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Another Stratfordian Aids the Oxford Cause

By LOUIS P. BÉNÉZET, M.A., Pd.D.

"WE ARE NOT QUITE certain of the identity of Shakespeare's father; we are by no means certain of the identity of his wife . . . we do not know when he began his dramatic career; we know the actual date of the first production of very few of his pieces, let alone that of their composition. Almost all of the commonly received stuff of his life story is shreds and patches of tradition if not positive work. We do not know whether he ever went to school. The early journey to London is first of a hundred years after date. The deer stealing reason for it is probably twenty years later. The crystallization of these and other traditions in the biography took place a hundred and forty years after the poet's supposed birth.

"To hark back; it is not certain, although it is probable, that the 'Shake-scene' in Greene's outburst is Shakspeare. 'Shake-scene' is not so very much more unlikely a term of abuse for an actor as 'cushion' or 'tub-thumper' for a minister. And Chettle's supposed apology is absolutely, and, it would seem, studiously anonymous."

Encountering the above quotation by chance, one might think that he had run upon the writings of some crackbrained anti-Stratfordian in the "lunatic fringe" of English scholarship.

It is a shock, then, to be told that it is taken from the great *Cambridge History of English Literature*, and that it is from the pen of the famous George Saintsbury, M.A., LL.D., of Merton College, Oxford; later Professor of English Literature in the University of Edinburgh.

More shocks are to come; for Dr. Saintsbury, admitting that there is only supposition to support

the story of Shakspeare's attendance at the Stratford Grammar School, and pointing out that Aubrey's story of his having been a country schoolmaster "is entirely unsupported," gives a table of the authenticated facts of William's life which occupies just two-thirds of a printed page. Accepting the Stratford man's career as an actor, on the basis of the Countess of Southampton's questionable post-dated entry¹ in the muddled accounts of her late husband, he says that the rest of Shakspeare's life in London has to be plentifully interspersed with "doubtless" or "probably" or "may have" to pass muster. "But the nature of commentators," says Dr. Saintsbury, "abhors a vacuum." This vacuum has to be filled up with a "series of conjectures about Shakspeare's novitiate as actor and playwright" and by "the application of hypothetical *hermeneutics* to the Sonnets."

Professor Saintsbury continues: "The first is guesswork pure and unadulterated, or, to speak with more correctness, adulteration without any purity. . . . We do not know that Shakspeare ever personally knew a single one of the 'university wits.' The Greene reference, taken at its fullest possible, is, distinctly, against personal knowledge. The Chettle reference, from its obvious and definite disclaimer of personal knowledge, strengthens the counter-evidence."

Excepting his family and business associates,

1. Mary Brown, Dowager Countess of Southampton, mother of the 3rd Earl of Southampton, and at the time she made out the voucher listing "William Shakespeare" as one of the "servants to the Lord Chamberlaine," (1595) widow of Sir Thomas Heneage.

says Saintsbury, the only two persons with whom we can connect him are Ben Jonson and Lord Southampton. Readers of the *QUARTERLY* do not have to be reminded of the strange story of Jonson's envious remarks about the Shakespeare works, followed by a complete about-face in 1623 when he suddenly conceived nothing but love and admiration for the man. Also we remember the *fruitless* thirteen-year search made through the papers of the Southampton family by Mrs. C. C. Stopes for the faintest hint that any one of them ever heard of the Stratford man.

Coming back to Dr. Saintsbury; after confessing that all attempts to identify members of the Stratford man's family and friends (in Stratford) with any characters in the plays have failed, he says:

"It may, however, be fully admitted that the *Sonnets* stand in a very different category from that of the plays. Not only does the poet speak *ex professo* from his heart, . . . but there is no poetry of this kind which approaches Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in apparent vehemence and intensity of feeling. There is even hardly any which mingles, with the expression of that feeling, so many concrete hints, suggesting so broadly a whole romance of personal experience, as they do. How are we to take all this?"

After confessing that debates over the *Dramatis Personae* of the *Sonnets* have "occupied a not small library of discussion," he admits that all the Shakespeare scholars are helpless in trying to explain them, and wagers that many more people than would confess it "have inclined to Hallam's curious but courageous wish that Shakespeare 'had never written them.' But he did write them," says Saintsbury, and, in so many words, asks, *What are we going to do about it?*

The answer, as members of the Fellowship know, is to be found in the story of the Earl of Oxford's stormy personal life, as illustrated in the *Sonnets*, and interpreted by Mr. Looney, Canon Rendall, and especially by Mr. Barrell. Dr. Saintsbury says that all commentators admit that the "Fair Youth" was a "person of quality." It does not seem to surprise him that an actor should reprove a young nobleman for "self-love" and adding to his blessings "a curse, being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse."

To digress for a moment, in order to drive home a point already made by others in the columns of the *QUARTERLY*, it is strange that commentators have not pointed out that there are just three per-

sons at Elizabeth's court who are named in properly sponsored Shakespeare publications, Southampton, to whom the two great poems are dedicated, and the Herbert brothers, to whom the First Folio is dedicated; and that *the only person in all England who was closely connected with all three was Edward De Vere*. For one of the Herberts married one of his daughters, while the other brother and Southampton were at one time engaged to marry the remaining daughters. If, as most of the critics have decided, Southampton is the one to whom the first seventeen sonnets were written, and Southampton from 1590 to '92 was being strongly urged to marry Elizabeth de Vere, let us think of the interest in this match which the girl's father had. A widower, without a legitimate son, head of a five hundred year-old house, which will "fall into decay" unless one of the daughters produces an heir, he has a vital stake in the wedding negotiations. With this situation in mind, let us reread the first seventeen sonnets. To our astonishment, we find "*Shakespeare*" impersonating the *Earl of Oxford*. He pleads the cause of the nobleman with "vehemence and intensity of feeling," as Saintsbury has said. He begs Southampton to marry, if only for love of the writer, he begs him to get a son, he cajoles him, he puts pressure upon him, he scolds him for self-love. *If the Earl had been sitting at his elbow as he wrote, "Shakespeare" could not have done a better job for the house of Oxford.*

Dr. Saintsbury confesses that he cannot solve the problem. He asks, helplessly, "Who was the friend, Southampton, Pembroke or another?" and "Who was the lady? Mary Fitton (who seems to have been a love of Pembroke, but who was fair, not dark), or somebody else?" When the critics get to speculating and supposing on the *Sonnets* "we have, obviously, passed into cloudland."

In his comments on the plays, Dr. Saintsbury makes one point which is very significant. He lists the eleven plays which Meres in 1598 attributes to Shakespeare's pen, and calls attention to the surprising output that this represents for a man who "during four years unquestionably and beyond reasonable doubt, for a good deal longer, had been busily employed in acting." He says that "so large a bulk as this, greater than the whole theatre of some considerable dramatists, must have taken no short time to write." He admits that it is all the more noteworthy because Meres has failed to include several whole plays, such as the *Henry VI* series, besides parts of others.

Here we must remind Dr. Saintsbury that Henslowe records productions of *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, "*king leare*," "*seaser*" and "*the taming of a Strawe*" four years before Meres published his list; that Hotson has proved that *The Merry Wives* and *Twelfth Night* were played in 1596 and '97; and that Cairncross shows in his *Problem of Hamlet* that *Othello*, *Pericles*, *Macbeth* and both parts of *Henry IV* had been acted in the early 1590's. In fact, the only Shakespeare play that Cairncross lists as definitely composed after 1604 is *The Tempest*.

