Langham, Robert. *A Letter*, edited by R. J. P. Kuin. (Medieval and Renaissance Texts). Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983. Pp. 150. 36 guilders.

Kenilworth! The princely pleasures of Kenilworth Castle! Of all the manor house shows with which Queen Elizabeth was entertained, none was more magnificent than the Earl of Leicester's in 1575 at Kenilworth. His entertainment was the prototype, including as it did the various kinds of *divertissement* characteristic of the manor house shown as a dramatic form. It is informed by a strong sense of the place, as are less lavish but more congenial shows at Theobalds in the 1590's, for it celebrates the beauty and the amenity of Kenilworth while transforming the natural advantages (and disadvantages) of the estate by the appearance of preternatural, legendary, and allegorical figures. Just as the feasting and the festivities were portrayed as manifestations of the approbation of the gods, local and Olympian, thrilled by the visit of the Queen, so inclement weather was turned to compliment by supposing that the same deities felt grief and shed tears at her departure. The grandeur of the estate, before and after its transformation into a kind of fantasyland by the appearance of fictive characters, bespoke, of course, the worth of the lord of the manor. As Robert Langham put it, coming out of "poeticaliteez," "What a magnificent lord may we justly account him that could so highli cast order for such a Jupiter and all hiz Gods besyde" (68-9). The Kenilworth festivities went beyond the person of the host and the beauty of his place, however, because a royal visit provided an opportunity for proud locals and penurious poets, would-be civil servants, to express their goodwill and their readiness to serve the monarch. Like the reception of the Queen at Cowdray, which went beyond the concerns of the Catholic Montague family to include a chivalric tree symbolising the patriotism of all Sussex, the entertainment at Kenilworth expressed a broader base of loyalty by including a country bridal and the Coventry Hock Tuesday play. And though Robert Langham names not one of the artists whom Leicester hired for the occasion, his entertainment, like later shows at Harefield and Cecil House for Sir John Davies, gave Gascoigne, Ferrers, Goldingham, and Hunnis a splendid opportunity to win royal preferment. Indeed Gascoigne's farewell, delivered *ex tempore* while jogging along beside Elizabeth's coach, remains if not the most memorable, surely the most energetic of all such suits. Given the importance of the entertainment at Kenilworth Castle—more important because the observed of all observers were no less than Elizabeth and Leicester—R. J. P. Kuin's new edition of *A Letter* by Robert Langham, one of the two chief sources of information about the event, prompts some excitement.

This new edition also brings some relief to someone who has worried about the silent emendations in John Nichol's version of *A Letter* in *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1823), or puzzled over the manuscript additions and corrections in the Scholar Press facsimile, or, like myself, searched in vain to learn the copy-text used by Furnivall in the most recent critical edition of *A Letter* we have, a 1907 reprint of a work first published in 1871. Robert Langham's *Letter* presents serious problems too, for neither original edition bears date, imprint, colophon, or printing information. Kuin attempts to fill in these *lacunae* by the careful analysis of various kinds of bibliographical evidence. Close inspection of the initial of one edition and of the factotum of the

other suggests that John Awdeley, "a minor printer who died between June and September of 1575" (23), produced the book. A brief comparative study of Langham's curious orthography leads to the plausible conclusion that while he was influenced by the theories of William Patten, he was not a systematic practitioner of some new theory of pronunciation and spelling. Internal evidence and new external evidence from the Mercers' *Acts of Court* and the *Acts of the Privy Council* allow Kuin to shed new light on both Robert Langham and his correspondent Humfrey Martin so that they can no longer be supposed to be fictive creatures of an anonymous journalist. Finally, on the basis of an examination of variants, persuasively summarized to highlight corrections of historical information, he judges the book in fours (A, *New STC* #15190.5) prior to that in eights (B, *New STC* #15191) and bases his text of the copy of A at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Kuin's commentary, some thirty-four pages of notes, routinely glosses biographical history and literary matters and provides very helpful information about Langham's coinages and the noble art of the hunt, which takes up a large part of Langham's description of Elizabeth's entertainment. The appendices include some selections from Gascoigne's account of the entertainment (other selections are awkwardly distributed through the notes), the original Italian version of a fireworks device recommended to Leicester by Sir Henry Killigrew (but not necessarily for this occasion), and a list of the possible original editions of the books in Captain Cox's library. Kuin promises "a reliable text" (Preface) and, of Robert Langham's *Letter* at least, he delivers.

