

**TOXOPHILUS:
1545**

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Toxophilus: 1545 by Roger Ascham

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ROGER ASCHAM

**TOXOPHILUS:
1545**

English Reprints.

ROGER ASCHAM.

TOXOPHILUS.

1545.

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CHRONICLE
of
some of the principal events
in the
LIFE, WORKS, and TIMES
of
ROGER ASCHAM,

Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. Author. Tutor to Princess, afterwards Queen Elizabeth. Secretary of Embassy under Edward VI. Latin Secretary to Queens Mary and Elizabeth. Friend of Queen Elizabeth, &c.

* Probable or approximate dates.

The chief contemporary authorities for the life of Ascham are his own works, particularly his Letters, and a Latin oration *De vita et obitu Rogeri Aschami*, written by Rev. Dr. Edward Graunt or Graun, Headmaster of Westminster School, and 'the most noted Latinist and Grecian of his time.' This oration is affixed to the first collection of Ascham's Letters: the date of Graunt's dedication to which is 16. Feb. 1571.

The figures in brackets, as (40), in the present work, refer to Ascham's letters as arranged in Dr. Giles' edition.

1506. April 22. Henry VIII. surrende to the staffe.

1511-12. 3. Hen. VIII. c. 5. required—under penalty on default of 12d per month—all subjects under 60, not lame, decrepid, or maimed, or having any other lawful impediment; the Clergy Judges &c. excepted; to use shooting in the long bow. Parents were to provide every boy from 7 to 17 years, with a bow and two arrows; after 17, he was to find himself a bow and four arrows. Every Bowyer for every Ewe bow he made was to make 'at the least 1] Bowes of Elme Withe or other Wode of mean price,' under penalty of Imprisonment for 8 days. Butts were to be provided in every town. Aliens were not to shoot with the long bow without licence.

3 Hen. VIII. c. 13. confirms 10. Hen. VII. c. 4 'against shooting in Cross-bowes &c,' which enacted that no one with less than 200 marks a year should use. This act increased the qualification from 200 to 300 marks.—*Statutes of the Realm. iii. 25. 32.*

*1515.

Childhood.

ROGER ASCHAM was born in the year 1486, at Kirby Wiske, (or Kirby Wiske,) a village near North Allerton in Yorkshire, of a family above the vulgar. His father, John Ascham, was house-steward in the family of Lord Scroop, and is said to have borne an unblemished reputation for honesty and uprightness of life. Margaret, wife of John Ascham, was allied to many considerable families, but her maiden name is not known. She had three sons, Thomas, Antony, and Roger, besides some daughters; and we learn from a letter (81) written by her son Roger, in the year 1544, that she and her husband having lived together forty-seven years, at last died on the same day and almost at the same hour.

Roger's first years were spent under his father's roof, but he was received at a very youthful age into the family of Sir Antony Wingfield, who furnished money for his education, and placed Roger, together with his own sons, under a tutor, whose name was R. Bond. The boy had by nature a taste for books, and showed his good taste by reading English in preference to Latin, with

CHRONICLE.

wonderful eagerness. . . . — *Grant. Condensed translation by Dr. Giles in Life: see p. 10, No 8.*

"This communication of teaching youthe, maketh me to remember the right worshipfull and my singular good mayster, Sir Humfrey Wingfelde, to whom nexte God, I ought to refer for his manifolde benefites bestowed on me, the poore talent of learning, whiche god hath lent me: and for his sake do I owe my service to all other of the name and noble house of the Wyingfelde, bothe in word and dede. Thys worshipfull man hath ever loved and used, to have many children brought up in learynge in his house amonges whom I my selfe was one. For whom at terme tymes he woulde bryng downe from London bothe bowes and shaftes. And when they shuld playe he woulde go with them him selfe in to the fyelde, and se them shote, and he that shot fayrest, shoulde have the best bowe and shaftes, and he that shot fassouredye, shoulde be mockod of his felowes, til he shot better." — *p. 140.*

In or about the year 1590, Mr. Bond . . . resigned the charge of young Roger, who was now about fifteen years old, and, by the advice and pecuniary aid of his kind patron Sir Aubrey, he was enabled to enter St. John's College, Cambridge at that time the most famous seminary of learning in all England. His tutor was Hugh Fitzherbert, fellow of St. John's, whose intimate friend, George Pember, took the most lively interest in the young student. George Day, afterwards Bishop of Chichester, Sir John Cheke, Sir Thomas Smith, Dr. Redman, one of the compilers of the Book of Common Prayer, Nicholas Ridley the Martyr, T. Watson Bishop of Lincoln, Pilkington Bishop of Durham, Walter Hudson, John Christopherson, Thomas Wilson, John Seton, and many others, were the distinguished contemporaries of Ascham at Cambridge. — *Grant and Giles, idem.*