Let us see where all this leaves us. Here we have the doubtful claim of the pouring out of all these masterpieces by a country youth after his presumed arrival from his native village. This youth has to earn his way and pack his brain with all the knowledge which lack of broad educational environment had denied him. He has to work at the theatre every day, presumably learning new parts and rehearsing them at night. He also goes into business and amasses wealth. Yet he manages to turn out four or five plays each year, besides writing two great narrative poems totaling more than 3,000 lines, and scores of sonnets which he circulates "among his private friends." When—may we ask—did the man sleep?

Then, after 1604, living at ease in his mansion at Stratford, with all the leisure necessary for writing, he chooses to spend his time brewing malt, suing debtors, and associating with shop-keepers, money-lenders and grain-dealers. Here, surely, was the grand opportunity for the great genius, well-to-do and in the prime of life, to turn out many more of the world's masterpieces. But did he? Not he. Prof. B. Roland Lewis tells us in *The Shakespeare Documents* that in 1609 the Kings Players are forced to hire Beaumont and Fletcher to supply them with plays—their former source has dried up. Professor Lewis thinks that ill-health may have silenced the alleged genius of Stratford—ignoring his wide-awake activity in the law courts, his shrewd speculations in real estate and the "*in pfect health & memorie God be prayesd*" which begins his will in 1615-16. We must also remember the published statement of the piratical publishers who boasted in 1609 that they had finally acquired the manuscript of *Troilus and Cressida* ² by

outsmarting its "grand possessors," at the same time warning the reading public that very soon, when such Shakespeare manuscripts were no longer to be begged, borrowed or stolen, a "new English inquisition" would hunt for them in vain.

We may note in this connection that our genius, in order, evidently, to have plenty of leisure for land speculations, brewing and suing, has washed his hands of all his works. In possession of the significantly unnamed "grand" owners are twenty plays that have never been printed—except those issued in garbled "memory" copies—and several that do not seem to have been heard of in 1609.

As for the whopper told in the introduction to the First Folio that the author had himself written out "with scarce a blot" the "True and Original" copies of the plays and handed them over (without bothering to mention the fact to any member of his family or to the executors of his will) to Heminge and Condell, to be published when these actors, at their own sweet will, might decide, it is an oratorical and self-evident lie, as every responsible Shakespearean "authority" knows. If more of them had the courage and honesty of the late Dr. Saintsbury, the "Shakespeare problem" would not today be surrounded by the dense fog which prevents the average teacher of English literature from perceiving even the outlines of its true solution.

Shakespeare

BY GERALD MASSEY

This tribute to the Bard seems little known and is very rarely reprinted, although its predominant thought would be well to keep in mind in this atomic age. It was published about eighty years ago by one of the best known 19th century commentators on the Sonnets.

Our Prince of Peace in glory's gone
With no spear shaken, no sword drawn,
No cannon fired, no flag unfurled,
To make his conquest of the world.

For him no martyr-fires have blazed,
No limbs been racked, no scaffolds raised;
For him no blood was ever shed
To make the victor's pathway red.

And for all time he wears the crown
Of lasting, limitless renown;
He reigns, whatever monarch's fall;
His throne is in the hearts of all.

² In February, 1603, the printer James Roberts entered for copyright "*The booke of Troilus and Cressida*, as yt is acted by My Lo. Chamberlens men. When he hath gotten sufficient authority for yt." Such "authority" was not forthcoming, however. But the play was obviously old in 1603.

A Literary Pirate's Attempt to Publish The Winter's Tale in 1594

Significant Facts Testifying to the Early Composition of Shakespeare's Comedy of Jealousy

By CHARLES WISNER BARRELL

... It had been a thing, we confess, worthie to have been wished, that the Author himself had liv'd to have set forth, and overseen his own writings. But since it hath been ordain'd otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envie his Friends the office of their care and pain, to have collected & publish'd them; and so to have publish'd them as where (before) you were abus'd with divers stolen and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious imposters, that expos'd them: even those are now offer'd to your view cur'd and perfect of their limbs, and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them.

Introduction to Shakespeare's First Folio.

FOR THE FIRST TIME in thirty-five years New Yorkers had the opportunity during the current season to see *The Winter's Tale* adequately presented. Thanks, doubtless, to the profits acquired from their history-making production of *Othello*, the directors of The Theatre Guild spared neither pains nor expense in putting on this infrequently seen tragi-comedy. It finally closed after 130 performances on the road and 39 in New York, having won critical acclaim but scant returns on the high production costs.

In announcing and reviewing the play, some of the best known critics referred to the date of composition of *The Winter's Tale*. Following "orthodox" practice, the date thus given was 1611—usually with the remark that the piece is one of the last written by the Bard of Avon. In the *New York Times* for January 13, 1946, Mr. Clayton Hamilton, a staunch Stratfordian, said:

"*The Winter's Tale* was composed by Shakespeare at the mature age of 47, and was prepared in contemplation of his imminent retirement."

It will be noted that Mr. Hamilton's statement is nothing if not positive. Any casual reader with a reverence for cold type would accept these words of the eminent lecturer as basic fact. But as it happens, this oracular asseveration can be shown to be backed by no weightier authority than the stand-

ardized guess. Mr. Hamilton, and his confreres who hold similar views regarding the composition of *The Winter's Tale*, do not really know with certainty just when the play was written, nor the personal circumstances that governed its creation. Unqualifiedly to claim such knowledge is an imposition on unwary readers. For the evidence on which the surmised date of 1611 has been based is not only highly questionable in part, but all of it refers to *performances* instead of the actual composition of the play. Although this specific difference has been emphasized many times by able scholars in the past, it is well to restate the facts at this time. Far too many of these plausible guesses persist in the "orthodox" field where exploded myths are still repeated with solemn finality by such popular "authorities" as Mr. Clayton Hamilton.

The first of the 1611 references to *The Winter's Tale* was "discovered" in the 1830's by a zealous Stratfordian named John Payne Collier. He "found" it among early 17th century papers in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, catalogued as *Ashmolean MS. 208*. This handwritten folio exhibit is a combination diary and commonplace book. Before Collier came across it, it had been studied by many careful investigators of the source material of the Shakespearean Age, including Anthony à Wood.

Joseph Ritson and Dr. Philip Bliss. But none of these experts ever reported finding any references to the Shakespeare plays therein. This did not deter the industrious Collier, however, from producing four such references as well as an effectively forged subtitle to a part of the manuscript which now reads: *The Booke of Plaies and Notes thereon . . . for Common Pollicie.*

The authentic portions of the folio are in the handwriting of one "Doctor" Simon Forman, a notorious quack, sorcerer and generally unmitigated rogue who lives in British criminal history as a principal adviser to Frances Howard, the fatal Countess of Essex, in encompassing the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. Forman would unquestionably have been hanged for his part in the Overbury poisoning, had he not made good on his prediction of his own death shortly before the crime was discovered. The Ashmolean collection of his papers was made to order for Collier's purpose as it contained several blank pages. And as the man himself flourished during the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean reigns, he was an obvious contemporary of the author of the Shakespeare plays. From his house on Lambeth Marsh—the perfect setting for so picturesque a reprobate—Collier makes it appear that the sinister necromancer sallied forth now and then in search of dramatic relaxation. And in the course of these peregrinations he has been recorded by Collier as witnessing four Shakespearean productions. Not only is he made meticulously to set down the places and dates upon which he attended three such performances, but to write out synopses of all four Shakespeare plays in pseudo-Jacobean spelling. These plays are:

"Mackbeth at the Glob 1610 the 20 Aprill . . ."

"Cimbalin king of England" (no date or place of performance being specified).

"Richard the 2. At the glob 1611 the 30 of Aprill . . ."

"... the Winters Talle at the glob 1611 the j5 of Maye . . ."

