



Essays in honor of C. A. ROBERTSON

... All These To Teach

Edited by



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*Professor of English
University of Florida*

Charles Archibald Robertson

An Appreciation



THE ESSAYS IN THIS VOLUME, CONCEIVED AS A salute to Professor C. A. Robertson upon his retirement, are contributed by men who have been associated with him as colleagues, have served in the department under his chairmanship, or are counted among his other friends. They are offered as a tribute to his more than forty years of service to humanistic studies at the University of Florida and the South Atlantic Region.

Professor Robertson was nourished in a tradition that placed stress upon Latin and Greek language and literature and upon Shakespeare and the King James version of the Bible. Determining at an early age to be a teacher, he devoted a lifetime to sharing his love of learning with students and colleagues alike. Born in Iamonia, near Tallahassee, Florida, he attended secondary schools in that region. From the University of Florida he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1915, major-

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ing in Greek, Latin, and English; and in 1919 he went on to the Master of Arts degree. He studied for the doctorate at Harvard University for two years and returned to the University of Florida as an assistant professor of English in 1923. Promoted to a professorship in 1928, he has held the position of head professor since 1946. For his interest in humane letters he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Literature by the University of the South in 1952. He served as president of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association, and has been elected to Phi Beta Kappa, Blue Key, and other honorary societies.

Professor Robertson's teaching of Shakespeare has been a memorable experience for thousands of students who took English 401-402 with him. Whether from farm or city, students left his class ennobled by the experience. His keen perception of human nature enabled him in presenting Shakespeare to give his students flashes of insight and moments of illumination into the nature of their own existence. Moreover, no student left his class without first acquiring a stock of quotable lines from Shakespeare. Many of his students, long after leaving the University, have sustained their relationship with this inspiring teacher.

From the outset of his career he was called to leadership. His nearly completed work at Harvard University was interrupted by the untimely death in 1927 of Dr. A. A. Murphree, then president of the University of Florida. The head of the Department of English at that time was elevated to the acting presidency, and Professor Robertson was recalled from Harvard to assume leadership of the English staff. As a chairman he made ceaseless efforts to bring into his department teacher-scholars of the highest caliber. His devotion to the department, his insistence upon quality instruction, and his loyalty to his staff have won for him the esteem of those whose privilege it has been to serve with him in building the department from one in which the M. A. degree was terminal to the present one which offers the Doctorate of Philosophy and post-doctoral fellowships.

One of Professor Robertson's most profound interests has been the University of Florida Library, which will reap the

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rewards of his vision for years to come. He championed library improvement not only in his own field but in all related areas. His zeal for finding funds, his perceptiveness in the value of proposed acquisitions, and his interest in a well-administered library have earned for him the gratitude of all students and faculty. As a member of the University Library Committee for several decades, he played an important role in the Library's growth from an institution containing possibly forty thousand books housed in a basement of one of the halls to its present building with over a million volumes.

He and his wife, Alleyne Redding Robertson, to whom he was married in 1926, have been host and hostess to many people of distinction in the humanities. Robert Frost in his annual visits to the University of Florida for over a decade shared the warm hospitality of the Robertson home, and Mr. Frost's lectures to the student body, sponsored by Professor Robertson, became a traditional event of the campus. In addition, the Department and the University have been favored by many visits from other literary men and women—a bounty to the University community made possible largely by the friendly relationships created with them by Professor and Mrs. Robertson. As a consequence of her warm regard for this department and its administration, the late Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings gave her manuscripts to the University of Florida Library and made the University of Florida residual beneficiary of her Cross Creek home.

Though Professor Robertson's primary love in literature has always been Shakespeare, he has had a lively interest in the whole range of English and American literary study. It is fitting, therefore, that the contents of this volume should exhibit a diversity of subject matter in keeping with his own wide range of interest in humane letters. Among the essays here presented the reader will find, in a chronological order of subject, topics ranging from linguistics to the Shakespearean drama, from the Middle English Digby play of Mary Magdalene to the letters of Elizabeth Madox Roberts.

