their dictation. This would seem to offer a more rational explanation of good letters coming from people who elsewhere used a "mark" in lieu of a signature, than that they could quite easily have signed their names legibly but preferred to make a mark. In any case we should require to know more of the cases cited by Professor

Campbell than he presents, and his controversial method does not encourage us to form judgments merely on his personal statement.

Professor Campbell takes exception to the use made by Oxfordians of the words of Meres, which he speaks of as "persistent perversion of a piece of evidence" (the placing of Oxford's name first on the list of best for comedy, "being in the Professor's opinion *merely etiquette*"). In the strict letter Campbell is no doubt right, but in point of fact he is not. Meres must be read in conjunction with other contemporary evidence. Puttenham (1589) names Oxford as *one* of the two best. The foremost position which etiquette required should be given to Oxford's name had therefore other substantial justification.

Not only must Meres be read in the light of Puttenham, but also in the light of subsequent references to Oxford's position in Elizabethan drama. At intervals from those days to the present time, the name of Oxford has cropped up on each occasion emphasizing his pre-eminence as a writer of comedy. Oxfordians have therefore nothing to withdraw in point of fact, even if the words of Meres, by themselves, do not admit of the implications sometimes attached to them.

What, however, is more to the point in connection with this reference to Meres is that the work of all the others whose names follow that of Oxford is known and much of it survives. Oxford, whose name stands first, is *the only one the whole of whose work, plays and titles alike, has been completely lost.*

Professor Campbell calls attention to certain other facts in these lists of Meres which, closely looked into, furnish their own quota of evidence in Oxford's favour. Oxford's name appears only in the list of "best for comedy." Shakespeare's name is in both lists: "best for comedy" and "best for tragedy."

We have first to take into account the character of this work of Meres. It is, in the part under consideration, a compilation of facts, names of authors and some of their works etc., such as could be gathered either from works already published, or from people moving in literary and dramatic circles respecting their activities and those of their acquaintances. of works in hand or ready for publication. The actual authority for any particular fact given is therefore uncertain. It implies no direct personal contact of Meres with any particular author or personal inside knowledge of secret literary activities. All was grist that came to his mill by

whatever means it was carried and he was evidently at very considerable pains to gather from any available source.

Oxford, as was well-known, according to Putterham, was of high repute as a writer of comedy. "Shakespeare," from works already published, was the author of *Venus, Lucrece*, and both comedies and tragedies. Titles of some unpublished Shakespeare works were furnished either directly or indirectly through people associated with the author or the stage, one title appearing in the list without any subsequent authorization.

In putting down Oxford as one of the best for comedy and "Shakespeare" as the author of both comedies and tragedies, Meres was only recording common knowledge open to every Englishman who could read. It therefore carries no implication of a knowledge that they were two different writers.

What is of special significance is that, at the time when in his early life Oxford was seen involved in dramatic activities, it was specially as a writer of comedy (which does not imply that he did not also write tragedy). Under the Oxford theory the writing of tragedy would therefore belong mainly to his later years, the years of his retirement when he wrote under the Shakespeare *nom de plume*. All Shakespearean scholarship is in full agreement with this view: that the comedies belong in the main to the author's early life and the tragedies to his later life.

## Are Other Members Doing Likewise?

The Literary Department of the Henderson County Woman's Club of Athens, Texas, whose purpose is the maintenance of the Henderson County Memorial Library, has undertaken for the coming winter a comprehensive study of the Oxford theory of Shakespeare authorship. The first meeting of the season was held on October 1st and the program for that day was pronounced most interesting and delightful. Several members of the Club are members of The Shakespeare Fellowship.

## Sisson's Researches

The Cambridge University Press has just issued *The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, by C. J. Sisson. Hitherto, most of our knowledge of Richard Hooker, his life, and writings has been based on the biography written long ago by Izaak Walton. In his quest of information regarding great Elizabethans, Professor Sisson had the good fortune to discover valuable material in Chancery Records which throws light on the fate of Hooker's manuscripts and his relations with his wife, quite at variance with Walton's story.

We are already indebted to Professor Sisson for his work on Thomas Lodge, contributed to a volume of Elizabethan studies, drawn from the public records. We could wish that it were possible for him to continue his research but alas! in these days of incendiary bombs, records have been put away for safekeeping, if anything is safe in England now.

Regarding England's public records, *The Times Literary Supplement* says, "The vast accumulation of our records, which have assuredly many more literary secrets to reveal, has been made possible by the security which this country has happily enjoyed through the centuries. Other lands, less fortunate, have suffered grievous loss in this respect, while civil strife has taken its toll, as in the destruction of the Irish records in our own day. A country which loses these monuments of the past loses priceless material for its political and social history. In these perilous days researchers must be content in the knowledge that documents for their studies are temporarily inaccessible in the interest of their safety."