A detailed account of these forgeries is to be found in the chapter headed "The Forman Notes" in Dr. Samuel A. Tannenbaum's *Shaksperian Scrapes* (1933). Regarding the *Winter's Tale* entry, Dr. Tannenbaum says:

"Collier's motive in including an account of this play is not far to seek. Scholars had been disputing for considerably more than half a century whether *The Winter's Tale* was one of Shakespeare's earliest plays or one of his latest. Malone had at first decided that it was written in 1594; subsequently he seems to have assigned it to 1604; later still, to 1613; and finally he settled on 1610-11. Hunter assigned it to 'about 1605.' Collier evidently decided to end the controversy by finding evidence that could raise the presumption that the play was new in 1611—for presumably Forman would not have made an elaborate entry of an old play. The argument—it is Collier's—ignores the fact that it is assumed that the performance of *Richard II* was a revival. Notwithstanding this, all Shaksperian scholars cite Forman as evidence for a 1611 dating of *The Winter's Tale*. It seems not to have occurred to them that if one was a revival, the other might be so too."

Dr. Tannenbaum then goes on to prove the outright manufacture of all this Forman-Shakespearean evidence. It may seem strange that a generally accepted commentator such as Mr. Clayton Hamilton—late medallist of Columbia University, whose Press printed the realistic Tannenbaum exposé—has failed to be impressed by so important a contribution to the science of literary detection. But it is even more inexplicable that the editors of the Garden City Publishing Company's *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, illustrated by Rockwell Kent (1940), should include the spurious Forman notes among the "Historical Data" appended to both *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* in their handsome household edition. Error bears a charmed life, and no mistake.

A somewhat more authentic reference to a 1611 performance of *The Winter's Tale* is to be found in the Revel's Accounts, said to have been compiled during the time that Sir George Buc administered the office of Master of the Revels. Here we find a notation under date of November, 1611, stating that "The King's Players" had put on at Whitehall a play which is called "*The Winter Night's Tale*." This, together with *The Tempest*, had been "chosen, reformed, and rehearsed" by Buc, says his biographer, Dr. Mark Eccles, "before they were acted at Court. Next year he had the King's Men give the same two again, and such others as *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Moor of Venice*, '*Cardenno*,' '*The Hotspur*,' and '*Sir Iohn flajstafe*.'"

None of these plays are identified as *new* at the

time they were shown at the Court of James I in 1611-12. In fact, it is obvious on the face of it that at least four — if not all six — of the Shakespearean offerings were time-tried and tested Elizabethan favorites. One of the best things that can be said of James is that he was a sincere and enthusiastic admirer of Shakespeare's plays and a truly generous patron of the real Bard. Multiple revivals of the great dramas and comedies took place throughout his reign.

As a matter of fact, the Revels Accounts from which we have quoted were for many years considered quite as spurious as the Collier-Forman evidence has been shown to be. This for the reason that they also were "discovered" in the 1830's by an intimate associate of John Payne Collier named Peter Cunningham. The latter ultimately told a circumstantial story of having rescued the papers from a disused charcoal cellar under ancient Somerset House where they seem to have escaped the explorations of previous Shakespearean sleuths. Although admittedly valuable government property, Cunningham did not scruple to "borrow" the documents without permission and keep them for his own purposes for thirty years. Finally, having become a pitiable victim of alcoholism and poverty, he tried to sell them back to the Public Record Office for some sixty guineas. The foiling of this attempted swindle came about when Cunningham inadvertently mentioned Collier as his associate in the deal.

Meanwhile, Cunningham had in 1842 published a volume of *Extracts* from these long lost Revels Accounts. Of course, once the scandal of his abortive effort to bilk the Record Office was noised abroad, most scholars lost faith in the *Extracts* as well as the documents upon which they were based. Quite naturally it was assumed that Cunningham and Collier together had doctored both collections with spurious Shakespearean entries. Nearly fifty years passed before certain reputable authorities switched over to the opinion that the Revels Accounts manuscripts are genuine relics of the times they purport to record. And that seems to be their status today. What finally gave the recovered manuscripts credence was the report issued in the early 1900's by Sir James Dobbie, F.R.S., a forgery expert accredited by the Bank of England and the British Government. Dobbie had analysed the ink used on certain suspected portions of the documents and pronounced it to be of Jacobean origin. But so far as we know, no later scientific test has

been made of *all* the entries with such aids as ultraviolet or monochromatic light.

However, granting complete authenticity to the Revels Accounts that Cunningham and his friend Collier handled still does not convert the November, 1611 notation of a performance of "*The Winter Night's Tale*" into a statement that *The Winter's Tale* was written by William of Stratford at that time. Nor does it make good Mr. Hamilton's sentimental fancy that it "was prepared in contemplation of his imminent retirement."

This merely happens to be a surviving mention of the staging of a play now identified as genuine Shakespeare. That other and earlier references to the same piece were made by Sir George Buc or Edmund Tylney, his predecessor as Master of the Revels, during the reigns of James I and Elizabeth is perfectly logical to believe.

We must bear in mind that the official books of both of these men (together with all office records of the Lord Chamberlain who supervised the Masters of the Revels in those times) have hopelessly vanished. With them have disappeared the voluminous and detailed correspondence and memoranda covering the origin, selection, licensing, casting, mounting, costuming, rehearsal and finished production of literally scores of plays, including Shakespeare's. The loss of this vital, first-hand technical information has not only given rise to many creative mysteries, but in itself is the greatest mystery of all. It would certainly seem that a systematic plan had directed the wholesale destruction of such documentation to hamper true evaluation of the creative factors responsible for the flowering of the Shakespearean drama.

Of the credible scraps that survive, the 1611 reference to *The Winter's Tale* can be shown to match up with other evidence pointing backward to the play's origin in the later 1580's or earlier 1590's instead of its marking the close of the first Jacobean decade — and the lean and slipper'd ease of Stratfordian retirement.

Edmond Malone really had excellent grounds for assigning first mention of the comedy to the year 1594 in his original estimate. Had he at that time sought a little more diligently and pondered a little more thoroughly all testimony that supports that date it might very well be accepted today in orthodox circles. This can be said without holding that *The Winter's Tale* was first written in 1594. For it is more likely to have been composed some time before that, as will be demonstrated.

Malone's surmise, first published in his 1778 *Attempt to Ascertain the Order in which the Plays attributed to Shakespeare were Written*, followed his detection in the then unprinted folios of the Registers of the Stationers' Company of London (ii.650) of an entry under date of 22nd May, 1594 which reads:

"Edward White Entred for his Copie vnder the handes of bothe the wardens a booke entituled *Wynters nightes pastime*. vjd C."

This Malone took to be a copyright license granted to Edward White, the Elizabethan publisher of ballads and plays, to issue an edition of the comedy now known as *The Winter's Tale*. In the nomenclature of these Registers a ballad is always specified as such, whereas a play is designated as "a booke." Moreover, the *prima facie* similarity of the titles, *A Wynters nightes pastime* and *The Winter's Tale* is arresting. Doubly so when we compare the White entry to the 1611 Revels listing of *The Winter Night's Tale*. But Malone did not follow through on this promising lead. He never saw the Revels document for one thing. In any event, he was soon off on another tack, as Dr. Tannenbaum has recounted, changing his opinion regarding the date of this play four or five times in all before death intervened.

Nevertheless, Edmond Malone was an able and honest investigator. His befuddlement in regard to the approximate dating of *The Winter's Tale* and many of the other plays was induced primarily by the exigencies of the synthetic Stratfordian creative canon. William of Stratford having been born there in 1564, known to his neighbors during early manhood as a butcher's apprentice, and being personally untraceable in London until about 1598, his advocates are rightfully most prudent in avoiding any creative spoors that lead back into the 1580's. Under the circumstances, Malone is not to be blamed for failing to realize the full possibilities of the White copyright entry. He must be criticized, however, for the leading part he took in establishing the precedent of confusing the actual writing of Shakespeare's works with initial mentions of plays or poems in outside sources — an entirely untenable proceeding, as most writers can testify from personal experience.