The colleagues and friends of Professor Robertson, acknowledging his devotion to literature, his excellence as a teacher,

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his selflessness as a leader, offer this volume as a tribute to him. It may be said of him as was said of another great teacher: "He gave back as rain that which he received as mist." It is our hope that good fortune for many years ahead may

Furnish him with all the appertinents
Belonging to his honour. (*Henry V*)

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THOMAS PYLES

*Professor of English
University of Florida*

Inkhornisms, Fustian, & Current Vogue Words



BUCCINATE 'TO TRUMPET FORTH,' DIREPTITIOUS 'given to plundering,' *ineffrenate* 'unbridled,' *honorificabilitudinity* 'honor'—such lush creations of classically educated intellectuals and those who, like Shakespeare's Holofernes, aspired to be thought of as intellectuals had a considerable vogue in the Early Modern English period. Words like these were in the nature of caste-designators: their use indicated that one was "in," that one knew his way about in what were conceived to be the most exalted intellectual circles. Nevertheless, they were lambasted about as vigorously by the conservative folk of the time as the considerably less colorful and less flamboyant *finalize* has been in our own day.

Such words were derisively called *inkhorn terms*. The author of *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) tells us that "*Irreducible, irradiation, depopulation* and such like . . . were long

time despised for inkehorne termes."¹ They could not have been far removed from the so-called fustian eloquence of the time.

Education (1531), *chronology* (1593), and *contemplate* (1594),² however, must have seemed equally gaudy and tasteless to linguistic conservatives as those words just cited as having been "long time despised." They, like many other learned adaptations of the Early Modern period, were ultimately to enter ordinary usage; yet they were just as vulnerable as the archaisms cited at the very beginning of this paper, and must have been regarded with like abhorrence by those who wished above all things to keep the English language "pure," whatever that may mean. The conclusion is obvious: there is no way of predicting which words will catch on, which will die.

It is just as impossible to predict which of those words which have long been a part of our word stock will suddenly become vogue words. *Activate* and *priority* have been with us in an unobtrusive way for a very long time, only to become voguish in our own day. *Automation* has been with us for less than two decades, but it is likely to stay with us for a long time to come. In the history of vogue words, however, no man dare prophesy. On the other hand, fashion, to some extent governed (the voguish word here would be *conditioned*) by the political, economic, intellectual, and religious life of a people, to some extent purely whimsical, has driven out of use such mellifluous American words as *conbobberation*, *absquatulate*, *peedoodles*, and *hornswoggle*, all of which enjoyed a considerable vogue on the frontier in the more innocent days of our country; nowadays they are not heard even in the "adult" Westerns.

As I have pointed out elsewhere,³ vogue words are, to use a voguish phrase in defining them, words which have prestige

1. Cited in the *OED*, s.v. *ink-horn*. *Inkhornism*, *inkhornist*, and *inkhornize* are also listed as from this period.

2. The dates of earliest known occurrences are those given in the *OED*.

3. "Subliminal Words Are Never Finalized," *New York Times Magazine*, June 15, 1958, pp. 16, 55, 57, 58. Some of the examples to be cited subsequently also occur in this article.

value. They invariably have a flavor of bright sophistication, of urbanity, of ultramodernity—in short, of know-how—and they are in the beginning employed for this very reason. Many in due time enter the general word stock, like *to contact*, which has survived the belaboring of teachers, who objected to it on the grounds that *contact* was “properly” a noun, despite the fact that there are many instances of such conversion of noun into verb in English. No really up-to-date purist winces at it nowadays; those who conceive it to be their mission to police the language have other supposed offenders against linguistic propriety to bludgeon. Some such words, as we have seen, disappear altogether. By the time either of these possibilities occurs, there is bound to be a new flowering among those who set the pace.

