

**Oxford, John Barton** (1876-1944) ["A Son of Trouble"]: Born in Malden, Massachusetts, May 14, 1876. His first job was with a wholesale drug firm in Boston, 1892. He worked on the staff of the Boston Public Library for eight years, beginning 1895, during which time he began writing fiction, finding his best success with humorous works. He published under his real name, Richard Barker Shelton, and the Oxford pseudonym, which predominated after 1905. In 1903 he began work in the advertising business; married in 1904. Starting in 1906, he was a reporter for the *Boston Herald*. He resigned in 1911 and moved to Hampton, New Hampshire to become a full-time freelancer, basing a number of his stories on the rural New Englanders he encountered.

He was a steady presence in the pulps into the late teen-years. He hit all the Munsey titles, and was a consistent seller to *Blue Book*, *Red Book* and *Green Book*. From 1919-24, he placed a number of stories in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The American*, *People's*, and other higher-grade magazines, under the name Barker Shelton. He primarily wrote short stories, although several serials turn up in the record.

Three of his stories were filmed as shorts in 1914-15. One, *Virtue Is Its Own Reward* (1914), included Lon Chaney in the cast; another, *The Availing Prayer* (1914), was directed by Donald Crisp, and featured Raoul Walsh and Dorothy Gish in the cast. A circus story, *The Man Tamer* (1921), was filmed as a feature by Universal.

In 1928, he was elected managing secretary of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Chamber of Commerce. In 1935, he left that job and became publicity director for a power company. He died at home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, of a heart attack, May 23, 1944, age 68; and was buried in a family plot in Hampton.

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