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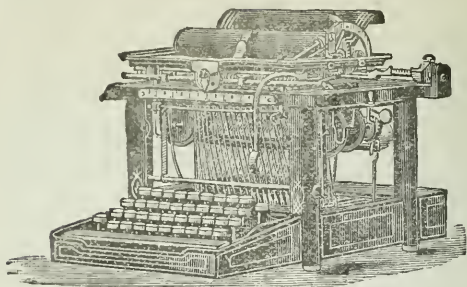
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[Souvenir of the Tercentenary of English Shorthand, 1887.]

SHORTHAND CELEBRITIES

OF

THE PAST,

ILLUSTRATED BY

TWENTY-TWO PORTRAITS FROM THE RARE ORIGINALS.

THE TEXT BY

EDWARD POCKNELL,

Past President of The Shorthand Society ;

THE PORTRAITS DRAWN BY

ARTHUR FREDERICS.

L O N D O N :

1887.

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SHORTHAND CELEBRITIES

OF THE PAST.

TRITHEMIUS, OR TRITTENHEIM.



I. JOHN TRITTENHEIM (1462-1516) was Abbot of Spanheim, in the circle of the Upper Rhine, about 1483-1506, and belonged to the Benedictine order. He was the first man we know of to call attention to the Tironian notes used, as it is supposed, by Tyro, the freedman of the famous Roman orator, Cicero. He obtained somewhere a lexicon, in the Tironian characters, and endeavoured to decipher the notes. Though his efforts were not quite successful, his labours induced others to give their attention to the subject. He was accused of being a sorcerer, and narrowly escaped burning.

JEWELL.



II. JOHN JEWELL (1522-1571), Bishop of Salisbury, famous in the Reformation period, is the first Englishman whose name is connected with Shorthand. He was a Devonshire man, born in 1522. We know he used some kind of Shorthand because all his biographers state that in some religious discussions at Oxford he was one of the notaries, and used *stenographic characters of his own invention*. His MSS. are not now to be found, otherwise we might be able to judge whether his Stenography was arbitrary or alphabetical.

BRIGHT.

III. TIMOTHY BRIGHT (1551-1615).—Our Tercentenary of English Shorthand dates from Dr. Timothy Bright, of whom we have heard a good deal during the last few years. Sheffield, or its neighbourhood, is supposed to be the place of his birth. He studied at Cambridge, and afterwards went to Paris, and was in

danger of losing his life in the massacre on St. Bartholomew's Day, in 1572; but he reached London safely, where St. Bartholomew afforded him a refuge in the Hospital of that name, being appointed physician there. He wrote several works on medicine, but Shorthand writers know him best by his "Characterie" of 1588, which he dedicated to the reigning Queen, Elizabeth. He became ultimately a Yorkshire clergyman, by the patronage of the same Queen, and was buried in his Church of Berwick-in-Elmet, near Leeds, in 1615, aged 64.

WILLIS (JOHN).

IV. JOHN WILLIS, B.D. (d. 1592-1606).—Most of our histories give the next place to Peter Bales (1547-1610), but he was not a Shorthand author. He invented a Brachygraphy, which has been called a Shorthand by persons who preferred the easy plan of describing it without having seen it, and depended on hearsay evidence instead of on their own eyes. The next place then properly belongs to John Willis, who, perhaps, in the judgment of Shorthand writers, is even more worthy of attention than Timothy Bright, because it is to Willis we owe the invention of an alphabetic English Shorthand, and not only so, but a Shorthand based on the phonetic principle, more especially in those vowel elements of sound in which the essence of phonographic writing consists, and of which vowel signs he had 14. John Willis was educated at Cambridge and took three degrees between 1592 and 1603. In 1601 he was rector of St. Mary Bothaw, London, and here we may suppose his anonymous work of 1602 was composed. Four years afterwards he became rector of Bentley Parva, in Essex, where he produced a second and distinct work on the "Art of Stenography," or, as we now call it "Phonography." There was, in 1624, a prebendary of Bath and Wells by the name

of John Willis, but whether this man was the same as our John Willis has not yet been determined. Though further particulars of this benefactor to the art are wanting, his name and fame will, through his book, be handed down the ages.