Today a more realistic approach to the problem of the creative origin of all the plays is demanded, not to say enforced by the scientifically grounded solution of the truth behind the theft and garbled

publication by actors and unscrupulous publishers of many of the dramatic pieces that were first printed in individual quarto form. The facts proving the wholesale piracy of which Shakespeare was a victim have been sufficiently developed by Greg, Alexander, Cairncross, Hart and others¹ to sweep away forever the false and foolish myth that the genuine Bard was a plagiaristic "cobbler" of other men's discards. We now know that it was he himself who was the victim of such re-creations, and that the very plays he is supposed to have cribbed from so extensively are all more or less illiterate piracies of the authentic Shakespeare masterpieces. Readjusting our minds to acceptance of these revolutionary truths, it becomes apparent that the stolen works inevitably go back to earlier origins than the Stratford creative canon can tolerate. For not even the most ardent of Will Shakspeare's partisans dare argue that the young runaway butcher's apprentice was the author of various dramatic masterpieces already so well known that they could be "maimed and deformed by injurious imposters" beginning as early as 1590-91 when *King John* was thus transformed into the obvious paraphrase of *The Troublesome Raigne of King John*.

Taking up Malone's lead again, after a lapse of one hundred and sixty-eight years, many circumstances combine to tell us that Edward White's 1594 copyright entry of *A Wynters Nightes Pastime* represents an abortive attempt to publish one more unauthorized edition of an authentic Shakespeare play.

The registration and issuance of literary material lacking all indication of the personal knowledge and consent of its creators was no new departure for Master White. Manuscripts reputedly acquired frequently stated the author's name when entered on the Stationers' books. Or at least gave that forgotten man some notice on the printed title-page. But very few of the licenses granted to White and his fellow pirates (such as John Danter, Thomas Millington, Abell Jeffes, Thomas Creede, Peter Short, Cuthbert Burby and others of the period) bear such distinguishing notations. The bulk of Edward White's business was in popular ballads and sensational chapbooks. Also, between 1589 and May 22, 1594, he had either published or "entred for his copie" twelve plays—allowing for the sake of our present argument that *A Wynters nightes pastime* was a play book. Most of these can

1. See "Exploding the Ancient Play Cobbler Fallacy" in the January, 1946 QUARTERLY.

be identified without difficulty as dramatic and comedy hits of the 1580's. Among those entered on the trade register, none mentions authorship. Significantly enough, the only surviving Edward White editions of plays dated within the 1589-1594 period which display an author's name even on the title-page are those credited to writers who had died before White printed their play books. Two of these are attributed to Robert Greene and one to Christopher Marlowe. Moreover—and this fact should be carefully noted—some of the titles which White registered for copyright purposes show the same discrepancies between the wording thus set down and the wording by which the same works are identified on their printed title-pages that is apparent between White's registration of *A Wynnters nightes pastime* and *The Winter Night's Tale* (in the Revels Accounts) or *The Winter's Tale* (in Shakespeare's First Folio). These title discrepancies can be observed as we proceed. The dated memoranda of Edward White's foray into the play book market follows:

1589

Greg says: "No entry of the piece (given below) has been found in the Registers of the Stationers' Company."

"*The Rare Triumphes of Loue and Fortune*. Plaide before the Queenes most excellent Maiestie" . . . Greg and others identify this interlude as equivalent to *A Historie of Loue and fortune* shown before her Majesty at Windsor on December 30, 1582 by the Servants of the Earl of Derby. Authorship anonymous, but attributed to Thomas Kyd.

3 April, 1592

Copyright entered to Edward White for *The tragedie of Arden of Feuersham and Blackwall*. Printed the same year as *The Lamentable and True Tragedie of M. Arden of Feuersham in Kent*. The Stationers' Court records show that White's trade rights were almost immediately invaded by Abell Jeffes who issued an edition of his own. The feud thus inaugurated between White and Jeffes proves that neither of these book buccaneers had much reverence for the other's so-called "property." *Arden of Feversham* has frequently been designated as an early work of Shakespeare's by orthodox scholars of repute. Prof. Felix Schelling and others identify it as the published version of *The history of murderous mychaell* which was given before the Court at Whitehall on Shrove Tuesday, 1579 "by the Lord Chamberleynes seruantes." Michael was the name of the servant who had

sworn to participate in the murder of Thomas Arden, esteemed resident of Faversham, at the instigation of the latter's wife—in real life as in the play. Edward White had, incidentally, secured license on 1 July, 1577 to "ymprinte" a blackletter chapbook account of this crime entitled *A cruell murder donne in Kent*. The young Earl of Oxford personally took part in the enactment of a "device" staged before the Queen "at Shrovetide," 1579. He was also patron of various famous groups of professional players. Being Lord Chamberlain of England, he can be identified as the directive patron of some of the companies that appear in Elizabethan stage records as "The Lord Chamberlain's Servants." In her *Hidden Allusions in Shakespeare's Plays*, Mrs. Eva Turner Clark examines the Oxfordian-Shakespearean evidence of *Arden of Feversham*. Backed by impressive documentation and a wealth of parallels, she makes out a very strong case for the poet-dramatist Earl as the real author of this powerful murder drama—a curious but telling forerunner of *Macbeth*. *Arden* was published anonymously.

16 October, 1592

Copyright entered to Abell Jeffes for *The Spanishe Tragedie of Don Horatio and Bellepeia*. Shortly afterwards White proceeded to revenge his grudge against Jeffes by employing Edward Alde to print an undated edition of this celebrated melodrama of the 1580's under the title of "*The Spanish Tragedie, Containing the lamentable end of Don Horatio, and Belimperia: with the pittifull death of olde Hieronimo*. Newly corrected, and amended of such faults as passed in the first impression. *Edward Alde for Edward White*." Brought before the Court of the Stationers' Company for their mutual transgressions, it was ordered that all copies of Jeffes' edition of *Arden of Feversham* and White's edition of *The Spanish Tragedy* should be "confiscated and forfeited according to the ordinance (and) disposed to the use of the poor of the company." A copy of White's undated and confiscated edition survives, however. Known to have been printed before the court order of 18 December, 1592, it is the oldest and most valuable copy extant. Printed anonymously in all of its many editions. Although attributed to Thomas Kyd as a reference made by Thomas Heywood in 1612, considerable doubt militates against this ascription. *The Spanish Tragedy* is a play that goes back on various scores, including Ben Jonson's satirical remarks, to 1585 or earlier. Heywood, on the other hand, was born between 1575 and 80. Obviously

mere child when it was produced, he is not likely to have had unquestionable knowledge of its authorship. Kyd died in 1594, whereas Heywood does not appear in London theatrical circles until 1598. Moreover, Thomas Kyd is one author of the period who seems to have put his name on every work to which his right is clear-cut. His play *Cornelia* (an unsuccessful translation of Garnier's French original) bears Kyd's name on the title-page and also at the end, while his initials are signed to the dedication to the Countess of Sussex. Furthermore, Kyd's name is given as the author of *Cornelia* in the Stationers' records. We also find the initials "T.K." no less than three times on the printed version of *The Housholders Philosophie*, Kyd's translation from Tasso. He even took pains to sign the two-penny chapbook shocker entitled *The Trueth of the most wicked and secret murdering of John Brewen, Goldsmith of London, committed by his owne wife &c.*, which was printed in 1592 for John Kid and Edward White. Under the circumstances, and with no more direct evidence than Heywood's casual attribution—made twenty-five or more years after the play was written—it is impossible to believe that a professional writer who liked to see his own name in print as much as Thomas Kyd did would not openly have claimed *The Spanish Tragedy* had he possessed legitimate right to such fame. This could have been done easily enough, it would appear. His relative (some say his brother) John Kid or Kyd was associated with Edward White in publishing chapbooks—including the one on the Brewen murder which Thomas Kyd wrote the same year that White issued his "newly corrected and amended" edition of *The Spanish Tragedy*. The notable failure to claim an alleged due at what must have been an opportune time makes it obvious that Kyd's own publisher in 1592 didn't know him as the author of the play or White himself would have capitalized on that circumstance in making his edition of the *Tragedy* more "authentic" than Jeffes'. Finally, by 1594 White seems to have made up his differences with Jeffes, for the names of both appear on another edition of *The Spanish Tragedy* bearing that date. But, as previously stated, no copy of any 16th or 17th century printing of the drama displays an author's name. These facts have been detailed as typical of the casual and contradictory bases of "authority" upon which so many attributions of Elizabethan dramatic authorship rest.