It is comforting to have this assurance that the invaluable records of England are only "temporarily inaccessible." Although one of the minor aspects of this hideous war, it is nevertheless a thousand pities that so able and persevering a research student as Professor Sisson should be compelled to cease his work.

Research in English public records, and in private records too, has long beckoned to members of the Shakespeare Fellowship. When England regains peace and normal living and her records are again accessible, we hope it may be possible for some among us to take up further research into the life of Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

## Canon Rendall's Pamphlet

An account of the X-ray examination of the so-called "Ashbourne" portrait of Shakespeare was published in an article by Charles Wisner Barrell in the January number of the *Scientific American*. In this illustrated article, Mr. Barrell shows that in its original state the work was a portrait of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, by Cornelius Ketel, a Dutch artist of established reputation. Upon this important revelation and the failure to accord it deserved recognition, Canon Gerald H. Rendall in a pamphlet recently issued, makes the following comment: "It seems strange that the champions of orthodoxy, the organs of literature, and the vested interests of Stratford-on-Avon, should combine to boycott all mention or discussion of so interesting a discovery. But in default of other openings, I make bold to state the case on behalf of a cause I have long had at heart, and to add supplementary comments and findings in support of those already adduced."

Canon Rendall then proceeds to trace the history of the portrait from the time of the death of the widowed Countess of Oxford and that of her son, the childless 18th Earl, to her brother, Sir Francis Trentham who, having largely supported the Countess during her last years, fell heir to most of her property. Following his death and, in 1644, that of his son of the same name, and the deaths soon after of the latter's two brothers, who died without issue, the estates of the second Sir Francis fell to the ownership of his only daughter. This daughter, Elizabeth, "the heiress of the rich lordship of Rocester," became the wife of Brian Cokayne, later Viscount Cullen. Members of the Cokayne family had taken a leading part in founding and establishing the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School at Ashbourne. During the years of the Civil War, Royalist families in the Midlands, such as the Trenthams and the Cokaynes, were exposed to all manner of risks, sacrifices, and vicissitudes of fortune. Besides which, Elizabeth Trentham was such an extravagant person that she dissipated the whole of her inherited fortune. At such crises, says Canon Rendall, family portraits are a recurrent problem, and about that of the Earl of Oxford no precise *testimonia* are extant; but probable surmises are admissible. That it had no abiding value for Elizabeth Trentham herself seems clear; for the Cokayne family it had no association, and there was no place for it on the walls of Ashbourne Hall.

Successive removals had by this time reduced it to a "tattered condition." Such interest as still attached to it was by now probably literary, rather than ancestral, and it seems by no means unlikely that the Hall of the local Grammar School, the school founded by the Cokayne family, suggested itself as a place of "honourable internment."

At this turn in its fortunes the portrait may have been remodelled as Shakespeare, suggests Canon Rendall, and the forged inscription superadded. There lies the real crux of the problem—the how? why? and by whom? of defacement. That it was deliberate is obvious—a more or less ingenious contrivance to divert inquiry and interest to a half-truth.

Canon Rendall concludes, "To discover an answer to a hard riddle is always gratifying, but for me the central interest lies in the direct and convincing corroborations which these enquiries have contributed in favour of crediting Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, with authorship, in whole or part, of the Shakespearean plays."

The New York Times Book Review carries a weekly column entitled "News and Views of Literary London," written by Herbert W. Horwill. The following interesting paragraph on Canon Rendall's pamphlet is included in the issue of October 27th: "Even in these days the question of the authorship of the plays attributed to Shakespeare has not utterly dropped out of the public mind. A distinguished scholar, Canon Gerald H. Rendall, has issued a pamphlet (published by Benham & Co., Colchester) calling attention to a curious discovery affecting an alleged portrait of Shakespeare which formerly hung on the walls of Ashbourne Grammar School. An X-ray examination shows that in its original state this was a portrait of Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, by the Dutch painter, Ketel. Now this is an interesting revelation, in view of the fact that Edward de Vere is one of the persons claimed to be a possible author of the plays. If, however, we assume that he actually wrote them and that the secret was carefully guarded, how did it come about that his portrait was subsequently altered to look like Shakespeare? Canon Rendall's own theory is that the alteration was a more or less ingenious contrivance to throw inquirers off the scent."

The portrait under discussion is now in the possession of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D. C.

## Shake-scene and Shake-Rags

There are two, and only two, props underneath the structure of Stratfordianism which cause any misgivings to believers in the Oxford theory of the authorship of the Shakespeare plays and poems. One is the statement of Ben Jonson, which has been successfully refuted by Dr. Rendall. The other is the reference to "Shake-scene" in Robert Greene's deathbed letter to his three playwright friends in which he warns them against a certain loud, coarse, conceited actor. The fact that Greene, in this letter, also uses a parody on a well known line in *King Henry VI*, part 3, clinches the argument, say the Stratfordians, one and all.