WILLIS (EDMOND).

V. EDMOND WILLIS (fl. 1604-1627).—This man was the first professional phonographer. He does not appear to have been related to the Rev. John Willis just spoken of. Shorthand, however, was his favourite study for 14 years, and he took pains to associate with everyone in London who had any knowledge of the subject. He tells us in his book of 1627 (second edition), which differs somewhat from John Willis's in having more numerous simple alphabetic characters, that he had then had 23 years' experience of the art, and had found "much gain and benefit by taking speeches *verbatim*"—which can hardly bear any other meaning than that he practised the art professionally, his "gain and benefit" being his fees.

CHARACTERISM (ANONYMOUS).

VI. CHARACTERISM (CIRCA, 1630) was the name of a system by some man more solicitous of benefiting the art than of handing down his name to posterity, for he not only did not publish it but he did not sign his own MS. which is in the Sloane collection at the British Museum. It was written soon after the system of Edmond Willis appeared, because he compares Edmond Willis's compound and angular characters with his own. He had simple strokes and half circles in four directions, which he multiplied into 16 characters by adopting the principle of two lengths. The curiosity of this system is that he paired B and P by

difference of length, and treated in the same way T D, K Q, N M, on what we call now the phonetic principle of related signs of consonant sounds. This is the first English instance of phonetic grouping, and the date is probably not later than 1630, or 257 years ago.

SHELTON.



VII. THOMAS SHELTON (fl. 1620-1659) is well known by name and reputation, but we can ascertain little about him personally. He was a teacher of his system at several places in London, chiefly in Cheapside, opposite Bow Church ; Old Fish Street ; in the Poultry ; and in Bore's Head Court, Cripplegate. His system was the basis of many others which followed it ; and it would seem that it was in the zenith of its fame when Pepys studied it and made it so useful in his celebrated Diary.

METCALFE.



VIII. THEOPHILUS METCALFE (fl. 1635-1668 ?) was a contemporary of Shelton, also of that “magpie in peacock’s feathers,” Jeremiah Rich, as Dr. Westby-Gibson has rightly called him. We know nothing of Metcalfe’s history. We can only judge from his book, where he speaks of his “professed art,” that he was a quiet, unobtrusive Shorthand writer and teacher. He was, like all his predecessors, careful to include an instruction to his pupils to “observe that in this art you have the *sound* of every word rather than the true orthography thereof, so that many times letters—yea, whole syllables—may be left out of some words, yet sufficient *sound* remaining to express the same.’

CARTWRIGHT AND RICH.



[JEREMIAH RICH, fl. 1642-1659.]

IX. CARTWRIGHT AND RICH.—William Cartwright was the real author of the well-known method which goes by the name of Jeremiah Rich's system. Rich was Cartwright's nephew, and the publisher of the system after his uncle's death. Subsequently he brought out the system as his own, and so the world has, up to the present date, been imposed upon. Of Cartwright we know nothing except that he invented his system some time prior to its publication by Rich in 1642. We can trace Rich's connection with the system by various editions of it down to 1659, when we lose sight of him. Rich taught the system, and probably used it for professional note-taking. At one time he was a tutor to the Right Hon. Lady Mary Rich, and may be con-

jectured to have had some relationship to her family, as his book was dedicated to her. He lived at St. Olave's, Southwark, at one time, and at another in St. Swithin's Lane. Rich's plagiarism is an interesting historical feature, yet not a very creditable one to his reputation. He, however, stimulated public curiosity about the art by various publications in Shorthand, notably the Psalms and New Testament, in very tiny volumes.

BRIDGES.