He takes his B.A. "Being a boy, new Bachelor of arte, I chanced amonges my companions to speake against the Pope: which matter was than in every mans mouth, because *Dr. Haines* and *Dr. Shippe* were cum from the Court, to debate the same matter, by preaching and disputation in the misericordie. This hapned the same tymes, when I stoode to be felow there: my talkes came to *Dr. Madcalfes* [Master of St. John's Coll.] care: I was called before him and the Seniores: and after grevous rebuke, and some punishment, open warning was given to all the felowes, not to be so hardie to geve me his voice at that election. And yet for all those open thrustes, the good father himselfe prouida procured, that I should euen than be chosen felow. But, the election being done, he made coontenance of great discontentation thereat. This good mans goodnes, and fatherly discretion, used towards me that one day, shall neuer out of my remembrance all the dayes of my life. And for the same cause, haue I put it here, in this small record of learning. For next Gods providence, surely that day, was by that good fathers meenes, *Dies natalis*, to me, for the whole foundation of the poore learning I haue, and of all the furdurance, that hetherto else where I haue obtayned." — *Scho. fol. 55.*

"Before the king's majesty established his lecture at Cambridge, I was appointed by the votes of all the university, and was paid a handsome salary, to profess the Greek tongue in public; and I have ever since read

1590. Oct. 25

1594. Feb. 18. Oct. 18.

Mar. 23.

1597-98.

June
 My secret time spent at Cambridge. The Scholmaster, fol. 60. Ed. 1578.

- a lecture in St. John's college, of which I am a fellow." (28) *To Sir W. Paget in 1544.*
1537. July 3. *Idie martis post festum Dni Petri et Pauli* (June 29) mt. 21. *Grevel.* Is installed M.A.
1538. Spring. Visits his parents in Yorkshire, whom he had not seen mt. 22. for seven years.
- Autumn. Date of his earliest extant letter.
- 1540-1543. Is at home in Yorkshire, for nearly two years, with quarant fever. Probably about this time he attended the archery meetings at York and Norwich. *pp. 159. 160.*
1540. mt. 24. "In the great snowe," journeying 'in the nye waye betwixt Topcliffe vpon Swale; and Borrowe bridge, he watches the nature of the wind by the snow-drifts. *p. 157.*
1541. mt. 27. Upon his repeated application, Edward Lee, Archbp of York, grants him a pension of 40s. (= 2/40 of present money) payable at the feast of Annunciation and on Michaelmas day, *see (86).* This pension ceased on the death of the Archbishop in 1544.
- 1541-2. 21 Hen. VIII, c. 9. "An Acte for Mayntenance of Artillerie and debarriage of unlaful Gerres." confirms 3 Hen. VIII, c. 1 and, *inter alia*, directs that no Bowyer shall sell a Ewe bow to any between 8 and 14 years, above the price of 1sd, but shall have for such, Ewe bows from 8d to 1sd; and likewise shall sell bows at reasonable prices to youth from 14 to 21 years. Ewe bows' of the tax called 'Elke' were not to be sold above 3s 4d, under penalty of 50s.—*Statutes of the Realm, iii. 277.*
1544. *Spring. mt. 28. Ascham writes *Taxophilus*.
- After Lady Day. Both his parents die. "How hard is my lot! I first lost my brother, such an one as not only our family, but all England could hardly match, and now to lose both my parents as if I was not already overwhelmed with sorrow!" (31) *To Cheke.*
- Before July. "I have also written and dedicated to the king's majesty a book, which is now in the press, *On the art of Schooleing*, and in which I have shown how well it is fitted for Englishmen both at home and abroad, and how certain rules of art may be laid downe to assure us being learnt thoroughly by all our fellow-countrymen. This book, I hope, will be published before the king's departure, and will be no doubtful sign of my love to my country, or mean memorial of my humble learning." (88) *To Sir W. Paget.*
- July—Sept. 30. The king out of the kingdom, at the head of 30,000 men at the siege of Boulogne, in France.
1546. mt. 29. Ascham presents *Taxophilus* to the king, in the gallery at Greenwich. He is granted a pension of 40s. *pp. 165-166.* He is ill again, and unable to reside at Cambridge.
1546. mt. 30. Succeeds Cheke as Public Orator of his University, in which capacity he conducts its correspondence.
1547. Jan. 28. Edward VI. returns to the throne. Ascham's pension which ceased on the death of Henry VIII., was confirmed and augmented by Edward VI., whom he taught to write. (Ascham's pension is one of the prominent things in his life.)
1548. Feb. mt. 31. Is Tutor to Princess Elizabeth, at Cheston. Attacked
1549. Sept. mt. 33 by her steward, he returns to the university.
1550. mt. 34. While at home in the country, Ascham is appointed, at the instigation of Cheke, as Secretary to Sir Richard Morrison, sent out as Ambassador to Emperor Charles V. On his way to town, has his famous interview with Lady Jane Grey at Broadgate. *Scholmaster, fol. 73.*

