

Society and Clubs

English Town Celebrates Shakespeare's Anniversary

Stratford-on-Avon, England — William Shakespeare — pen name or person?

The literary debate over whether Shakespeare or Bacon wrote the plays, which has been waged for years, comes to an annual climax of conviction on both sides on April 23, the day commonly accepted as Shakespeare's birthday.

In the bard's birthplace, Stratford-on-Avon, it's a day of joyful celebration and one of England's most colorful events, according to the British Travel association. Shakespearean scholars and visitors from all over the world converge on the little market town in celebration of the "glorious 23rd" — to the green-eyed envy of a small group of zealots who cling to the belief that Shakespeare was a pen name for Sir Francis Bacon, a 16th century essayist and statesman.

It must be admitted that the dispute over authorship of the plays is not too remarkable in view of the lack of documentary evidence about Shakespeare's life. All that is known about Shakespeare as a person could be scribbled on the back of a postal card. One letter to him, a few legal records, the date of his baptism and death—that's all there is.

What is remarkable is that so little evidence exists. The plays he wrote came to be regarded as extraordinary dramatic achievements only a century after his death. His daughter, who inherited his property, was undoubtedly aware of his reputation. Why she made no attempt to preserve his papers is a puzzle that has bothered scholars for years. There is one possible explanation: that she was somewhat embarrassed by her father's fame.

As a daughter of Stratford and the wife of a devout Puritan, she may have felt religious scruples about playwrights, actors and the stage. One guess scholars make to explain the absence of any personal documents is that Shakespeare's daughter and son-in-law, a good Puritan pair, destroyed the bard's papers as something distasteful for upright, churchly people to have in their home.

Whatever the reason for such neglect, the people of Stratford do their best to make up for it every year on April 23rd. Flags of all nations are unfurled in the streets. The natives wear sprigs of rosemary ("Rosemary's for remembrance") with the pride that Irishmen sport the green on St. Patrick's day. The Mayor of Stratford leads a floral procession through ancient streets of timbered Tudor houses to Shakespeare's grave at the Church of the Holy Trinity. Their whole-hearted enthusiasm results in evidence of a sort—emotional if not historical. Visitors who join the procession through the leafy lanes of old Stratford and sleep in rafters, age-darkened inns, claim they feel a closeness with Shakespeare and his works which they have never experienced before.

This year, visitors wishing to pay homage to Shakespeare by witnessing plays in his hometown will have a better chance than ever; the season of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre has been extended to 33 weeks, the longest on record. Sir Ralph Richardson will head a distinguished cast which includes Margaret Leighton and Mary Ellis. This year the repertory includes: "Coriolanus," "As You Like It," "The Tempest," and "Macbeth," a new production directed by John Gielgud.

Baconians are not always silent on-lookers at the Shakespearean goings-on. Convinced that the visitors are applauding the wrong man, they are occasionally driven to find an outlet for expression—even going as far as defying the famous Shakespeare curse.

One year a devotee of Shakespeare lovingly placed a wreath at the foot of the master's statue. Under cover of night, someone crept up and placed a placard over the wreath which read: "To the blessed memory of Sir Francis Bacon." This over-ardent Baconian was running quite a risk. The wreath was hastily removed, and Baconians were sternly cautioned to remember the famous inscription on Shakespeare's grave:

"Good friend for Jesus sake forbear To dig the dust enclosed here: Bleste be ye man yt (who) spares these stones, And curst be he yt moves my bones."

There's still another group to be heard from—a group which disagrees with both Shakespeareans and Baconians. Their cham-

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by Alice Brooks

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pion is the seventeenth Earl of Oxford — in the eyes of most Stratford folk, just a second pretender to the title, "Bard of Avon."

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Your Health and Its Care

By DR. WILLIAM BRADY, M.D.
Readers should address inquiries to: William Brady, 265 El Camino, Beverly Hills, Cal.

NO, NO, NOT AGAIN!

Each blessed winter now for years an expedition has set out into the wide blue yonder in quest of "the common cold."

This winter it began to look as though we might be spared for once, but just as we came within sight of spring, the middle of March, the latest "War on the Common Cold" was started by the newly organized Common Cold Foundation.

The executive director of this expedition admits it is impossible even to identify any particular ailment or indisposition as a common cold.

That's what I contend—but, darn it, who am I to elevate an eyebrow at the pronouncements of experts, specialists and authorities on such a question?

Having acknowledged that the hypothetical "cold" cannot be identified, the Common Cold Foundation winks the off eye and says some of the questions the Foundation hopes will be answered are:

1. Is it caused by a virus? Researchers disagree on this theory. (Doctors, too.)
2. Does sudden chilling make normal individuals susceptible?
3. Why do outbreaks of colds follow sudden weather changes? (This reminds me of the orchestra leader who stopped the music, stepped forward and demanded "Who called the piccolo player a nut?" A voice from the audience replied "Who called the nut a piccolo player?"

The Common Cold Foundation purports to pursue studies in many parts of the world, including the Arctic and the tropics and to help other expeditions to complete work already under way.

The announcement of the Foundation's plans conspicuously ignores the conclusion reached by the British Medical Research Council after many years of study, including experiments on volunteer subjects, that exposure to cold, wet feet, dampness and drafts has nothing whatever to do with ailments which unteachable doctors and laymen call "colds."

Well, naturally! An expedition of that sort would look silly if the findings of a previous expedition were accepted as fair or reasonable.