X. NOAH BRIDGES (fl. 1643-1661) was a follower of the Cartwright-Rich method. He was a remarkable man, educated at Oxford, and skilled in mathematics; and when the Parliament sat at Oxford in 1643 and 1644, during the Civil War, he acted as Clerk of the Parliament. He was in attendance on King Charles I. at Newcastle and in the Isle of Wight. He was the victim of promise-breaking. Several offices under the King's

Government were promised him when monarchy had been restored, but when the Restoration had come the promises were forgotten, and he retired to Putney, where, after keeping a school for some time, he died. Just a year before Charles II. returned in triumph to London, he published his "Stenographie and Cryptographie." He was also the author of some arithmetic books.

ADDY.



XI. WILLIAM ADDY (fl. 1664-1695) was another author of the same school as Bridges, and is remembered chiefly by his Short-hand Bible, which he published in 1687. By profession he was a writing master in the City of London. He was a teacher of his system, and pupils had to apply for particulars "at ye Bible, in Newgate Street."

WILKINS.



XII. JOHN WILKINS (1614-1672) is not reckoned in the histories of Shorthand as a Shorthand author, though he undoubtedly was one. His system, however, is smothered up in a large folio volume, with the rather uninviting title of "An Essay towards a Real Character and Philosophical Language." He was educated at Oxford, and entered holy orders. He was chaplain to some distinguished personages. He took the side of the Parliament at the breaking out of the Civil War, and married a sister of Oliver Cromwell. He became warden of Wadham College, Oxford; and Richard Cromwell during his brief rule made him head of Trinity College, Cambridge. On the Restoration he was ejected, but afterwards became minister of St. Lawrence Jewry, London, and was chosen on the Council of the Royal Society then just established. At length he was appointed, first as Dean of Ripon, and then as Bishop of Chester. He died in Chancery Lane, in 1672. He was skilled in the mathematics, in astronomy, in mechanics, and in experimental philosophy. His "Mercury, or Swift Messenger, 1641," is a curious book, giving

instructions for the conveyance of secret messages by writing and by signals. His Shorthand had three peculiarities—first, it was not for *verbatim* note-taking, but for universal communication between all nations using alphabetic signs; secondly, its characters were not intended to be joined, but to be written, or printed, as separate letters, just as our printed letters are now set up in type; and thirdly, the vowel signs were written into the signs of the consonants. Wilkins's system is probably entitled to rank between the ideagraphic-alphabetical of Timothy Bright and the joining-alphabetical of John Willis. It was a purely phonetic method. He had cognate signs for the pairs of sounds *pb*, *t d*, and the rest; not omitting *zh* and *sh*, *dh* and *th*, *gh* and *ch*, and some foreign sounds.

HOPKINS.



XIII. WILLIAM HOPKINS (fl. 1670) produced a beautifully engraved little book on the Cartwright-Rich basis, called "The Flying Pen." We only know that he was a writing-master.

MASON.



XIV. WILLIAM MASON (fl. 1659-1719?) has been esteemed by all Shorthand historians, and doubtless with much truth, as the most celebrated Shorthand author of the 17th century. He taught his system for many years in London. From his own book we learn that he studied the art several years before he ventured on authorship. His first system was founded on the Cartwright-Rich system, but afterwards he thought that basis too narrow, and set out to build on an original foundation of his own, which was so far successful that the system had a good run for 20 years, after which he again published an improvement of the latter. He had a school of writing at the Hand and Pen, in Gracechurch Street, and sold his first books at 1s, but his last book was priced at 2s. 6d., both prices very low for that period; and that pro

bably contributed not a little to the popularity which we are told his system gained. We must regret that we know nothing more of so shining a light in the phonographic firmament.

BOTLEY



XV. SAMUEL BOTLEY (1642-1696 ?) was another author and teacher of the Cartwright-Rich system, which somehow or other has managed to lead a struggling existence down to our own time, for letters have been written in the method by a clergyman, addressed to our friend Dr. Westby-Gibson, during the past six months. Botley published a book curiously engraved, and taught the system in Thames Street. He appears to have had scholars in Bristol and Exeter also. He seems to have had other occupations besides teaching, but we are not aware of their nature.