But let us not allow our emotions to run away with our reason. There are certain obstinate facts in the way:

1. No writer of Shakspeare's time ever intimated that Greene's attack was directed at Shakspeare.
2. It was the latter part of the 18th century before any one (Thomas Tyrwhitt) suggested that Greene might be referring to the Stratford man.
3. Many scholars of Tyrwhitt's time refused to accept this interpretation. J. O. Halliwell, writing in 1843, admits that it is not universally accepted, and adds: "So valuable an authority it is that it is unfortunate that there is doubt relative to its meaning."
4. The parodied line, evidently well known to the public, is found not only in *Henry VI*, part 3, but also in the "True Tragedie of Richard, Duke of Yorke," which Adams says is an older play, written by Marlowe.
5. The name "Shakespeare" was absolutely unknown to the public until the year following Greene's reference when, in 1593, *Venus and Adonis* was dedicated to the young man who was engaged to marry the Earl of Oxford's oldest daughter.
6. The Stratford man's name "was pronounced Shacksper or Shackspare," says George H. Cowling in "A Preface to Shakespeare." He is right. The clerk who attests John Shakspeare's mark spells it Shacksper. The lawyer who writes Wil-

liam's will does the same. In the marriage bond it is Wm. Shagsper; in the marriage license Wm. Shaxper. Therefore "Shake-scene" would awake no responsive chord in the public's mind, as connected with either playwright or actor.

7. Greene attacks an upstart crow of an actor in a letter addressed to three of his friends. How can Shakspeare be both the crow and one of the friends?

8. If Shakspeare was so well known to English play-goers in 1592 that Greene was so jealous of him and that everybody would connect the line from the "True Tragedie" and *Henry VI* and the Shake-scene allusion with the author of the plays, how did it happen that Chettle did not know him "even by reputation," as J. Q. Adams admits?

9. Greene attacks a loud, cruel, tiger-hearted, bombastic, conceited actor, who has stolen his lines and pirated his plays, according to the accepted version. Is this the same man whom Chettle discovered to be so gentle, so honest, and so gracious?

10. Chapman, in his book, "William Shakespeare and Robert Greene," proves that the "crow" was William Kemp, a loud, arrogant, conceited man, with a great reputation as a scene-shaker, as those clowns were called who put on the jigs and morris dances at the close of the show.

11. In 1599 Kemp published a pamphlet attacking those who had defamed him, chiefly the ballad-makers, and salutes them thus: "My notable Shake-rags."

Thus disappears the only contemporary reference to an actor named Shakspeare as connected with the authorship of any Shakespeare play. Halliwell is right. It has been, as long as nobody probed it, a most valuable "authority," and now that it is gone, the Stratford case rests alone on the testimony of Ben Jonson, which is in such violent contrast to all his "Shakespeare" comments prior to 1623.

## NEWS-LETTER

## THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP

AMERICAN BRANCH

VOLUME II

DECEMBER, 1940

No. 1

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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 per 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 The Shakespeare Fellowship, 17 East 48th Street, New York, N. Y.

## Some of Our Speakers

Professor Louis P. Bén  zet of Dartmouth College, President of The Shakespeare Fellowship, makes many addresses on the subject of the Oxford theory of Shakespeare authorship and finds a lively interest displayed in it. He has made a number of converts. Professor R. L. Morrow of the University of Maine and Professor Everett L. Getchell of Boston University are making speeches for the cause. Mr. F. Allen Burt, Assistant Professor of Advertising at Boston University, who talked to two Rotary clubs on Oxford-Shakespeare last summer, says, "The subject at once becomes alive and interesting when the dry bones of Wm. Shaxper are brushed aside." Miss Louise Kroeger, of St. Louis, has given some impressive talks on the subject to groups of friends.

## Annual Meeting

The Shakespeare Fellowship, American Branch, held its Annual Meeting at the home of Mr. James Stewart Cushman, 815 Fifth Avenue, New York, on Saturday, November 30th. A report of the meeting will be given in the next issue.

## A New Comedy

A new play about the seventeenth Earl of Oxford has been written by Walter Grotyohann. It is entitled, *The Man Who Was Shakespeare*, with the permission of Eva Turner Clark. Those who have read the comedy declare that the many-sided personality of the Poet-Earl is remarkably delineated in characteristic situations aptly constructed from his life.

Oxonians will be glad to know that Mr. Grotyohann reports meeting with no objections whatever to the subject matter of his play in theatrical circles, the fact that it is a stage-worthy comedy being held sufficient reason for the public's attention. Thus it appears that the stage, rather than the printing press, may yet be the popular means of redeeming Edward de Vere as the man who was Shakespeare.