- Secretary of Embassy.
- Sept 27. The Embassy embarks at Billingsgate, and finally reaches Augsburg on Oct. 28; where it appears to have remained more than a year.
- 1559 Oct. Ascham writes, probably from Spire, *A Report and Discourse written by Roger Ascham, of the affairs and state of Germany and the Emperour Charles his court, during certaine yeares while the sayd Roger was there.* Published at London, the next year, without date.
1558. *Sept 8. Sharp secrets to the crown.*
1553. July 7. Writes from Brussels.
On the death of the King the Embassy is recalled.
1554. April. Though a Protestant, Ascham escapes persecution; his pension of £10 is renewed and increased, *see p. 165.*
- May 7. He is made Latin Secretary to the Queen, with a salary of 40 marks.
- June 1. *mt. 3.* Resigns his Fellowship and Office of Public Orator.
Marries Margaret Howe.
He sometimes reads Greek with the Princess Elizabeth.
1558. *Feb. 17. Elizabeth's system to resign.*
Ascham's pension and Secretaryship are continued.
1560. Mar. 22. Is made preacher of Wetwang, in York Cathedral. His *mt. 44.* had now possession of a considerable income. It would be satisfactory if he could be cleared from the suspicion of a too great love for cock-fighting.
1569. Dec. 16. The Court being at Windsor on account of the plague in London, Sir W. Cecil gave a dinner in his chamber. *mt. 47.* A conversation on Education arose on the news 'that diverse Scholars of Eaton be runne awaie from the Schole, for feare of beating.' Sir Richard Sackville, then absent, afterwards renewed the subject with Ascham; who finally writes for his grandson, Robert Sackville, *The Scholemaster*, first published by his widow in 1570.
His constitution had been enfeebled by frequent attacks of ague. Imprudently sitting up late to finish some Latin verses which he designed to present to the queen as a new-year's gift, and certain letters to his friends, he contracted a dangerous malady, during which he was visited and consoled by his pious friend Alexander Nowell, dean of St. Paul's, and Wilham Gravet, a prebendary of that church and vicar of St. Sepulchre's London. Ascham died 20 Dec. 1568. His last words were "I desire to depart and to be with Christ."
1568. Dec. 20. *mt. 43.* He was buried at St. Sepulchre's. Nowell preached his funeral sermon, and testified that he never saw or heard of a person of greater integrity of life, or who was blessed with a more christian death. Queen Elizabeth, when informed of his decease, declared that she would rather have lost £10,000, than her tutor Ascham.
1569. Jan. 4.
- Thames and death.

Buchanan did honour to his memory in the following epitaph:
*Aschamum extinctum patriam, Gratiaque Cameram,
Et Latinæ verbis cum pietate dolent.*

*Principibus viri carnis, jucundis amicis,
Re modicâ, in moris dicere fama negant.*
which has been thus rendered by Archbishop Wrenham.
*O'er Ascham, withering in his narrow urn,
The muses—English, Grecian, Roman—mourn;
Though poor, to greatness dear, to friendship just:
No scandal's self can taint his hallow'd dust.*

Cooper. Ath. Cantab. p. 266.

TOXOPHILUS.

INTRODUCTION.

Despite his promise, see page 20, Ascham wrote no English work on a great subject. Writing late in life, his *Scholemaster*, he thus defends his choice in the subjects of his books:

“ But, of all kinde of pastimes, fitte for a Gentleman, I will, godwilling, in fitter place, more at large, declare fullie, in my booke of the Cockpitte: which I do write, to satisfie som, I trust, with som reason, that be more curious, in marking other mens doinges, than carefull in mendyng their owne faultes. And som also will nedes busie them selues in merueling, and adding thereunto vnfriendlie taulke, why I, a man of good yeares, and of no ill place, I thanke God and my Prince, do make choise to spend souch tyme in writyng of trifles, as the schole of shoting, the Cockpitte, and this booke of the first Principles of Grammer, rather, than to take some weightie matter in hand, either of Religion, or Ciuill discipline.

Wise men I know, will well allow of my choise herein: and as for such, who haue not witte of them selues, but must learne of others, to iudge right of mens doynge, let them read that wise Poet *Horace* in his *Arte Poetica*, who willeth wisemen to beware, of hie and loftie Titles. For, great shippes, require costlie tackling, and also afterward dangerous gouernment: Small boates, be neither verie chargeable in makyng, nor verie oft in great ieopardie: and yet they cary many tymes, as good and costlie ware, as greater vessels do. A meane Argument, may easelie beare, the light burden of a small faute, and haue alwaife at hand, a ready excuse for ill handling: And, some praise it is, if it so chaunce, to be better in deede, than a man dare venture to seeme. A hie title, doth charge a man, with the heauey burden, of to great a promise, and therefore sayth *Horace* verie wittelie, that,