STRINGER.



XVI. NATHANIEL STRINGER (fl. 1676-1686) was another author of a system still on the Cartwright-Rich basis. This, too, is curiously engraved. He appears to have been a pupil of Rich. He undertook the publication of his system because others had tried to improve on his former master, Rich, but had, in his opinion, "failed of that success which the world expected." Nothing is known of Stringer's life.

COLES.



XVII. ELISHA COLES (1640-1680), a schoolmaster in Russell Street, Covent Garden, who was the son of John Coles, schoolmaster at Wolverhampton, began life as a chorister at Magdalen College, Oxford, and matriculated at that University, but left it without taking a degree. He was the author of several Dictionaries, English and Latin, which were popular at the time. He published a Shorthand, but he is chiefly interesting to us as the suggester of a method of *position in regard to the line*. It was difficult in his time, as it is in our own, to be original, but his invention certainly had originality about it. Though we are now familiar with the principle of "position," in his day it was a daring novelty to suggest that vowel sounds should be differentiated according to the position of the consonant *above, on, or through* the line. Coles became second undermaster in Merchant Taylors' School, but held afterwards an appointment in Galway School. After two years' service in the latter capacity, he died at Galway in 1680, aged 40, Northampton claiming the honour of his nativity within her precincts.

WESTON.



XVIII. JAMES WESTON (fl. 1727-1757 ?) has produced perhaps the largest and bulkiest volume of a Shorthand system ever published ; yet nothing is known of his life except that he was a Scotchman and a teacher of his system at Manchester and London, and most probably a professional practitioner. He is chiefly known to students of Shorthand history on account of the disputes as to the best system that arose between himself and Dr. Byrom, in which also the Rev. Philip Gibbs, our first historian, and Mr. Anlay Macaulay, a rival author to Byrom, joined. The wordy war is interesting. He published the Common Prayer Book in his system. His Shorthand book, though not particularly scarce, fetches a high price, varying from 12s. 6d. to £2 2s. From what Weston says in the dedication of his "Stenography Completed," we are led to infer that Shorthand was employed by the Government as early as 1724.

GIBBS.

XIX. PHILIP GIBBS (fl. 1736) was our first English Shorthand Historian. He ministered to a congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Hackney, London. He had been trained in the Calvinistic doctrines, but abjured them subsequently, and did not profess to belong to any particular sect. His book, entitled "An Historical Account of Compendious and Swift Writing," exhibits much learning and a research amongst the authors of antiquity for the purpose he had in hand. His account of Bright's and John Willis's books were adopted by subsequent historians, except that Mr. Levy, in 1862, gave an independent account of Willis's Shorthand. He was also the author of a Shorthand system entitled "An Essay towards a Farther Improvement of Shorthand."

GURNEY.



XX. THOMAS GURNEY (1705-1770), the founder of the present firm of W. B. Gurney & Sons, official Shorthand writers to both

Houses of Parliament, was for many years the official Shorthand writer at the Old Bailey, London, and was also employed in the House of Commons, though the appointment of W. B. Gurney & Sons, above noted, dates from 1802 and 1813. Thomas Gurney published an improvement of Mason's method, acknowledged by him as such in the editions published during his life from 1750 to 1770, during which time seven editions were published. Gurney was born in 1705, near Woburn, Bedfordshire. His father, descended from an ancient family, was a substantial miller. Thomas was intended for a farmer, but having a turn for books and mechanics he deserted his original calling, and became a clockmaker and then a schoolmaster at Newport Pagnell and Luton. In purchasing a parcel of books he found one to be Mason's Shorthand, and he studied it to such purpose that at the age of 16 he was able to take down sermons. At the age of 32 he was appointed to the Shorthand writership at the Old Bailey, and held it for 33 years until his death. He taught and practised Shorthand, but still pursued the clockmaking business concurrently, varied by designing patterns for calico printing. He has been described as a shrewd, humorous, and well-informed man. He had a literary passage of arms with John Angell, who, in a preface to his own Shorthand, animadverted upon Gurney's method. This little quarrel is to be found in the postscript to the fourth edition of Gurney's "Brachygraphy."