## Middle Temple Bombed

"The blast of a high explosive bomb has torn 300 square feet out of the east wall of London's Middle Temple Hall, the scene of the first production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and one of the last remaining gems of Elizabethan architecture.

"The richly carved wooden screen, supporting the Minstrels' Gallery, lies in splinters on the floor under a pile of masonry. The great twenty-nine-foot table, presented by Queen Elizabeth, has been badly scarred. The heraldic stained glass windows and many paintings fortunately had been removed at the beginning of the war."—*Reproduced from the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, October 23, 1940.*

Grievous reports of the wanton destruction of London's ancient buildings, like the Middle Temple, stir our hearts and give us a feeling of personal loss. They were built when the ancestors of American members of the Fellowship were living in England and most of us have seen them and loved them. To our English members and friends, to whom this heritage of the past remains, we send our sympathy and express the hope that, with the war at an end, these precious edifices may, by some magic of the builders' art be re-assembled from the ruined masonry into their old forms to ornament and to glorify what will always be London!

## Arthur Golding: The Uncle of Edward de Vere And the Intimate Part He Played in the Development of Shakespeare's Creative Genius

### PART TWO

As outlined in previous pages of this essay, "Mr. William Shakespeare" can be shown to have made instinctive use of those books by Arthur Golding which the Elizabethan translator either dedicated to Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, or published while personally associated with his literary nephew—"whose infancy from the beginning was ever sacred to the Muses."

This situation, touching the very well-springs of Shakespeare's creative mystery, reveals much coincidental evidence to buttress other strong documentary testimony in the Oxford-Shakespeare authorship case.

#### Shakespeare's Familiarity with the Routine of Choir Boys

It has already been mentioned (continues the author of *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*) that Shakespeare quoted more from the *Psalter* than from any other book of the Bible. . . . His indebtedness to the *Psalter* struck Mr. Anders very forcibly when reviewing the subject in his *Shakespeare's Books*, and he hazarded the suggestion that perhaps he had sung the *Psalms* in church as a choir-boy. Certainly his knowledge of the *Psalms* is greater than the ordinary layman might be expected to acquire by attendance at church. . . . It would account for his acquaintance with some of the elements of vocal music.

A shrewd observation and one that coincides with Edward de Vere's recorded activities with uncanny accuracy!

For contemporary accounts of Elizabethan theatrical affairs, as published by Sir E. K. Chambers and others, tell us that beginning in 1583 and continuing for an indefinite period thereafter, Lord Oxford was the patron of a company of junior players made up from choir-boys of the Chapel Royal and St. Paul's Cathedral. As a poet, playwright and gifted musician himself, the Earl most certainly have familiarized himself with the routine of these choir singers before selecting them to appear under his patronage. John Lyly, the writer whose influence upon the comedies of Shakespeare has been remarked by hundreds of critics, acted as

private secretary to Oxford at this period and also as stage manager of the "Oxford Boys." The published Quartos of all of Lyly's comedies but one state on their title-pages that they were first presented by these children from the choirs of the Queen's Chapel and St. Paul's.

Such facts not only conjure up pleasing pictures of the Earl's real associations and interests; they help supply tangible substance to the Shakespearean creative background which otherwise presents the most baffling vacuum in English literature.

The evidence that brings Arthur Golding and the Bard within the same creative orbit is too extensive to have been accidental. Just as Sir Sidney Lee and other orthodox authorities have concluded, the dramatist is mentally akin to the translator. Such being the case, it would seem not only possible but very natural to find that these two outstanding Elizabethan writers had enjoyed personal relations. But no scrap of testimony can be produced to show that the Stratford citizen ever met Golding.

On the other hand, the close relationship—both by blood and literary affinity—that existed between the playwright Earl of Oxford and the translator of Ovid, provides constructive evidence that Oxford was indeed the real "William Shakespeare."

#### Golding's Biography Points the Way

But in these comments on Louis Thorn Golding's book I do not wish to give the impression that the author is himself a proponent of the Oxfordian theory or that he sees any particular significance in the facts that Arthur Golding personally endeavored to influence the thinking and the conduct of his literary nephew, while at the same time the Golding translations are admitted by everyone to have fundamentally influenced several of the best-known works published under the name of "William Shakespeare." As it happens, Louis Thorn Golding devotes only four or five pages to the latter subject and follows the old and mistaken notion that Edward of Oxford was permanently addicted to a "wild and spendthrift life."

