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'The Rivals'

Question: How far can 'The Rivals' be taken as autobiographical.

Answer: It is known fact that literature grows out of life. It is a vital record of what an author has seen in life. The personal experiences of the author's private life are the data of the work of art. In 'The Rivals' we find Sheridan's experiences certain aspects of the main plot run parallel to the life of Sheridan himself. In the first place, the romantic love between Lydia and Captain Absolute is directly derived from the love affair of Sheridan and Miss Elizabeth Linley. Sheridan eloped with her and married her after fighting two duels.

Then there are echoes of the personality of Sheridan's father in Sir Anthony Absolute - the typical self-willed authoritative father of the old conservative school. Sheridan's father Thomas Sheridan took an unyielding attitude towards his son's run-

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away marriage with Miss Lind. He could never reconcile himself to this marriage. Thus 'The Rivals' reflects Sheridan's personal experiences through characters and situations and we look into these autobiographical touches. All these might have been true to say that they were actual transcripts from real life.

The end.

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