ANNET.



XXI. PETER ANNET (fl. 1693-1769) was born at Liverpool, 1693, and, besides producing two systems of Shorthand, was at one time a schoolmaster and at another the holder of some small public office. He wrote some deistical works, and published some numbers of a periodical called the *Free Enquirer*. He is the first Shorthand author known to have been sentenced to stand in the pillory, besides having to undergo a year's hard labour on account of publishing in his paper what was called in those days a blasphemous libel. After that he kept a school at Lambeth. Gurney has described him as "behaving with modesty and candour, not imposing incredulous stories about his Shorthand on the public."

TIFFIN.

XXII. WILLIAM TIFFIN (fl. 1750 ?) is credited with being the first Phonetic Shorthand author by some of our historians ; but

that is an error, as it is clear the art was founded upon that principle by John Willis, who provided for an equal number of vowel sounds to those included in Tiffin's system. Tiffin was chaplain of Wigston's Hospital in Leicester, probably from 1735 to 1788. He doubtless held a living in the town also. He regarded his scheme of "suiting the alphabet to the utterances of the language" as entirely novel, and did not know that he had been anticipated by John Willis and the author of "Characterism."

BYROM.



XXIII. JOHN BYROM, F.R.S. (1691-1763) is famous in Shorthand history for giving an entirely new feature to the art in the direction of simplifying the characters and rendering them more easy of junction one with another, and of preserving greater lineality in writing. These features have been taken as a standard to be followed by all subsequent authors. Byrom was both poet and

stenographer. He was born at Kersall, Manchester, in 1691-2, and educated at Merchant Taylors' School, London, and at Trinity College, Cambridge. Here is his portrait as a young man :—



He became a fellow of his college, and contributed literary essays to the *Spectator*, besides writing poems, some of which have gained notoriety. He studied medicine in France, and was called "Doctor" by his friends, but never took the degree, or practised. He was for some years dependent on a small portion allowed him from the family estates, and was thus driven to teach his Shorthand privately in London, Manchester, and Cambridge ; but ultimately he succeeded to the whole of the estates by the death of his elder brother, and then lost a good deal of his interest in the promulgation of the art. He left a collection of notes in Shorthand, published after his death under the title of "*Byrom's Journal and Literary Remains.*" Two of his letters to the Royal Society appear in their Transactions for the year 1748, in reply to proposals for a new Shorthand by Mr. Jeake and for a new scheme for a universal language by Mr. Lodwick ; and these show that Byrom had fully studied phonetic principles. Byrom's system was not published till 1767, four years after his death. He was the founder of a society, open to his pupils, for the encouragement of the study of his method. His journal contains much interesting

matter in reference to that society and upon Shorthand topics generally, including his professional disputes with James Weston and other rival Shorthand authors.

TAYLOR.

XXIV. SAMUEL TAYLOR (fl. 1786) was a teacher and professional writer of a system he published under the title of "An Essay intended to Establish a Standard for an Universal System of Stenography," &c., 1786. The system gained great popularity, and is still used by members of the "Institute of Shorthand Writers (Registered)" in our Law Courts. Taylor dispensed with the quadrant signs introduced by Byrom, and represented any vowel by a single dot in any position. By the subscription list appended to his book he appears to have been well known to contemporaries, but nothing can now be learned respecting him except that he was at one time engaged in taking notes of speeches in the Irish Parliament

MOLINEUX.



XXV. THOMAS MOLINEUX, of Macclesfield (1759-1850), a follower of Byrom's method, is remarkable for having lived to the age of 91 and for being an enthusiastic disciple of "The Grand Master," as he and others were wont to call Byrom. Molineux

was a native of Manchester, but at an early age became writing-master and teacher of accounts in King Edward the Sixth's Grammar School at Macclesfield, a post he held for 26 years. He lived the remainder of his days in retirement in the same town. He wrote a treatise on arithmetic in two volumes, and was a contributor on educational subjects to various magazines. For some years he carried on an interesting correspondence, chiefly on Shorthand matters, with Robert Cabell Roffe, an engraver, of London, a strong Byromite, and many of the letters were privately printed in 1860 by Roffe's sons, under the title of "The Grand Master."