Even though no one has identified "the common cold," the doctors blandly say that any d.f. knows what a "cold" is—and so you do.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Fertile Boy-Girl Twins
My grandmother had a twin brother. She bore eight children. My father raised four children. The last two my twin brother and myself. I have raised six children, and am soon to become a grandmother. My twin brother and his wife have raised two daughters and they are grandparents. So we know you are right in assuring people that twins of opposite sex are not

sterile. (Signed)
Answer—Thank you Ma'am. In the same mail with your letter came two others of similar import, but I tossed them into the chucker as not valid—the writers didn't sign 'em.

How to Love Bulk
Coffee and the Heart
Husband recently had heart attack from drinking too much coffee. Physician said his heart beats too hard. If he eliminates coffee this year—will the damage already done be irreparable? (Mrs. L. H.)

Answer—You give no inkling in regard to the quantity of coffee the man takes. Send 25c and stamped, self-addressed envelope for booklet CVD (cardio-vascular, that is, heart-artery troubles). It has a chapter on The Abuse of Analgesic Drugs and another titled Coffee is Good for the Heart!

How to Lose Bulk
Have already lost 12 of these hated 20 pounds of slacker flesh in just two weeks on the diet you give in the pamphlet, and needless to say I'm overjoyed. (Mrs. S. D.)
Answer—Better simmer down a bit—that's too rapid reduction. The pamphlet HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT is available to any one who asks for it in writing and provides stamped, self-addressed envelope.

High School News

By ROBENE STARCHER
Boys attending Medford high met in the auditorium Thursday for a sports movie.

Amendments to the Medford high constitution which were passed at the student body election held April 17 include the following:
Minor sport lettermen may

uncover a stripe on their letterman sweaters instead of wearing chevrons; minor sport lettermen who win or place in state competition may be awarded major letters; the student council may amend the by-laws to the constitution as long as the meaning of the student council may amend the constitution to bring it up to date.

All Medford high students were excused from Friday classes because of the district music contest held at the school.

A dance was held Friday afternoon in the girls' gymnasium for all students participating in the music contest.

Recent scores in the traffic safety contest are sophomores, 606; seniors, 641 1/4; and juniors 1057 1/2. The contest ends May 9.

Many seniors are participating in Senior Weekend activities at state-supported institutions this week-end.

Representatives of the armed services met Tuesday with all interested boys over 17 years of age.

Court Records

DISTRICT COURT
Ronald Willis Ritchey, no operator's license, \$10.
Gerald Duane Newman, no muffler, \$6.
William Earl Atwood, failure to stop at stop sign, \$10.

CIRCUIT COURT
Wayne Ruben Buttram vs. Melvina Edna Buttram, divorce complaint.
Frances Johnson vs. Harold E. Johnson, divorce complaint.

On The Side

By E. V. Durling

(Distributed by King Features Syndicate, Inc.)

If I had but two little wings, To you I'd fly, my dear! But thoughts like these are idle things And I stay here. But in my dreams to you I fly, I'm always with you in my dreams. The world is all one's own, But then one wakes, and where am I? All, all alone. —Coleridge.

In some sections (including San Francisco) the price of a hair-cut for men has been raised to \$1.50. I don't say the tonsorialists asking this fee are going to price themselves out of business. However, with the way those home hair cutting gadgets have recently been improved it might not be wise to push the customers too far. Especially those customers who only ask for "a little off the sides and back, none off the top." The sides and back are easily handled with the aforementioned gadgets.

Says She
Although considered one of the leading specialists in that thing called "oomph," Marlene Dietrich does not approve of sweater girls and plunging necklines. Says she: "Women have become too figure conscious. All those sweater girls! I think it is quite vulgar. As for wearing a plunging neckline off the screen, I never would, I am sure no mother wants her daughter to go around like that, nor does any man like his wife to look like that."

Lively Blonde
The first burlesque troupe to tour this country was "Lydia Thompson's British Blondes." Lydia was a very lively blonde but would stand for no reflections on her morals. She horse-whipped a Chicago drama critic for hinting she was not as good as she might be. It was Lydia Thompson who introduced that ditty "If Ever I Cease to Love," now the theme song of the New Orleans Mardi Gras. The following is an excerpt from that rollicking ballad:

If ever I cease to love, May the fish get legs And the cows lay eggs If ever I cease to love, Passing By
Rudolf Friml. Distinguished

composer. Chiefly recalled as the composer of that entertaining operetta, "Rose Marie." Yet he had written many hits before that such as "The Firefly," "Kalinka," and "High Jinks." Mr. Friml is among the innumerable celebrated and successful men who married their secretaries. Such marriages are usually successful because the bride has had a good chance to study her man and knows how to handle him.

... John Jelke. Handsome, healthy and wealthy young fellow who is president of the New York Bachelors club. Most of the members of this organization are young men with wealth or fancy salaries. Their attitude of playing "hard to get" is highly irritating to many young women of Manhattan. Also, many married women view them with disfavor. A married woman is never pleased at the sight of a happy bachelor. She considers it a reflection on her sex and its necessity to male contentment.

Arking
Queries from clients. Q. Was there ever a hypnotist featured in big time vaudeville? A. There were several but the only one I recall was "The Great Pauline." He was a headliner and his salary is said to have reached \$2,000 a week, in the days when there was no income tax to pay and a dollar bought three times as much as it does today. Q. Which does a native of Scotland prefer to be called a Scot, a Scotsman or a Scotchman? A. I believe "Scotsman" is preferred. In any event, that celebrated railway train is called the Flying Scotsman.

Asides
There is a political campaign song called "Get on the Raft With Taft." This was written 44 years ago for the successful presidential campaign of William H. Taft.

CARD OF THANKS
We wish to thank the many friends for their kindness and beautiful floral offerings during the recent illness and death of our beloved wife and mother. We especially thank the members of the Ashland branch of the Church of Latter-day Saints. James Lilly and family. Mr. and Mrs. Len Crum.

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