22 November, 1592

Entered to Edward White "vnder th(eh) andes of the Bisshop of London and master warden Styrrup the tragedye of Salamon and Perceda." Published, presumably the same year, by White as *The Tragedye Of Solyman and Perseda. Wherin is laide open, Loues constancy, Fortunes inconstancy, and Deaths Triumphs*, this companion piece to *The Spanish Tragedy* and its likely predecessor, shows in a hundred tricks of style and imagery the same creative origin. All surviving copies are likewise anonymous. Solely due to its textual association with *The Spanish Tragedy*, the play is attributed to Kyd. His claim to so notable a work is entirely conjectural, as can be gathered.

* * *

We now come to one of the most interesting and provocative periods in the history of the Elizabethan book publishing trade.

Due to certain unusual interlocking circumstances, during the summer of 1593 and continuing on into 1595, a great many famous stage plays appeared from the presses of a group of the younger, less prosperous and less reputable members of the Stationers' Company. Checking the Registers of the Company as well as the dated title-pages of surviving quartos, we find that from July 6, 1593, through 1594, at least thirty-six plays were either licensed for individual publication or actually printed. This is many times more than had ever been licensed or published during a previous period of like duration.

Reasons behind this sudden transformation of stage property into print are to be found in the business reverses that all of the acting companies of the metropolis had suffered, beginning early in 1592 and persisting with only two short respites until June, 1594. The puritanical restrictions imposed on the players—including the Queen's own men—which are so vividly described by Spenser in his *Teares of the Muses* (1591), together with the official ban on public assemblies which severe epidemics of "the sweating sickness" called forth, brought the acting profession into very low water. It appears that most of the companies disbanded, either losing identity, or reforming into small itinerant groups to tour the countryside "on foot-back," picking up such largess as rural taverns and tolerant village headles might grant. In Philip Henslowe's informative *Diary* is the following memorandum specifying fifteen pounds advanced

to his nephew, which explains much in a few words:

"Lent unto frances Henslow the 3 of Maye, 1593 to laye downe, for his share to the Quenes players when they broke and went into the country to playe."

In addition to the Queen's Players, the Servants of the Earl of Pembroke disbanded in the summer of 1593, while the Earl of Sussex's Men, to quote Greg, "disappear from London, and indeed from dramatic history generally," after April, 1594. Certain well known actors such as Edward Alleyn—Henslowe's son-in-law—then formed temporary alliances for brief periods. As the records indicate, the whole acting profession was in a state of flux during the first four or five years of the 1590 decade. It was just about the worst period imaginable for any untried rural amateur to come to the fore (as the proponents of William of Stratford would have us believe that he did) during this time of unemployment and famine. There was certainly little livelihood to be visualized in the writing of plays. Henslowe, a shrewd literary speculator if there ever was one, does not record advancing so much as a lone shilling to any identifiable writer prior to 1597. Among the plays that he put on at the Rose and at Newington during the interrupted seasons of 1592 to June, 1594 with the players of Lord Strange, the Lord Admiral and the Lord Chamberlain, as well as the Queen's and Sussex's men, a few are marked "ne" for "new" in his crabbed script. And they undoubtedly were new to Henslowe's audiences, though they could have been written long before he lists them. But as for the bulk of the thirty-odd tragedies and comedies presented, they were popular favorites that go back some years. These include Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and *Massacre at Paris*; Greene's *Friar Bacon* and *Friar Bungay*, *George à Green*, and (with Lodge) *A Looking Glass for London*; *The Spanish Tragedy*; and Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth* (first called "*Harey of Cornwall*" by Henslowe), *1 Henry the Sixth*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *King Lear*.

During such precarious times, it stands to reason that Henslowe was not one to take a chance on the works of new and untried men. Marlowe, Greene, Lodge, and the author of *The Spanish Tragedy* were all playwrights of approved experience. But does the runaway butcher's apprentice from Stratford fit into the same category at this period? What is the answer to the riddle?

A very obvious one, in sooth. The pen-name of

"William Shakespeare," an "invention" that did not appear in print until the summer of 1593, belonged to the poet-dramatist Earl of Oxford, who is the real veteran of this group of playwrights. He is the master craftsman, patron and supervisor of the others, "our pleasant Willy," described by Spenser in 1591 as the learned, aristocratic genius whom Nature's self had made to mock herself, and Truth to imitate.

"Our pleasant Willy" could take no percentage or royalty on the use of his works from a commercial house manager such as Henslowe. That is to say, he could not cut in on the "take" openly under his own name or the easily identifiable title of Earl of Oxford. But he quite evidently did receive royalties under his less easily identifiable title of "Lord Chamberlain." For although Oxford was hereditary Lord Great Chamberlain of England, it has been conclusively proved that he was frequently referred to in legal documents and personal correspondence merely as "the Lord Chamberlain" (period).² So, while it is standard practice on the part of the "authorities" to claim that every reference during the last decade of Elizabeth to "the Lord Chamberlain's players" means that these performers reported directly to some one of the various Lords Chamberlain of the Queen's Household who happened to be filling that office at the time, this supposition can no longer be maintained. Not when we so definitely know that the bohemian Earl of Oxford, an amply documented poet-dramatist and the patron of numerous actors and dramatists, was actually the one permanent "Lord Chamberlain" of the realm.

Therefore, when we find Philip Henslowe noting the payment of various substantial sums, such as "ten pondes in part of twenty," from time to time, "at the apoyntment of my lord Chamberlain," it is entirely logical to argue that Lord Chamberlain Edward Oxford was at these times demanding and receiving certain royalties. The payments could have been on behalf of his "men," or they could have been percentages due on some of the many Shakespearean works that were shown in the theatres managed by the enterprising Henslowe.

One of the Shakespearean works put on under Henslowe's house management by "the Earl of Sussex his men" in February, 1594, was "*titus & andronicus*." In June of the same year, Henslowe also

2. See "Lord Oxford as Supervising Patron of Shakespeare's Theatrical Company" in the July, 1944 QUARTERLY

records two performances of "andronicus" at "newington" by "my Lord Admerelle men & my Lorde Chamberlen men." This piece is unquestionably Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, the Senecan melodrama that Ben Jonson satirically lumps with *The Spanish Tragedy* as representing the primitive blood-and-thunder theatrical ideals of London audiences in the 1580's. Many modern students see in it one of the earliest youthful efforts of the playwright Earl; and recently discovered (but unpublished) documentation bears out this conclusion. With *Titus Andronicus* we can take up again the listing of those "stolen and surreptitious" plays in which Edward White's piratical hand appears.

