

# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the  
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Editor: DR. PAUL CARUS.

Associates: { E. C. HEGELER.  
MARY CARUS.

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VOL. XVIII. (NO. 2) FEBRUARY, 1904.

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- IX. **SOME ORIGINS OF THE NUMBER TWO.** A glimpse of what occurred while our every-day Two was gaining recognition. Later developments of the conception are not considered.

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THE CHANDOS PORTRAIT OF SHAKESPEARE.

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*Frontispiece to The Open Court*

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## WHO WROTE SHAKESPEARE?

BY THE EDITOR.

WHO wrote the works of Shakespeare? is a question that has been ventilated from time to time, and several suggestions have been offered. One thing alone seems sure, viz., that the man who is generally credited with the honor of having written these wonderful dramas cannot be considered their real author. Something must be wrong in the traditions concerning the poet, for documentary evidences seem to contradict the current view; but it is difficult to point out the cause of the discrepancy, and it may be a hopeless task to correct the error, if error there be.

General J. Warren Keifer has condensed the reasons that make him pause, and anyone who investigates the subject and carefully weighs his arguments will come to his conclusion that the owner of New Place in Stratford-on-Avon is not likely to have written the dramas that are commonly accredited to him. In enumerating the main points that make him doubt that Mr. Shakspeare of New Place wrote the dramas that go under Shakespeare's name, he speaks of the will, which is documentary evidence of the most reliable kind. He says:

"Francis Collins, solicitor at Warwick, drafted his will, of date of January 31st, 1616—spelling the name 'Shackspeare,' the signature thereto being spelled 'Shakspeare.' The will was not executed until March following. He died April 23, 1616.

"But his last will and testament testifies to some things we may not overlook. I have read it and re-read it with care. He disposes therein of a large estate to children and named persons, in detail, naming small amounts in pounds, shilling and pence, finger rings, plate and '*bole*,' old clothes, 'household stuff,' etc., omitting in the first draft one natural object of his bounty, then had it interlined thus: '*I give unto my weife my second best bed with the furniture.*' So only did his wife come to be remembered with a necessary '*second best bed.*'

## FIRST PAGE OF SHAKSPERE'S WILL.

(With facsimile of signature.)

Mij  
 Vicesimo Quinto Die ~~January~~ <sup>January</sup> Anno Regni Dñi nri Jacobi unice Rx Anglie  
 &c. Decimo quarto & Scotie xlix<sup>o</sup> Annoq; Dñi 1616

T. W<sup>mj</sup> Shackspeare

In the name of god Amen I Willi<sup>m</sup> Shackspeare of Stratford vpon Avon in the countie of warr gent in pfect health & memorie god be prayed doe make & Ordayne this my last will & testam<sup>t</sup> in man<sup>n</sup> & forme followeing That ys to saye first I Comend my Soule into the hands of god my Creator hoping & assuredlie beleiving through th onelie meritts of Jesus Christe my Saviour to be made ptaker of lyfe everlasting And my bodye to the Earth whereof yt ys made Itm I Gyve & bequeath vnto my ~~sonne~~ & Daughter Judyth One hundred & ffyftie pounds of lawful English money to be paid vnto her in man<sup>n</sup> & forme followeing That ys to saye One hundred pounds <sup>in discharge of her marriage porcon</sup> w<sup>h</sup>in one yeare after my deceas w<sup>th</sup> consideraçon after the Rate of twoe Shillings in the pound for soe long tyme as the same shalbe vnpaid vnto her after my Deceas & the ffyftie pounds Residewe thereof vpon her Surrendring <sup>of</sup> or gyving of such sufficient securitie as the overseers of this my Will shall like of to Surrender or grante <sup>that shee</sup> All her estate and Right that shall descend or come vnto her after my deceas or <sup>that shee</sup> nowe hath of in or to one Copichold teñte w<sup>th</sup> thap<sup>t</sup>enn<sup>s</sup> lyeing and being in Stratford vpon Avon aforesaied in the saied countie of warr being pcell or holden of the manno<sup>r</sup> of Rowington vnto my Daughter Susanna Hall & her heires for ever Itm I Gyve & bequeath vnto my saied Daughter Judith One hundred & ffyftie pounds more if she or Anie issue of her bodie be Lyvinge att thend of three yeares next ensueing the Daic of the Date of this my Will during w<sup>th</sup> tyme my executo<sup>s</sup> to paie her consideraçon from my deceas according to the Rate aforesaied And if she Dye w<sup>h</sup>in the saied terme w<sup>th</sup>out issue of her bodie then my Will ys & I Doe gyve & bequeath One Hundred Pounds thereof to my necce Elizabeth Hall & the ffiftie Pounds to be sett fourth by my executo<sup>s</sup> during the lief of my Sister Johane Harte & the vse & pfitt thereof cominge shalbe payed to my saied Sister Ione & after her deceas the saied l<sup>i</sup> shall Remaine Amongst the children of my saied Sister Equallie to be Devided Amongst them But if my saied Daughter Judith be lyving att thend of the saied three yeares. or anye yssue of her bodie then my will ys & soe I Devise & bequeath the saied Hundred & ffiftie pounds to be sett out <sup>by my executors & overseers</sup> for the best benefit of her & her issue & <sup>the Stock to be</sup> not <sup>to be</sup> paid vnto her soe long as Shee shalbe married & covert Baron by my executo<sup>s</sup> & overseers but my will ys that she shall have the consideraçon yearlie paid vnto her during her lief & after her deceas the saied stock and consideraçon to bee paid to her children if she have Anie & if not to her executo<sup>s</sup> or assigns she lyving the saied terme after my deceas Provided that if such husband as she shall att thend of the saied three yeares be married vnto or attaine after doe sufficientlie Assure vnto her & thissue of her bodie lands Awnswareable to the porçon by this my will gyven vnto her & to be adjudged soe by my executo<sup>s</sup> & overseers then my will ys that the saied C l<sup>i</sup> shalbe paid to such husband as shall make such assurance to his owne vse Itm I gyve & bequeath vnto my saied sister Ione xx<sup>li</sup> & all my wearing Apparrell to be paid & deliv<sup>d</sup> w<sup>h</sup>in one year after my Deceas And I Doe will & devise vnto her <sup>the house</sup> w<sup>th</sup> thap<sup>t</sup>enn<sup>s</sup> in Stratford wherein she dwelleth for her naturall lief vnder the yearlie Rent of xii<sup>d</sup> Itm I gyve & bequeath