The same cannot be said for other texts he uses or for his consideration of the entertainment at Kenilworth as a whole. The attention to detail with which he conducts his bibliographical investigations and the extreme caution with which he sets forth his conjectures make flaws in the treatment of other works more glaring. Such carelessness affects Kuin's own work and that of others, especially Gascoigne. The note to l. 844 ends with the puzzling direction: "See also below, n. to l. 756." Line 756 is, of course, above, and it deals with a completely different matter. I would bet that there should have been a note *at* line 756, a note directing us "below" to l. 867, which (like l. 756) mentions a show that may have been written by Gascoigne. Similarly, there is no basis in the original Italian for the ambiguity that remains in Kuin's translation of the proposed fireworks device: "The third evening in on (*sic*) the river." (93); and surely square brackets should set off "the decorations on the bridge" in this passage from Gascoigne: "All which the decorations on the bridge were expounded by an Actor . . ." (88) These are only small matters, but they are symptomatic of more serious flaws in the edition.

First, the fireworks device. It is surprising that a scholar as scrupulous as Kuin is when discussing the publication of *A Letter* should accept without question that the fireworks device recommended by Killigrew is for this occasion. There is nothing in the manuscript of the device or in Killigrew's accompanying letter to tie the proposal to Kenilworth or to 1575. If the conjunction of fireworks and Leicester be the basis for the dating, the entertainment at Warwick sponsored by the Earl in 1572 has a claim equal to that of Kenilworth three years later. Given the castles with courtyards and nearby rivers and meadows at both Warwick and Kenilworth, the Italian master of fireworks could have designed his display with either landscape in mind. Killigrew's reference to his travels with Lord Hunsden

suggests a more plausible date, a conjectural one of course, because Killigrew's hope that he may "goe over my self this iornay with my Lord of honsden" (7) leaves the destination vague and the trip a mere possibility. In the Spring of 1564, Killigrew accompanied Hunsden to Lyons for the ratification of the Treaty of Troyes. If France be the intended destination of the trip Killigrew hoped to make with Hunsden, then 1564 is likely the year he recommended the Italian artisan and his fireworks. In the early 1560's Killigrew increasingly sought the patronage of Leicester, and recommending a reliable artist may have been one way of ingratiating himself. At the same time Dudley was Elizabeth's favorite suitor, a suitor eager to entertain her and, consequently, in need of capable artists and craftsmen. He might well have had in mind plans to entertain the Queen at his newly acquired estate of Kenilworth. Elizabeth awarded him the estate in 1563, and Leicester renovated it in the next years to prepare for her first visit there in 1565. Killigrew also wrote to Leicester on July 10, 1564, to inform him that Lord Hunsden had given him permission to remain in France to conduct some personal business with a M. de Beauvais (*Report on the Pepys MSS.*, p. 29). This personal business would explain why Killigrew hoped to be able "to goe ouer" with Hunsden in the first place. The proposed fireworks device and Killigrew's letter of recommendation seem natural products of his relationship with Leicester in the early 1560's. There is no necessary connection at least with Kenilworth and 1575.