I have, therefore, taken *An Elizabethan Puritan* as a starting point for new research which includes

Lord Oxford in his lesser known character of a gifted scholar, a producer of plays and a writer whom contemporary critics declared would be recognized as the foremost among all Court poets if his "doings could be found out and made public with the rest." The fact that Dr. Gabriel Harvey in 1578 took it upon himself to admonish this nobleman that he was wasting too much of his time upon "bloodless books" and "writings that serve no useful purpose," while ending his harangue with the striking reference:

. . . thine eyes flash fire, thy countenance  
shakes a spear . . .

should have given a hint to students of the Shakespearean arcana generations ago that Arthur Golding's aristocratic nephew, who lived so many years under "an unlifted shadow" in the company of bohemian writers, actors and playwrights, would repay careful investigation.

As it turns out, the Golding-Oxford-Shakespeare lead opens up so many new lines of evidence contributory to a realistic solution of the new authorship theory that its most important phases can be sketched only in barest outline here. A few more instances of "Mr. William Shakespeare's" reliance upon mental stimuli provided by Lord Oxford's uncle, and we shall have done.

### Another Golding Book That Influenced the Bard

In 1578, the same year that Harvey, the Cambridge pundit, saw fit to reprove the Earl of Oxford publicly for devoting himself to the pen instead of the spear, Arthur Golding issued from the press of John Day a translation of Seneca. The title, rendered in modern English, reads:

*The work of the excellent Philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca concerning Benefiting, that is To say the doing, receiving, and requiting of good Turns.*

Dr. Lily B. Campbell in her scholarly study of *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes* (1930), traces to Arthur Golding's popularization of this Senecan discourse "most of the ideas on gratitude" that found dramatic expression in Shakespeare's age. She uses the Golding text in direct comparison with the basic structure of *King Lear* to show how the playwright developed his psychological theme with Seneca's observations on the good or evil results that follow wise or foolish benefactions clearly in mind.

Thus in *King Lear* we find that the law of benefiting is not observed by either party, for

the King never ceases to recount the good he has done and the gratitude that is owed him, while his undutiful daughters forget altogether the benefits they have received and fail to be grateful for them.

It is a notable fact that Lord Oxford, like *King Lear*, was the father of three daughters. As he grew older and his estates dwindled, the nobleman experienced increasing difficulty in supporting the young ladies in accordance with their social positions. It therefore came about that his father-in-law, the great Lord Burghley, forced Oxford from time to time to sign away rights in Castle Hedingham and other ancient family properties in order to insure the economic future of these girls—though all three seem to have been Cordelias when left to their own inclinations.

The influence of Seneca as a dramatist on Shakespeare is so obvious that comment would be tedious. The Roman philosopher-playwright is mentioned by name in *Hamlet* and quoted or referred to more than twenty-five times in six or seven different plays. Certain important elements in *Hamlet* derive as directly from Senecan psychology as does the gratitude theme of *Lear*. Dr. John W. Cunliffe covers most of these parallels in *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy* (1893).

A thorough study of Golding's version of *Benefiting* will, however, unquestionably reveal Shakespeare's indebtedness to the book for many turns of thought not heretofore traced in origin. Timon of Athens' remark: "We are born to do benefits"; and several direct paraphrases in the *Sonnets* immediately present themselves. But perhaps the most extraordinary of all appears in the philosophic motif of that charming song in *As You Like It*:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen  
Because it is not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot:  
Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friends remembered not.

### A Murder and An Earthquake

In addition to his many translations from the Latin and French, Lord Oxford's indefatigable



uncle published two English books on rather sensational contemporary happenings.

The first of these was *A brief discourse of the late murder of master George Sanders, a worshipful Citizen of London* (1573). This pithy recital of the snuffing out of a prosperous merchant tailor by the paramour of the tailor's wife, with special emphasis on "the secret working of Gods terrible wrathe in a guiltie and blouddie conscience," went into several editions and was later dramatized under the title of *A Warning for Faire Women*. In this form it was produced at the Globe Theatre during the 1590's by "Shakespeare's company." The play, though printed in 1599, bears no author's name and has been attributed by some critics to John Lyly who served so long as Lord Oxford's private secretary and stage manager.

Arthur Golding's other original work was *A discourse upon the Earthquake that happened through this realm of England and other places of Christendom, the sixth of April, 1580*. In mentioning this journalistic tract, the *Dictionary of National Biography* remarks:

Shakespeare refers to the same earthquake in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Scene 3.