6 February, 1594

Entered on the Stationers' Register to John Danter, generally considered the least reputable London printer of his day, "a booke intituled a *Noble Roman Historie of Tytus Andronicus*." Published anonymously the same year as "*The Most Lamentable Romaine Tragedie of Tytus Andronicus*, As it was Plaide by the Right Honourable the Earle of Darbie, Earle of Pembroke, and Earle of Sussex their Seruants." Also on the title page appear the names of John Danter, Edward White and Thomas Millington as printer and distributors respectively. This is one of the rarest and most valuable of all the Shakespeare quartos. A unique copy of the 1594 edition was purchased from its Swedish owner in 1904 for two thousand pounds by the late Henry Clay Folger, founder of the Folger Shakespeare Library. Barring the usual run of typographical errors, the text is authentic, although lacking Scene 2 of Act III which first appears in the 1623 Folio. By some legerdemain the Danter-White-Millington syndicate had acquired a first-class transcript of the old melodrama—in fact, the only substantially accurate example of an early Shakespeare play among the various surreptitious re-creations that were then being put into print through the connivance of shorthand writers, actors and paraphrasing books. In passing it has been noted that three different companies are credited on the title-page of this first edition with having played *Titus Andronicus*. From Henslowe's records we can add the performances during June, 1594 by the Lord Admiral's and the Lord Chamberlain's men to those credited to the players of the Lords Derby, Pembroke and Sussex. Thus we have at least four or five companies producing the same popular play—not to mention the Queen's men, who seem to have been

the original source of the 1594 Sussex group. Several other instances of various companies producing the same plays can be cited. It was a common practice. By the same token, these various groups of players did not own outright all the plays that they appeared in. The indications are that a great many of the plays (as well as many of the actors) were drawn from a centralized pool and allocated as circumstances best warranted. Certain noblemen were evidently officially persuaded to lend their names to certain groups of players for limited periods, while dramatic material was also officially selected and provided to meet their requirements. A well organized plan of patriotic propaganda and public enlightenment is apparent in the background. To talk of the rise of the Elizabethan stage as a merely fortuitous circumstance, with the mysterious miracle-worker of Stratford as its *deus ex machina*, descending from the blue, is merely fabulous nonsense. An assured, powerfully placed directive mind guided the whole movement through floodtide and shallows. No other conclusion is possible, once we get the overall picture. By way of proof—and contrast—observe the steady degeneration of the English creative drama after the death of the Earl of Oxford in 1604, despite all the money that James I lavished on the stage. Shakspeare of Stratford was then only forty, an age when any normal man is at the height of his creative powers. But a highly significant paralysis seemed to grip the alleged creative faculties of this alleged magician. As many facts prove, all the great Shakespeare plays had been written. And only in their revival, from time to time, does the Jacobean theatre recapture the glory and stimulus of elemental genius. As for *Titus Andronicus*, although it is just such an abattoir of dramaturgy as a brash young experimenter might revel in, the language of many of its pages is minted out of the true Bard's own vocabulary. Moreover, Meres in 1598 lists it as authentic Shakespeare in comparing its author to the Latin master, Seneca.

May, 1594

A red-letter date in the calendar of Elizabethan dramatic publication. For during this month a total of twelve plays were entered for copyright on the Stationers' books by such specialists in questionably acquired manuscripts as Peter Short, Cuthbert Burby, Thomas Creede, Edward White, Thomas

Gosson, Nicholas Ling and Thomas Millington. Of these, White was then the most enterprising (or least inhibited) as he managed to secure licenses for six out of the twelve plays entered.³ Five of these copyrights were granted him on May 14th, although he evidently experienced difficulties in bringing off this coup. For under the same date the name of Adam Islip first appears as the licensee of all five manuscripts. But these Islip entries are crossed out, new ones being substituted in favor of White. Such recording indicates the generally suspicious circumstances under which these playbooks came into Master White's hands. Suspicion of irregularity becomes a certainty when we further learn from bibliographers that of the six "bookes" licensed to White during this month of May, only three are known to have been published at all; while of these but one bears White's name as distributor. This lone work is—significantly enough—from the pen of the then-deceased Robert Greene. A list of the White entries dated 14 May, 1594 follows:

1) . . . "a booke intituled the *Historye of fryer Bacon and fryer Boungaye*" . . .

The title-page of surviving copies of White's 1594 edition reads:

"*The Honorable Historie of frier Bacon and frier Bongay*. As it was plaid by her Maesties Seruants. Made by Robert Greene Maister of Arts." This is to all intents and purposes a practically perfect copy of Greene's best comedy. It can now be proved that it is also his first play, written at a time when Greene acknowledged the Earl of Oxford as his patron. Greene's biographers have done him many cruel injustices. He was a far abler pioneer than many seem to think. The present work is not at all an imitation of Marlowe's *Fastus*, as Harrison and others claim. It was, in fact, written and produced some years before Christopher Marlowe was even heard of. Marlowe himself was the imitator of Greene—in exactly the same sense that he was the imitator of Shakespeare. In failing to identify the real Bard, the "authorities" have befogged the whole era with their own conjectures

and misdatings. One result has been to belittle Greene outrageously—much as Gabriel Harvey did—while elevating the rantings of Marlowe far above their actual worth. I agree fully with Bernard Shaw that "Marlowe's mighty line" is largely tiresome cacophony. Greene was vastly more human in every sense.

2) . . . "the moste famous Chronicle historye of *Leire kinge of England and his Three Daughters*" . . .

No White edition is known. But on 8 May 1605—less than a year after the death of the Earl of Oxford—Simon Stafford "entred for his copie 'the Tragecall historye of kinge Leir and his Three Daughters &c.'" White may have tried to register a copy of the authentic Shakespeare play in 1594, or it may have been the same paraphrase of that work which Stafford entered eleven years later. Be that as maybe, another claimant now comes forward in the person of John Wright—one of the distributors of Shakespeare's stolen Sonnets—who is recorded as the final licensee "provided that Simon Stafford shall have the printinge of this booke." Arber, the editor of the *Stationers' Transcripts* remarks in a footnote: "It is evident that King Lear was printed by S. Stafford before the 8th of May 1605, though not entered until it was assigned on that date." The White entry of 1594 is not mentioned by Arber. The indications seem to be that White was either officially prevented from publishing Lear at that time, or that he was in some way "bought off." That publishers sometimes extorted blackmail on manuscripts can be verified from a memorandum in Henslowe's *Diary* of about 1600 which notes the payment of 40 shillings to an unnamed pirate "to stay the printing" of Thomas Dekker's new play, *Patient Grissel*. The Stafford-Wright edition of "*The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters Gonorill, Ragan and Cordella*, as it hath bene divers and sundry times lately acted," is a loose paraphrase of the genuine *Lear*, as has been frequently stated. Returning to the list of other playbooks copyrighted by Edward White on the 14th of May 1594, we find:

3) . . . "a booke intituled the *famous historye of John of Gaunte sonne to Kinge Edward the Third with his Conquest of Spaine and marriage of his Two daughters to the Kinges of Castile and Portugale, &c.*" . . .

No copy of this drama or its equivalent exists. But one called *The Conquest of Spain by John of*

3. The Stationers' records show that on May 2nd Peter Short and Cuthbert Burby together copyrighted "a pleasant conceyted historic called 'the Taimyng of a Shrowe'" which is the re-created memory version of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*; while on the particularly busy date of May 14th, Thomas Creede "entered for his copie" "the famous victories of Henry the Fyft coneytynge the honorable battell of Agincourt," the crude, telescoped scenario of Shakespeare's 1 & 2 *Henry IV* and *Henry V* in which Dick Tarleton appeared before his death in 1588.