Secondly, Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle*. The unevenness of Kuin's work is epitomized by the inaccurate accuracy of his quotations from Gascoigne. Since Kuin includes the original Italian of the fireworks device (and he is the first to publish it), his own transcription of Killigrew's letter and his own translation of the proposal, and since he searches out the most likely original editions of the books in Captain Cox's library, one might expect him to work with the earliest text of Gascoigne. Kuin does not however. Given the references to the page numbers of Cunliffe's edition of Gascoigne's work, the only 20th-century edition, one might expect that Kuin is using that edition, but he is not. In fact, though he never gives his source directly, he takes his quotations from Gascoigne from the edition of John Nichols in 1823 with its silent emendation of orthography, capitalization, punctuation, and format. Kuin's transcription of this outdated edition is, however, scrupulously accurate.

The inaccuracies resulting from the use of Nichols are less unsettling than the omission of material from the new edition of *A Letter*. Although Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures* is the only other primary source of information about the entertainment at Kenilworth, parts of it are deleted in favour of nice bibliographical conjectures which have already been placed elsewhere in a fuller form. I simply cannot comprehend how the masque of Zabeta and her nymphs—a show crucial to an understanding of Leicester's relationship with Elizabeth—or Gascoigne's dashing farewell speech could be judged less significant than an analysis of two copies of B (not Kuin's copy-text) that leads to the less than profound conclusion that "If they [the emendations] are not the author's they are likely to have been made by someone with access to a copy of A, and with an independent knowledge of the events, notably Captain Cox's Library and the text of the minstrel's song" (28). The material Gascoigne published is crucial for an

understanding of ideas Kuin himself mentions in his introduction: Leicester's political problems, his marriage hopes, and the quest for patronage by artists. Indeed if some of the bibliographical niceties were replaced by texts from Gascoigne, which Kuin deletes in accordance with some unexplained principle that they are not "relevant" (Preface), readers might truly appreciate that Kenilworth was, as Kuin argues, "the grandest deed of personal homage of the reign" (3).

One has to wonder what objectives guided the preparation of this text, which seems to have been studiously begun but hastily completed by someone with lower standards or too little time, and guide that of other works in this series of Medieval and Renaissance Texts. The purpose cannot have been to provide an exhaustive bibliographical analysis of the text, for Kuin does not chart fully the variants among copies of A and B. The purpose cannot have been to provide all the raw materials for an understanding of Leicester's fête in honour of Elizabeth, for primary materials are omitted. The purpose cannot have been to provide the basis for a thorough study of the entertainment at Kenilworth, for this edition lacks even a selected list of studies of comparable prose works or of comparable manor house shows. In fact, no work published since 1977 (except Kuin's own "Langham's *Letter*: Facts and Problems" forthcoming in *The Library*, 1983) is cited. No work since 1973 except those dealing narrowly with the question of authorship is cited. The studies that might help put the entertainment in the various contexts that make it significant and intriguing—the works of Marie Axton, Jean Wilson, David Bergeron, Muriel Bradbrook, Ivan Shulze—are overlooked entirely. I am happy to have a reliable text of *A Letter* by Robert Langham, happy too that this text is based on the copy in fours in Emmanuel College, Cambridge, even though this new edition fails to do the justice modern scholarship might do to the magnificent entertainment of Elizabeth at Kenilworth.

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Ronald G. Shafer, ed. *Ringling the Bell Backward: The Proceedings of the First International Milton Symposium*. Indiana: Indiana University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982. Pp. vi, 150. Paper, \$6.50.

This collection of ten papers and seven responses from the first International Milton Symposium, July 7-9, 1981, represents in print what, judging from the photographs, must have been a most pleasant and elegant occasion. For the most part, the nature of the papers is dictated by the nature of their occasion: they are directly chiefly to other Miltonists, and they are content to shadow forth informally rather than to nail down their various arguments. The title, Dr. Shafer remarks in his Introduction, comes from "Little Gidding" and is intended to evoke the conference's theme, which was Milton's place in the historical relationship between Britain and America.

Jackie DiSalvo writes on Puritans and Indians in *Paradise Lost*. She sees in the American Puritan writings of Milton's time, which were so preoccupied by the "paradise-wilderness paradox," a possible model for Milton's Eden. Just as the early settlers inhabited what they thought of as a kind of Edenic garden in the midst