### Golding Thwarts a Crime in High Life and "Shakespeare's" Indignation Rankles

One of the most interesting portions of *An Elizabethan Puritan* has to do with the serious troubles that John de Vere, 16th Earl of Oxford, experienced as the result of a love affair with one "Mistress Dorothy," the governess or companion of his young daughter, Lady Katherine de Vere, following the death of his first wife. The Earl evidently gave a promise of marriage to this woman which she in turn admitted to the child. In some way the affair came to the ears of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, who had seized power as Lord Protector in 1547, upon the accession of Henry VIII's frail heir. Greedy and unscrupulous, Somerset immediately set on foot a scheme to blackmail the Earl of Oxford into an agreement to affiance his small daughter and only heir (at that time) to one of Somerset's sons. To accomplish this, "Mistress Dorothy" was spirited away and pressure was exerted upon Oxford to make him agree to a "fine," ostensibly in earnest of his daughter's marriage to young Seymour, but really for the private enrichment of the Duke of Somerset. This "fine," as exacted from the harassed nobleman, was so worded that its provisions stripped his collateral

heirs of their rights in the vast Vere estates. Certain legal authorities date the decline of the Vere family fortunes from this ill-advised love affair of the 16th Earl, coupled with Somerset's blackmailing devices; though the forced "fine" was later voided by Parliament.

This calls to mind another tell-tale "coincidence" in the Oxford-Shakespeare dossier, for it appears that in defiance of full historical warrant, the author of *I Henry VI* and *II Henry VI* makes a Duke of Somerset the outstanding villain of both plays. He is pictured as a scheming trouble-maker who causes the death of the valiant Talbot and his son by delaying reinforcements during the battle of Bordeaux. Throughout both dramas, Somerset is referred to as "the fraud of England," "vile traitor," and characterized as one who studies to play both sides in the contention between the houses of York and Lancaster to his own advantage. At one point Richard Plantagenet exclaims:

*And for those wrongs, those bitter injuries  
Which Somerset hath offer'd to my House,  
I doubt not but with honour to redress;  
And therefore haste I to the Parliament,  
Either to be restored to my blood,  
Or make my ill th' advantage of my good.*

Such expressions would come even more appropriately from the mouth of an Elizabethan Vere than from a long-dead Plantagenet. For it is a fact, here thoroughly documented, that as a direct result of John de Vere's persecution by the sixteenth century Somerset and the calling into question of the legality of the Earl's marriage to Margery Golding, Edward de Vere's mother, the 17th Earl of Oxford was in 1563 put in jeopardy of losing his titles and all rights to his patrimony. Only a thirteen-year-old boy when the first of these suits affecting his legitimacy were instituted, his literary uncle undertook the "desperate study" of his case in legal rebuttal. And so well did the staunch Puritan perform these duties that the little Earl was saved the disgrace of social and economic extinction at the outset of his career. But the experience could not help but leave marks deeply etched in a mind so impressionable.

These circumstances may explain "Mr. William Shakespeare's" determination to embalm the name of Somerset in the amber of his scorn, just as they give additional point to the Bard's appreciation of loyal uncles. Also, quite reasonably, they may indicate a personal motive behind the development of the Bastard's character in *King John*. For years ago Algernon Charles Swinburne, among others, re-

marked that this debonnaire young patriot who is branded as illegitimate at the beginning of his active life, is unquestionably the *beau ideal* of all Shakespeare's quasi-historical heroes.

Certainly the recovered facts of Edward de Vere's private life, his known activities and associations, provide more realistic answers to such problems in the psychology of literary creation than any conjecture that has yet emanated from the shadowy background of the rustic village on the Avon.

Charles Wisner Barrell

## Annotations by Shakespeare?

"A correspondent in *The Times* has announced the discovery by Mr. Alan Keen, of the Gate House, Clifford's Inn, of what is conjectured by some examiners to be marginal annotations by Shakespeare made in a copy, printed in 1550, of Edward Halle's *Chronicles of the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V*—strictly 'Union of the Noble and Illustrate Houses York and Lancaster.' The annotations, these examiners believe, were made with a view to the construction and language of the historical plays. Mr. Keen found the *Chronicles* in a small pile of books which he received from the country. He observed that the annotations were in a sixteenth-century handwriting. On further examination he found that they corresponded closely to the text and dramatic sequence of Shakespeare's plays. There is said to be a certain similarity of handwriting in the marginal notes and acknowledged Shakespeare signatures; but the main argument is based on some identity of ideas and language in the matters noted and the plays.

"Mr. Keen has handed his material to Sir John Squire, who is preparing a volume which will tell the story of the find, and will produce a survey of the evidence and reproductions of some of the crucial pages."—*Reproduced from THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT (London), August 31, 1940.*

In a letter to the TLS, September 14, 1940, Mr. R. F. W. Fletcher, of St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, challenges the theory that the annotations in Mr. Alan Keen's copy of Hall's *Chronicles* were written by Shakespeare and even that Shakespeare made use of Hall in writing the play of *Henry V*. He says, "After reading the article in *The Times* I consulted the 1550 edition of Hall's *Chronicles* in the Bod-

leian Library with eager expectation, collating (hurriedly, I admit) the passages relevant to *Henry V* with the play and with a reprint of the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*. I have to report that this collation appears to prove that Shakespeare used Holinshed for this play, and not Hall."