In the mid-teens of the present century, according to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in his chapter “On Jargon” in *The Art of Writing* (1916), English newspaper writers were excessively fond of such locutions as *psychological moment*, *obsess*, *recrudescence*, *envisage*, and *adumbrate*. Today not one of these is really fashionable, and only one calls for comment—*psychological moment*, used then as now in the sense ‘most favorable time,’ though this was not the meaning of the German *das psychologische Moment*, its ultimate source.⁴ The mistranslation has been so long established and so freely used as to have become a mere cliché, though it is rapidly being supplanted by *moment of truth*.

An examination of the vogue words of the middle years of our century must inevitably tell us a great deal of the concerns and the mores of the period—its spiritual, intellectual, and

4. The French misunderstood it first, at the time of the Siege of Paris in 1870, when they encountered the phrase in a German journal in reference to the bombardment. In German *Moment* means ‘momentum, impetus’ when used as a neuter noun; only as a masculine does it mean ‘moment of time.’ According to the *OED*, the French mistranslation of *das psychologische Moment* as *moment psychologique* “has passed equally nonsensically into English journalese.” (The relevant section of the *OED* was issued in 1909, a date which accords well with Quiller-Couch’s statement.) This example I have used in a somewhat different connection in *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (New York, 1964), p. 311.

social aspirations and predilections. Just as the Renaissance rage for inkhornisms indicates the tremendous enthusiasm in those days for classical values—misguided though it certainly sometimes was—so does the current rash of vogue words taken from psychiatry and the so-called behavioral sciences indicate the values of our own world, ignoble as some of these may seem to those who live in ivory towers. It is likely that many of these words would be incomprehensible to one who died so recently as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, if we were able to resurrect him; and it is certain that under the same happy circumstances Calvin Coolidge would be completely in the dark as to the meaning of, say, *gimmick*, *name-dropping*, *psychosomatic*, *isometric*, and *moisturize*.

Just as *disposition*, *complexion*, *temper(ament)*, *humor*, *choleric*, *melancholy*, *sanguine*, *phlegmatic*, and a number of other words taken from the voguish scientific and pseudo-scientific parlance of an earlier day indicate to us an intense concern with astrology and physiology, so future commentators on our own era will certainly note our vast preoccupation with mental aberration of one sort or another as this is reflected in our voguish use of the terminology of psychoanalysis and psychology. Practically always these lose any sharpness of definition when they pass into popular use and are employed in reference to widespread and more or less vaguely delimited traits of character. This has happened, for instance, to the psychoanalyst's *complex*, which in voguish use has come to designate little more than the sort of obsessing idea which has temporarily taken hold of many of us at some time or other in our lives without in the least upsetting the mental balance. The word has been highly progenitive; there are nowadays many complexes which Freud never dreamed of. It is similar with the word *psychology* itself, as in *sales psychology*, which apparently means something like 'ability to discern the mental processes of one's "prospects" in such a way as to persuade them to purchase from one what they have no need for and frequently cannot afford.'

As E. E. Ericson has shown, with many citations, *sadism* has come to mean simply cruelty, with no connotations of *psychopathia sexualis*, and *moron*, at least in the Chicago area in the

