

## APPENDIX IV

### THE CHRONOLOGY OF WILLIAM BADGER'S DICTATES

SINCE WILLIAM BADGER has been quite lazy in marking the various terms and times in his dictates, we need to establish the sequence of events, especially since these are not otherwise known. Johnson's insatiable appetite for moralizing the passing show gives us a calendar and a great deal of information besides. Badger had headed a dictate (126r) "In die lunę," in which Johnson refers to the day as Harvest Home, which would thus be Monday, September 24,<sup>1</sup> 1565. So, counting back, it appears that the Post-Michaelmas term in which these themes began was that of 1563. Because of allusions to the plague, etc., Leach had already decided that this is the proper date.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, as we shall later see, the time between Christmas and Easter each year will also show that these are the proper years.

Apparently, it is possible to get the exact day on which Badger records the first dictate in 1563. But first we need to consider the custom concerning these dictates. It will be remembered that original exercises were given only on the first four days of the week, so that four is the maximum number possible. An intervening holiday would reduce the number. For one quarter, Badger marked all Mondays except two, the resultant groups of exercises being 4, 4, 3, 3, 8, 6 (37r-52v). In practice, therefore, the exercises were either three or four each week, no more than one interfering exemption from dictates being ordinarily allowed between Sunday and Friday. The groups of exercises indicate the same rule throughout, being nearly always in multiples of three and four. For any three-week period, therefore, the exercises can ordinarily number only nine, ten, eleven, or twelve. For a nine week period, the exercises could number from twenty-seven to thirty-six, though they are not likely to be of either extreme.

This routine established, we may now fix the date when Badger's notebook began at the beginning of the Post-Michaelmas term in 1563. Johnson has referred to Simon and Jude, October 28, as ending the summer customs begun on or shortly after May 1 (156r). Now in the sixth dictate of the Post-Michaelmas term of 1563, Johnson suspends this rule, granting the boys three things, among which the third is "that from that nocturnal declamation [*declamatio*] (which you call books) exemption is granted and so be it" (4v). This dictate, therefore, should be on or shortly before Thursday October 28, 1563, when the rule should have gone into effect. Since this is the sixth dictate, the boys apparently began on Monday October 18, 1563, this being the date, therefore, when Badger's notebook begins.

As we have seen, there were thirty-six dictates in this term. Since it is not likely that the boys had not a single holiday, these must represent the

<sup>1</sup> Chambers, R., *The Book of Days* (1864), Vol. II, pp. 376-380.

<sup>2</sup> V. C. H., *Hampshire*, Vol. II, pp. 311-312.