Mr. Fletcher then gives numerous examples (too lengthy to include here) of the correspondence between passages in the play and Holinshed, and declares, "I submit that the evidence (and I have given but a fraction of it) corroborates the long-established view that the 1587 edition of Holinshed is Shakespeare's source for *Henry V*. What then of the annotations in the newly discovered copy of Hall?" Mr. Fletcher gives his conclusions.

"(1) They might be Shakespeare's annotations, even although he later turned to Holinshed when writing the play. This hardly seems likely."

"(2) There is one Elizabethan writer who is known to have read Hall and used his work—namely, Holinshed himself. Will Sir John Squire, before he completes his book, consider the possibility that Holinshed may have been the annotator? Do the marked passages correspond substantially with what Holinshed incorporated from Hall in his *Chronicles*? Seeing that Holinshed used so much of Hall, and much of it verbatim, it is quite likely that he would mark the passages that he contemplated using."

\* \* \*

There is an argument in favor of Holinshed that Mr. Fletcher does not include. My article "Topicalities in the Plays" (October NEWS-LETTER), shows by various allusions to events of 1586 and 1587 that *Henry V* was probably written in 1587. I overlooked the publication in that year of the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, which gives added strength to my contention that the play was written in 1587, possibly begun late in 1586. The dramatist was very likely attracted to the new book, reading it to find wherein it differed from a previous edition and from Hall, and finding it useful in connection with the play he was then engaged in writing.

Eva Turner Clark

## Gabriel Harvey and Axiophilus

In an article on "Gabriel Harvey and the Modern Languages," The Huntington Library Quarterly (Oct. 1940) describes eight small volumes once belonging to Gabriel Harvey and now the property of the Huntington Library. All contain hitherto unpublished marginalia by Gabriel Harvey.

Gabriel Harvey, it will be remembered, was a friend of Spenser. What is not pointed out in the article is that he was also a friend of Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, upon whom, in 1578, he delivered a panegyric in Latin before the Queen at Audley End, where, with her Court, she had stopped on her Progress of that year to witness an entertainment in her honor by the University of Cambridge. There are reasons for believing that Lord Oxford had considered engaging Harvey for his secretary, but, because of the foolish pedantry displayed by him at Audley End, the Earl gave up the idea and, instead, engaged John Lyly who held the position for more than a decade. Whether it was this disappointment or ridicule he thought the Earl had heaped upon him, Harvey showed his displeasure by writing a lampoon in verse on the "italianated Englishman," generally considered to be a caricature of Lord Oxford, though Harvey later denied that he was the subject of the poem. Even though a caricature, many lines indicate Harvey's admiration for the person so portrayed. (See "The Satirical Comedy, *Love's Labour's Lost*.")

Harvey has long been famous for the annotations he wrote on the margins of his books, chiefly because of his opinions of his contemporaries there expressed. In a copy of Chaucer, printed in 1598 (not in the Huntington Library), he waxes enthusiastic over an anonymous poet whom he terms "Axiophilus." He lists this writer among the "gentle, noble, and royal" poets of the time. The only name among contemporary poets that he fails to note is Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, called by Webbe and Puttenham, in the previous decade, the best of the courtier poets.

Harvey's Axiophilus in his copy of Chaucer has been a puzzle to many students. Professor G. C. Moore-Smith published in 1913 a book on the subject, *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, in which his chief concern is the identity of Axiophilus. After

giving the views of various scholars on the subject, he gives as his own opinion that Harvey himself was Axiophilus. But Harvey was not one of the "gentle, noble, and royal" poets of the Elizabethan period; besides, he was a very bad poet, and must have known it.

In the copy of Chaucer, Harvey ends his marginal notes with his "sovereign hope" that "Axiophilus shall forgett himself, or will remember to leave sum memorials behind him: and to make an use of so manie rhapsodies, cantos, hymnes, odes, epigrams, sonets, and discourses as idle howers, or at flowing fitts he hath compiled. God knows what is good for the world, and fitting for this age. Finis." The failure to mention plays in such a list of poetic writings tends to weaken my theory that this anonymous writer was Lord Oxford, who was, as we know, in his own time, famous as a dramatist. We shall see!

In another book of Harvey's, *An Italian Grammar* by Henry Grantham, now in the Huntington Library and described in the current issue of the Quarterly, the first and last annotations are of particular interest to us and are here quoted:

Title-page:

Gabrielis Harueij. 1579. mense Aprjli.

[Secretary hand]

Axiophili prima ars Linguae Italicae. Grammatica. Comoediae.