1930's and 1940's, was used, perhaps euphemistically, in the specialized sense 'sex degenerate'⁵—a usage most unfair to those actual morons whose name is legion and who do much of the uninspiring but nonetheless useful work of the world. It is doubtful that calling a person an *exhibitionist* is any longer actionable, inasmuch as the word has come to refer to a comparatively harmless human failing referred to less pretentiously as "showing off," and is so defined in recent dictionaries⁶—a far cry indeed from the Baron von Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis. Other terms from psychiatry and social psychology which have passed into voguish usage include *behavior pattern* 'behavior,' *neurotic* 'nervous, worrisome,' *ambivalent* 'ambiguous, two-sided' (like *empathy*, a great favorite nowadays with literary critics), and *compulsive* 'habitual.' The last-cited word is doubtless used out of humanitarianism, as in *compulsive drinker*, with much the same sense as *alcoholic* 'one who likes to drink, does so habitually and usually over his capacity.' On the other hand, *insanity*, a more or less technical term, has come to be replaced by *mental illness*, but this is doubtless to be attributed to the same sort of tender feeling which calls a drunkard a compulsive drinker or an alcoholic. (It should be noted also that *sick* has acquired a specialized meaning 'insane,' so that one can tell only from context whether a *sick man* is crazy or merely dyspeptic.) It is similar with sociological *senior citizen*, beloved of politicians for 'aging and decrepit person,' and *juvenile delinquent* 'underbred and badly behaved adolescent.' No doubt such verbal subterfuges help to make life more bearable for decaying oldsters and the parents of naughty brats.

The voguish use of *image* seems to be an extension of its use in psychology for the phenomenon of experiencing anew some sensation with the original stimulus lacking. In really up-to-date speech much of this technical meaning, as we should

5. "New Meanings in Current English," in *Philologica: The Malone Anniversary Studies*, ed. Thomas A. Kirby and Henry Bosley Woolf (Baltimore, 1949), pp. 321-25.

6. The word is listed in the *OED* in the sense 'one who takes part in a performance,' with a single citation (1821). *Exhibitionism*, in the psychopathic sense, is entered only in the *Supplement* of 1933, the first citation being from 1908; but by the 1920's the figurative and general use had begun to occur.

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expect, has been lost, and the word means simply the impression, true or false, which one is able to make upon others. Such an image is almost invariably *projected*, and would seem to be vastly more important than what a person or an institution really is. An interview with some very eminent members of the American Psychiatric Association around the time of the political conventions in 1960, syndicated by the Women's News Service,⁷ disclosed that women, particularly those with weak husbands, wanted a "father image" as president. Dwight David Eisenhower, it was thought by the psychiatrists being interviewed, had projected just such an image,⁸ whereas Mr. Nixon was "not quite old enough for a father image and not quite young enough to appeal to women as a boy," that is, presumably, as a son image. One pundit feared that Mr. Nixon's appearance on television, when with the aid of his family and the little dog Checkers he defended himself against slush fund charges, had affected him adversely, but added, in what must be considered a little gem of voguish diction, "However, I am not discounting the fact that the Nixon image can be repackaged before the next election." Mr. Kennedy's chances were not rated high by the psychiatric mahatmas. In what was probably the most inept prophecy of the year 1960, they agreed that, although there was no doubt of his appeal to women as "the image of their little boy," they "will not vote for him because they do not want a boy in the White House." Nowhere in the article, it should be noted, was there any reference to a husband image. But this omission may be attributable to the fact that the assembled magi were by and large speaking for the American homemaker (she used to be a "housewife"), for whom a mere husband cannot be expected to project much of an im-

7. Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, February 9, 1960, p. 10.

8. This fantasy was very widespread. Cf. Ralph McGill, "The Image of the President," in his column *Conscience of the South*, Gainesville (Fla.) *Sun*, February 24, 1964, p. 4: "They [poll takers] could explain that General Eisenhower was the father image for which all of us instinctively and psychologically seek . . . the universal father who knows best." President Johnson, however, has also built up an image, "not that of a comfortable and comforting father," but that "of a competent man who knows how to get things done." We shall see more of the Johnsonian projection later.

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age—or, to put it in another way, almost equally vogueish, husbandwise she is left cold. An eminent lady doctor put the cap on the interview when she remarked that “the man who will be the next president will have to be presented to women in the image of a salesman.”