Gaunte is mentioned by Henslowe in 1601 as being prepared for production at that time by William Rankins and Richard Hathway. If White actually had a manuscript to cover his 1594 entry, it seems to have been one that the real owner was able to prevent White from printing.

4) . . . "a booke called *the booke of David and Bethsaba*" . . .

This Biblical interlude is by George Peele, whose works were produced mostly by the Queen's players before their 1590 decline. No copy covering the White entry is known, the earliest extant edition being one issued five years later in 1599 by Adam Islip.

5) . . . "a booke entituled *a pastorall plesant Comedie of Robin Hood and Little John &c.*"

No printing of any date has come to light; and the play is surmised to be one of the several lost works of Anthony Munday, long a protégé of the Earl of Oxford and a stage manager of the Oxford men during the 1580's. Himself a registered publisher's apprentice, Munday would have known how to circumvent the piratical White, if need be.

* * *

It will be perceived that Edward White's "rights" in the five plays listed were evidently based on much flimsy pretense. In laying hold of unguarded literary property, this tradesman's energy was only equalled by his effrontery. Ten years later he was heavily fined and censured for stocking an unauthorized edition of the *Basilicon Doron*, a book written and published by King James himself. White's activities in the early 1590's have been particularized at the risk of straining the reader's attention in order to give some idea of the murky atmosphere of stealth surrounding the "injurious imposters" who dominated dramatic publication in Shakespeare's day.

Another play of which White secured a garbled and abridged acting version (evidently during this 1594 period) but which it seems he did not dare enter on the Stationers' Register, was Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*. This was one of the groundlings' favorite melodramas produced frequently under Henslowe's management. He lists it under various quaint nicknames, such as "*the Gwies*," "*the masacer*" and "*the tragedy of the gvyes*." The title-page of White's undated edition reads:

"*The Massacre at Paris With the Death of the Duke of Guise*. As it was plaide by the right hon-

ourable the Lord high Admirall his Seruants. E. A. (Edward Allde) for Edward White."

Although a badly mangled "memory version," apparently sharked up by some hungry actor, White's stolen text has proved of very great value to Dr. Greg and others in demonstrating the system whereby such thieveries were perpetrated.

We have already noted that White entered in his own name on 22 May, 1594, the manuscript of "a booke entituled *Wynters nightes pastime*." Although, like four of his other entries that month, no contemporary printing of such a work has ever been discovered, this does not mean that it was not issued in later years under a somewhat similar title by more reputable publishers. We will now show how realistically, in point of fact, *A Winter's Night's Pastime* expresses the creative atmosphere of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.

In the first place, if the Revels Accounts can be trusted, this piece was known prior to its 1623 First Folio publication as *The Winter Night's Tale*. Contemporary lack of standardization in spelling and titling generally makes it entirely reasonable to assume that it was also referred to by other variants, just as *The Massacre at Paris* appears in Henslowe's records under three stage aliases—no one of which matches exactly the wording of the printed title. In any event, "tale" immediately connotes "*pastime*." Malone caught this at once. Moreover, the corroding jealousy from which Leontes of *The Winter's Tale* suffers becomes unbearable as he persuades himself that Hermione and her assumed paramour, Polixenes, are making a "*pastime*" of playing upon his weakness. This identical point is emphasized significantly. Self-created jealousy being the motivating spirit (or vice) of the play, comedy turns to tragedy all the faster as the infatuate monarch's household endeavors to laugh away his fixation. To wit:

Act I, Scene 2.

HERMIONE (to LEONTES). You look
As if you held a brow of much
distraction:

Are you not moved, my lord?

LEONTES. No, in good earnest.
(Aside, in self-pity.)

How sometimes nature will be-
tray its folly,

Its tenderness, and make itself
a *pastime*

To harder bosoms!

Again, in Act II, Scene 3, after Leontes has de-

nounced his wife as an adultress, and is unbending his imaginary wrongs to his attendants, he complains that

Camillo and Polixenes

Laugh at me, make their pastime at my sorrow:

They should not laugh, if I could reach them; nor

Shall she, within my power.

Thus, what began as *A Winter's Night's Pastime* of hospitable good will and merriment, curdles into the grim *Winter's Tale* of revenge of fancied injuries. But this mood changes in turn as nature proceeds to undo the harm wrought by Leontes' egocentric wrong-headedness. From the entry of the good-hearted shepherds "on the coast of Bohemia" in Act III, the play takes on the color of a veritable *Winter's Night's Pastime* as the shepherds, clowns and rural soubrettes—led by Autolycus, Prince Florizel and Leontes' discarded daughter, Perdita—charm us with song and sunburnt mirth. In the end, young love and the wit of experienced womanhood find the way to move the heart of the chastened tyrant Leontes to remorseful reparation. As the play appears in the First Folio, it is the longest of all Shakespeare's comedies—nearly twice the length of *The Comedy of Errors*—and we can be assured that when it was produced contemporaneously the tragical parts were cut as radically as they frequently are today.

The word *pastime* and its synonyms, such as *entertainment*, *sport*, *jest* and *trick* are used so pointedly to express the motivating jealousy in *The Winter's Tale* that it seems strange indeed nobody since Malone's day has sensed the full significance of these circumstances in parallel with Edward White's 1594 entry of *A Winters nightes pastime*.

* * *

We have seen that the latter part of 1593 and the full year of 1594 witnessed the most productive raid on play properties ever engineered by piratical publishers in the history of the Elizabethan stage. This period coincides with the break-up of such acting groups as the Queen's men, the players of the Earl of Pembroke, the players of the Earl of Sussex, and the re-grouping under economic stress of those actors styling themselves the "servants" of Lord Hunsdon, Lord Strange, the Lord Admiral and the Lord Chamberlain. Of the thirty-six play manuscripts then copyrighted or actually published, surviving printings of nine

can be identified by modern methods of analysis and deduction as "memory" versions or simplified paraphrases of their originals. These include:

Greene's *Orlando Furioso* and *The Scottish History of James the Fourth*—both said to have been played by the Queen's men.

Peele's *Battle of Alcazar*—played by the Lord Admiral's men.

Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*—played by the Lord Admiral's men, and the Lord Chamberlain's men.

Shakespeare's *2 Henry Sixth*, corruptly printed as *The First Part of the Contention* &c.—assigned to Pembroke's men.

Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, corruptly printed as *The Taming of A Shrew*—played by Pembroke's men and the Lord Admiral's and the Lord Chamberlain's men.

Shakespeare's *1 and 2 Henry Fourth* and *Henry Fifth*, crudely digested as *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*—played by the Queen's men.

Shakespeare's *Richard the Third*, loosely paraphrased as *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*—"As it was played by the Queenes Maiesties Players."

Shakespeare's *King Lear*, paraphrased and simplified as *The Chronicle History of Leire*, but not published by White, following his 1594 copyright entry. During April, 1594, "*king leare*" was played twice at Henslowe's theatre by the Queen's men and Sussex's men.

Also, we have shown that a true copy of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* was copyrighted and published in 1594 by Edward White and his associates.

We therefore have versions of seven famous Shakespearean works either published or "claimed" by the most notorious literary pirates of London, working hand in glove with needy actors and undercover hacks at the very time White slips through his mysterious copyright of *A Winters nightes pastime*. All such circumstances combine to tell us that the entry represents an attempt by this "injurious imposter" to steal the genuine *Winter's Tale*—just as he had participated in the filching of the genuine *Titus Andronicus*, and had all but snared *King Lear*.

But how, the "authorities" may ask, did a copy of *The Winter's Tale* become available to the pirates in 1594? There is no record of any such tragi-comedy being played at that time.

As a matter of fact, there is just such a copy

porary record in the accredited accounts of Philip Henslowe, under date of January, 1593.