Tragoediae. Poco, y bueno. [Italian hand]

Written on the right margin of p. 155 is the following note:

No finer, or pithier Examples, then in ye Excellent Comedies, & Tragedies following: full of sweet, & wise Discourse. A notable Dictionarie, for the Grammer.

Caroline Brown Bourland, author of the article in the Quarterly, makes this comment: "These last words, mystifying at first, since no comedies or tragedies follow, are clear if taken in connection with those on the title-page, 'Axiophil. . . .' The latter appear to indicate both the ownership and the contents of the book, and we may infer that when Harvey owned it some Italian plays were bound with the grammar. The name Axiophilus is supposed by Moore-Smith and others to stand for Harvey himself."

We cannot accept Moore-Smith's conclusion that

Harvey was Axiophilus, since Harvey was not one of the "gentle, noble, and royal" poets of his day, while Axiophilus is thus described in the Chaucer annotations. The first of the annotations quoted seems to indicate Harvey's admiration for Axiophilus (or Axiophili) by calling him the best, or first, in the Italian language, in grammar, comedy, and tragedy, and here we have the mention of dramatic writing which is missing in the Chaucer *mar-ginalia*. The second of the annotations quoted does not seem to connect with the first. Miss Bourland is probably correct in her inference that when Harvey owned the book some Italian plays were bound with the grammar, but Axiophilus (Axiophili) is not mentioned in this annotation as he surely would be if such a connection were in Harvey's mind, for he never hesitated to repeat names in his annotations, certainly when 155 pages separated them.

We have, then, in the newly published marginal notes from *An Italian Grammar* those references to comedy and tragedy by the gifted author Axiophilus which were missing in the copy of Chaucer. In such a way do the scattered bits of the puzzle come together to portray the picture of the great poet, comedian, tragedian of Elizabeth's day who preferred anonymity, or of whom anonymity was demanded. Even the name Axiophilus, meaning "lover of truth," points to Lord Oxford whose family motto was *Vero nihil verius*—"Nothing truer than truth." Harvey's friend and patron, the "learned Sir Thomas Smith," was one of Oxford's first tutors.

Eva Turner Clark

## English Periodicals Keep Coming

Radio and newspaper tell us of England's daily and nightly bombing, of the devastation by fire, of the loss of life and property, and we are filled with wonder when we observe the steadiness with which the gallant English manage to carry on their usual duties under such a heavy handicap.

Among other things, this steadiness of purpose is revealed in the regular arrival in this country of the literary and historical periodicals which bear their usual appearance and are as erudite as ever.

Some of the periodicals lately received are London's weekly Times Literary Supplement, with its illuminating reviews of new books; the scholarly quarterly, *The Review of English Studies*, pub-

lished by the Oxford University Press; Notes and Queries, that fascinating solver of literary and other problems; the East Anglian Magazine, published at Ipswich, one of whose special features is an interesting page on the Oxford-Shakespeare authorship theory; there are others, but we cannot name them all.

## Twelfth Night

Under the direction of Margaret Webster, a revival of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* opened Tuesday night, November 19th, at the St. James Theater, New York. Helen Hayes takes the part of Viola and Maurice Evans that of Malvolio. With other strong members in the cast, this delightful comedy promises a long run.

## Oxford-Shakespeare Books

Copies of the following books and booklets are available at the office of The Shakespeare Fellowship, 17 East 48th Street, New York, N. Y. Prices listed include postage.

"Shakespeare" Identified in *Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, by J. Thomas Looney. \$4.10.

*The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford*, by B. M. Ward. (Orders on this book will take time, as it must be sent from England.)

*Life Story of Edward de Vere as "William Shakespeare"*, by Percy Allen. \$2.10.

*Lord Oxford was "Shakespeare"*, by Lieut.-Colonel Montagu W. Douglas. \$2.10.

*The Man Who was Shakespeare*, by Eva Turner Clark. \$3.50.

*Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays* (printed in England as *Shakespeare's Plays in the Order of Their Writing*), by Eva Turner Clark. \$3.00.

*The Satirical Comedy, Love's Labour's Lost*, by Eva Turner Clark. 75c.

*Elizabethan Mystery Man*, by Charles Wisner Barrell. 25c (five copies for \$1.00).

"Ashbourne" *Portrait of Shakespeare*, by Gerald H. Rendall. B.D., Litt.D., LL.D. 25c.

*Ben Jonson and the First Folio Edition of Shakespeare's Plays*, by Gerald H. Rendall, B.D., Litt.D., LL.D. 25c.

*Shakespeare Authorship, a Summary of Evidence*, by Gilbert Standen. 25c.

Also available are a few bound copies of Volume I of the NEWS-LETTER, published by The Shakespeare Fellowship, American Branch. \$2 00.