More recently, according to Ben A. Franklin in an article copyrighted by the *New York Times*, government historians have agreed that in the earliest days of his presidency, Lyndon B. Johnson “projected a very strong image.”⁹ We should all feel a great sense of security, inasmuch as it is only the image, the appearance, which seems to be really important. In “The Image of a Simple Man,” *Time* reports an official White House “adviser” as declaring “I believe—and I’m sure he believes—that the best image for him now is that of a serious, able, competent man who understands the office of the presidency. . . .”¹⁰

The physical and biological sciences have supplied comparatively few vogue words. Nevertheless, the awesomeness of their mysteries, as well as the tremendous prestige which they enjoy in the lay mind, is indicated by the use of *lab(oratory)* in non-scientific contexts (for instance, *composition lab*, *writing lab*). The use of *potential* as a noun may come from physics; it is now very fashionable and may in time supplant *potentiality* altogether.¹¹ Medical terminology is widely used—and doubtless misused—but it is primarily in the employment of *allergy* for ‘distaste,’ as in *an allergy to learning*, *clinic* as in *reading clinic* and *high school football coaching clinic*, and *intern* for ‘novice schoolteacher’ that similar extensions and laxations may be observed. It is likely that *condition* as a euphemism for practically any sort of ailment originated with doctors: “You have a liver condition” is far less alarming to the victim than “You have cirrhosis of the liver.”¹²

9. Gainesville (Fla.) *Sun*, December 4, 1963, p. 4.

10. March 27, 1964, p. 14.

11. Thus Charles Reid, music critic, in the London *Spectator* (March 6, 1964, p. 316): “For all the sudden throat trouble that marred her big coloratura number and made her duck a high note or two, Elizabeth Harwood is obviously a Zerbinetta of rare potential.”

12. But *condition* as verb (*air-conditioned*, *flight-conditioned*, and the like) in the sense ‘adapt’ seems to have grown out of similar uses by psychologists and sociologists. To *recondition* means ‘to repair’ (“Let Us Re-

Charisma seems to have dribbled into vogue usage from theology; in very high-toned circles it is used as a synonym for *glamour*. It is impossible to account for the resuscitation of this rather rarefied word. The adjectival form *charismatic* was occasionally used by the tonier columnists in reference to the late President Kennedy. *Mystique*, with similarly metaphysical overtones, is even commoner in vogueish use;¹³ the craze for it is echoed in the title of a very popular book, *The Feminine Mystique*, by Betty Friedan. There has been a similar upsurge in the more or less figurative use of *viable*, and *methodology* has practically ousted the once fashionable *technique*, being frequently used to mean simply 'method of scholarly procedure.' *Climate*, which many of us have been so naïve as to associate primarily with the weather, has come to have a much more metaphysical meaning, as in "The preface of the document [issued by the Florida Legislative Investigations Committee and labeled "obscene and pornographic" by Dade County State's Attorney Richard Gerstein] said the report could be of value to all citizens, 'for every parent and every individual concerned with the moral climate of the state should be aware of the rise in homosexual activity noted here. . . .'"¹⁴ *Time* has reported that, according to Senator Jacob Javits, "It is up to Latin American governments . . . to do more to improve the climate for business."¹⁵ Finally, at the trial of Jack Ruby for the murder of the alleged assassin of President Kennedy, Judge Joe Brown "rejected a defense demand that all prospective jurors as well as spectators be searched for concealed weapons, on the

condition Your Shoes") and was probably born of the desire, laudable enough in a democracy, to dignify what might otherwise be thought of as humble work. A reconditioned car, as everyone is aware, is a second-hand one.

13. Thus Murray Krieger, "The Poet and His Work," *College English*, XXV (1964), 406: "Seeing the intimate relationships between the materials of the poem and the surrounding world which provides them, Spitzer refuses to engage in the mystique that cuts them off as 'not-words.'" Cf. the use by Henry C. Wolfe in the *Saturday Review* of March 21, 1964, p. 46: "Only his [Franz Josef's] sense of duty and his dynastic mystique sustained him."

14. Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, March 19, 1964, p. 22.

15. March 20, 1964, p. 29.