



Oxford
University
Press

Academic Division

Managing Director Ivon Asquith

Great Clarendon Street
Oxford OX2 6DP

Telephone 01865 556767

Telefax 01865 556646

Telex 837330 OXPRES G

A/ODQ/SMR/vjf

25 November 1997

Mr A. Baron
93c Venner Road
Sydenham
London
SE26 5HU

Dear Mr Baron

Although Algernon Sidney died in 1683, his *Discourses concerning Government* was not published until 1698. The correct reference for 'Liars ought to have good memories', as given in the fourth revised edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (1996) is chapter 2, section 15.

The expression is in fact proverbial, and several earlier versions are given in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*. I enclose a photocopy of the relevant page.

Yours sincerely

Susan Ratcliffe

Susan Ratcliffe
Assistant Editor
Oxford Dictionary of Quotations

Enc.



let: *see also* let the COBBLER stick to his last; let the DEAD bury the dead; let them LAUGH that win; LIVE and let live; let SLEEPING dogs lie; SPARE at the spigot, and let out at the bung-hole; never let the SUN go down on your anger.

leveller: *see* DEATH is the great leveller.

A LIAR ought to have a good memory

[QUINTILIAN *Institutio Oratoria* iv. ii. *mendacem memorem esse oportet*, a liar ought to have a good memory.] a 1542 T. WYATT in *Poetical Works* (1858) p. xxxvii. They say, 'He that will lie well must have a good remembrance, that he agree in all points with himself, lest he be spied.' c 1690 R. SOUTH *Twelve Sermons* (1722) IV. 167 Indeed, a very rational Saying, That a liar ought to have a good Memory. 1721 J. KELLY *Scottish Proverbs* 50 A Liar should have a good Memory. Lest he tell the same Lye different ways. 1945 F. THOMPSON *Lark Rise* xiii. 'A liar ought to have a good memory,' they would say. 1990 *Washington Times* 7 Mar. F1 They say a liar has to have a good memory. In that case, Mr. Reagan's testimony is proof of his honesty.

libel: *see* the GREATER the truth, the greater the libel.

lick: *see* if you can't BEAT them, join them.

If you LIE down with dogs, you will get up with fleas

An assertion that human failings, such as dishonesty and foolishness, are contagious.

[L. *qui cum canibus concumbunt cum pulicibus surgent*, they who lie with dogs will rise with fleas.] 1573 J. SANFORDE *Garden of Pleasure* 103^v *Chi va dormire con i cani, si leua con i pulici*. He that goeth to bedde wyth Dogges, aryseth with fleas. 1640 G. HERBERT *Outlandish Proverbs* no. 343 Hee that lies with the dogs, riseth with fleas. 1721 J. KELLY *Scottish Proverbs* 129 He that sleeps with Dogs, must rise with Fleas. If you keep Company with base and unworthy

Fellows, you will get some Ill by them. 1791 'P. PINDAR' *Rights of Kings* 32 To this great truth, a Universe agrees, 'He who lies down with dogs, will rise with fleas'. 1842 C. J. LEVER *Jack Hinton* xxii. If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas, and that's the fruits of travelling with a fool. 1931 C. W. SYKES tr. *Kober's Circus Nights & Circus Days* ix. It's like this; if you go to bed with your dogs, you're bound to get up with fleas. If you once work for a small salary, the news gets round. 1991 *Spectator* 9 Nov. 8 I have few genial feelings towards the *Sunday Times*, and it is possible that I was thinking of its editor when I wrote . . . of the danger that those who lie with dogs will rise with fleas.

lie: *see* (noun) ASK no questions and hear no lies; HALF the truth is often a whole lie.

lie: *see also* (verb) as you MAKE your bed, so you must lie upon it; as a TREE falls, so shall it lie; TRUTH lies at the bottom of a well.

LIFE begins at forty

1932 W. B. PITKIN *Life begins at Forty* i. Life begins at forty. This is the revolutionary outcome of our New Era. . . Today it is half a truth. Tomorrow it will be an axiom. 1945 *Zionist Review* 14 Dec. 6 Among Palestine pioneers, life does not 'begin at forty'. 1952 'M. COST' *Hour Awaits* 142 Life begins at forty. . . I know you're only in your thirties, but it leaves a nice margin. 1990 J. R. McCAHERY *Grave Undertaking* v. Life begins at forty, she reminded herself—give or take a couple of years.

LIFE isn't all beer and skittles

1855 T. C. HALIBURTON *Nature & Human Nature* I. ii. 'This life ain't all beer and skittles.' Many a time . . . when I am disappointed sadly I say that saw over. 1857 T. HUGHES *Tom Brown's Schooldays* 1. ii. Life isn't all beer and skittles. 1931 A. CHRISTIE *Sittaford Mystery* xxvi. 'It's an experience, isn't it?' 'Teach him life can't be all beer