DODDRIDGE.



XXVI. DR. PHILIP DODDRIDGE (1702-1751) was a well-known Nonconformist divine, born in London, 1702. He was educated at Kibworth, Leicestershire, and, having become minister of that place, removed in 1725 to Market Harborough, where he set up an academy. Thence he went to Northampton as minister and tutor, and acquired great reputation for learning and candour. He published a great many well-known and esteemed works, besides a modification of the old Cartwright-Rich system. The peculiarity of Doddridge, most interesting to Shorthand writers, was that he insisted on all his pupils, who were chiefly in training for the Nonconformist ministry, acquiring the art of writing his Shorthand, so that they might use it for taking down the lectures by means of which he imparted instruction to them.

A full account of his method, written by Dr. Westby-Gibson, was published a few months since in the *Phonetic Journal*. Doddridge's intense application to study brought on a pulmonary complaint, from which he died at Lisbon, whither he had gone to seek relief in change of climate. Many MS. volumes in Doddridge's system, by himself or his pupils, are in existence.

MAVOR.



XXVII. DR. WILLIAM MAVOR (1758-1837) was a compiler of educational works. Born in Aberdeenshire, he came to England at the age of 17, and commenced life in a school at Burford, Oxfordshire. He obtained a title for holy orders, and through the favour of the Duke of Marlborough, the junior members of whose family he instructed in writing, he became rector of Woodstock, where he wrote his "Universal Stenography," and also a system of abbreviated longhand entitled "Macro-Stenography." He was elected 10 times mayor of the borough of Woodstock, and was buried in Woodstock Church. The introduction to his Shorthand displays a close knowledge of his subject. The system was a popular one in his day and reached its 10th edition in 1820, but it is now almost forgotten, though MSS. in its character are sometimes met with;

LEWIS.



XXVIII. JAMES HENRY LEWIS (1786-1853) was not only the author of a system of Shorthand called "The Ready Writer," but of a valuable and unbiassed Shorthand History, entitled "An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of Shorthand," published in 1816. The insinuation made in some quarters that Mr. Lewis had assistance in preparing his History is perfectly groundless and totally unworthy of belief. Mr. Lewis was born in the parish of King's Stanley, Gloucestershire, being the eldest son of a cloth manufacturer, mill and landowner, at Ebley, Stroud. He seems to have studied Taylor's system, and, deeming it to have defects, brought out his own. He opened business as a teacher of the system at 104, High Holborn, London, and afterwards travelled in England, lecturing in the larger towns and collecting old Shorthand books, of which he possessed a large number, many of them being very rare. Returning to London, he located himself, first in the Waterloo Road, and afterwards in the Strand, where his shop was a landmark to passers-by. He retired to Milton Road, Gravesend, a few months before his death in 1853. He founded a Society of Reporters, with the object of improving their status.

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South London Press.—"Is the system good?" Yes. "Does it show advancement on previous systems?" Decidedly; and it is a monument in testimony of the author's skill in invention, etc.

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Illustrated Phonographic Meteor.—Of *Legible Shorthand* . . . it is impossible to speak in hesitating terms. . . . He (the author) has been instrumental in advancing the art by a considerable stride.

Journal of Education (Boston, U.S.).—Many educators will rejoice to learn that "a man of business" has at length issued a work which has grown out of his own experience. . . . Our stenographer thinks it a prize.

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English Mechanic.—The plan laid down is as simple as it is ingenious. . . . It has many points of advantage in rapidity and legibility.

The Phonographic Monthly.—It would appear that Mr. Pocknell has made a real discovery. . . . We think that this system will be one of the most dangerous rivals of Phonography in the future.

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