On the 5th of that month, Henslowe credits his management with a percentage of 44 shillings on the gross intake at "the gelyous comedy." These phonetics translate plainly enough into "The Jealous Comedy"—a thoroughly adequate descriptive subtitle for *The Winter's Tale*. Also one that is typical enough of old Henslowe's penchant for realistic nicknames.

It was the players of Ferdinando Stanley, 5th Earl of Derby, formerly Lord Strange, who put on "The Jealous Comedy" at the Rose. The famous Edward Alleyn was then the star performer of this troupe. The year previous they had produced on the same stage versions of *Henry Fifth* and *1 Henry Sixth*, both so effective in arousing British patriotic fervor that Tom Nash had specifically described audience reactions to them in his *Pierce Penniless* (1592). Nash is the most intelligent and revealing of all contemporary commentators on the Elizabethan theatre, and it would repay any student of the times to read and ponder carefully his descriptions of contemporary dramas and comedies of outstanding merit in those sections of the above book captioned "the defense of Plays" and "The use of Plays." The Nash testimony has been pointedly neglected, not to say deliberately misread by Stratfordian "authorities." But in *Pierce Penniless* alone, he describes approvingly at least nine works on themes that the real Shakespeare had made his own prior to 1592.

The 44 shilling cut which Henslowe sets down as his share of the receipts of "The Jealous Comedy" may seem laughably small today, but for the period such a house percentage indicates real success. The total intake was not only at least three times Henslowe's recorded share—the value of Elizabethan currency would be about fifteen times its modern equivalent. The average price of admission would hardly be more than three pence.

Henslowe's average percentages received during this particular run—29 December, 1592 to 1 February, 1593—from the Strange-Derby company's most popular productions are: Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, 50 shillings; *The Spanish Tragedy*, 37 shillings; Shakespeare's *1 Henry Sixth*, 36 shillings; *A Knack to Know a Knave*, 27 shillings; and Greene's *Friar Bacon*, 18 shillings. It will be seen at once that *The Jealous Comedy* is topped only by Marlowe's sensational *Jew of Malta* in popular appeal, while outranking such traditional favorites as *The Spanish Tragedy* and *1 Henry Sixth*.

Greene's excellent comedy is not even in the running. This indicates clearly that "The Jealous Comedy" was an effective vehicle in the hands of a company known for its proficiency in Shakespearean production. The play is marked "ne" for "new" by Henslowe. And it doubtless was "new" to the repertory of the Strange-Derby men at this time. All circumstances taken into account, it may very well have been a version of *The Winter's Tale*—then released for public entertainment by its author, following earlier Court presentations. This probability would also explain how a transcript of the same work, entitled "A Wynthers nightes pastime" came into the temporary possession of Edward White some time before the 22nd of May, 1594—just as the Marlowe play called "The Tragedy of the Grges" gravitated to the same piratical specialist to be published by him as *The Massacre at Paris*.

Of course, the Stratfordian creative canon has been artificially synthesized to prevent any such realistic identifications of Henslowe's "Jealous Comedy" and White's "Wynthers nightes pastime" as 1593-94 references to *The Winter's Tale*. We can well imagine the scorn with which the sentimentally conditioned Mr. Clayton Hamilton and other professional Stratfordians will greet such suggestions. But as their creative canon has already been proved wrong on at least a dozen major counts by the scientifically sound testimony assembled from so many "stolen and surreptitious copies" of the First Folio plays, one more example of its untrustworthiness can hardly occasion surprise.

Progress Reported

At the invitation of the Headmaster, Dr. Bénézet delivered his annual lecture on the evidence for Edward de Vere as the real Shakespeare at the Clark School, Hanover, New Hampshire, on February 22nd. As usual, the talk stimulated considerable interest in the fertile field of youth, and our President was given an ovation at its close. Many shrewd questions were posed and answered. One of the student reporters present wrote an amusing account of the meeting for the *Clark Clarion* entitled "Shakespeare Authorship Fraudulent" which we shall reproduce in our next issue. It contains a graphic description of Dr. Bénézet in action and should be appreciated by his friends and associates.

Mrs. Elsie Greene Holden, our western Vice-President, gave a talk before the Literary Club of Denver early in April which also stimulated considerable interest. The papers on Lord Oxford's place in the authorship mystery which Mrs. Holden wrote and circulated last year have been successful in arousing the attention of several important librarians and university English professors who had previously been out of touch with Oxford-Shakespeare publications.

* * *

The Fellowship has recently received from Paris an author's inscribed copy of *A La Découverte de Shakespeare*, a new book by Professor Abel Lefranc of the Institut de France, which will be reviewed in a later issue of the QUARTERLY. A Vice-President of The Shakespeare Fellowship of Great Britain, Professor Lefranc is a proponent of William Stanley, 6th Earl of Derby, and the poet Earl of Oxford's son-in-law and frequent companion, as "Shakespeare." This distinguished French scholar was for many years a member of the faculty of the Collège de France. He is well known in the United States, having served as an exchange professor at both Harvard and the University of Chicago. Besides being one of the foremost anti-Straifordians of his time, Professor Lefranc is generally acknowledged to be one of the greatest living French authorities on the literature of the Elizabethan Age. His latest work, written during the darkest days of his country's history, contains much new and valuable documentation that will be read with interest and respect by many Oxfordians.

* * *

Mr. Barrell reports that he is in receipt of much new and vitally important documentation from his transcriber-agent at the Public Record Office in London. Previously unpublished references relating to the character and activities of Sir Edward Vere, Lord Oxford's talented natural son by Anne Vavasor, as well as a whole series of Sir Edward's own letters, have come to light. In this material is a perfect copy of the knight's armorial seal which proves his genealogical origin beyond any shadow of doubt. The shield displays alternate quarterings of the Vere star with a "difference" (indicative of illegitimacy) and the Vavasor *fesse dancettée*. This evidence is to be reproduced in the book on Oxford's life and intimate associations as revealed in Shakespeare's sonnets which Mr. Barrell is now writing.

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Official organ of The Shakespeare Fellowship in the U.S.A., the QUARTERLY is the only publication now printed which is devoted chiefly to the perpetuation of documentary evidence that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604) was the real creative personality behind the plays and poems of "Mr. William Shakespeare."

Meetings of The Shakespeare Fellowship for educational and allied purposes will occasionally be held, in which members will be asked to cooperate. Membership dues are \$2.50 per year—U.S.A. money—which sum includes one year's subscription to the QUARTERLY. Special rates of subscription to the publication which do not include membership in The Fellowship may be arranged for student groups and libraries.

The Shakespeare Fellowship executives will act as an editorial board for the publication of the QUARTERLY, which will appear four times a year, i.e., in January, April, July and October.

News items, comments by readers and articles of interest to all students of Shakespeare and of the acknowledged mystery that surrounds the authorship of his works, will be welcomed. 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 opinion of their authors, not necessarily that of The Shakespeare Fellowship as a literary and educational corporation.

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Quarterly

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Our Apologies

Delays in publishing the first two issues of the QUARTERLY this year have been caused by changes in printing arrangements. Our work is now being done by the Dartmouth Printing Company of Hanover, New Hampshire, a concern that handles many of the typographical requirements of Dartmouth College. Material for forthcoming issues is in hand, and barring a general tie-up of transportation facilities or some similar calamity, we should be up-to-date with the July issue.

To the uninitiated it may seem hard to believe that it was less difficult and less expensive to publish this periodical during the war years than it has been since the shooting ceased. Nevertheless, such has been the case. This has been all the more regrettable as public interest in the Oxford-Shakespeare case has greatly increased of late. We must put ourselves in position to take full advantage of our opportunities.