*Shakespeare*  
*1616*



" But there is no mention of a property right in manuscripts or of the existence of any—none were found in his possession at his death—of any royalty.

## SECOND PAGE OF SHAKSPERE'S WILL.

(With facsimile of signature.)

vnto her three sonns Willm̄ Harte Hart & Michaell Harte  
 fyve pounds A peece to be payed w<sup>h</sup>in one yeare after my deceas  
 to be sett out for her w<sup>h</sup>in one yeare after my deceas by my execute<sup>r</sup>  
 w<sup>h</sup> thadvise & direccions of my overseers for her best pffitt untill her  
 marriage & then the same w<sup>h</sup> the increase thereof to be paid vnto  
 her Itm̄ I gyve & bequeath vnto <sup>the saied Elizabeth Hall (except my brod silver & gilt bole)</sup> her All my Plate <sup>^</sup> that I now  
 have att the date of this my will Itm̄ I gyve & bequeath vnto  
 the Poore of Stratford aforesaied tenn pounds to Mr. Thomas  
 Combe my Sword to Thomas Russell Esquier fyve pounds &  
 to ffrancis Collins of the Borough of warr in the countie of warr  
 gent thirteene pounds Sixe shillings and Eight pence to be paid w<sup>h</sup>in  
 one Yeare after my deceas Itm̄ I gyve & bequeath to <sup>Hamlett Sadler</sup> Mr. Richard  
 Tyler <sup>to Willim Reynolds gent xxvj viij<sup>d</sup> to buy him A Ringe</sup> theld' xxvi' viij<sup>d</sup> to buy him A Ringe <sup>^</sup> to my godson Willm̄  
 Walker xx' in gold to Anthonye Nashe gent xxvj' viij<sup>d</sup> & to Mr.  
 & to my ffellowes John Hemyngs Richard Burbage & Henry Cundell xxvj' viij<sup>d</sup> Apeece to buy them Ringes  
 John Nashe xxvj' viij<sup>d</sup> in gold <sup>^</sup> Itm̄ I Gyve will bequeath & devise vnto  
 for better enabling of her to pforme this my will & towards the pformans thereof  
 my Daughter Susanna Hall <sup>^</sup> All that Capitall message or teñte  
 in Stratford aforesaid  
 w<sup>h</sup> thappenn<sup>s</sup> <sup>^</sup> called the newe place wherein I nowe Dwell  
 & twoe Messuags or teñtes w<sup>h</sup> thappenn<sup>s</sup> scitvat lyeing & being  
 in Henley Streete w<sup>h</sup>in the borough of Stratford aforesaied And all  
 my barnes stables Orchards gardens lands teñts & hereditam<sup>u</sup> whatsoev<sup>r</sup>  
 scituat lyeing & being or to be had Receyved pceyved or taken  
 w<sup>h</sup>in the towns Hamletts Villags ffields & grounds of Stratford  
 vpon Avon Oldstratford Bushopton & Welcombe or in anie of them  
 in the saied countie of warr And alsoe All that Messuage or  
 tente w<sup>h</sup> thappenn<sup>s</sup> wherein One John Robinson dwellete scituat  
 lyeing & being in the blackfriers in London nere the Wardrobe & all  
 oth<sup>r</sup> my lands teñts & hereditam<sup>u</sup> whatsoev<sup>r</sup> To have & to hold All &  
 singler the saied pmiffs w<sup>h</sup> their App'tenn<sup>s</sup> vnto the saied Susanna  
 Hall for & during the terme of her naturall lief & after her  
 deceas to be the first sonne of her bodie lawfullie yssueing & to the  
 heires Males of the bodie of the saied first Sonne lawfullie  
 yssueinge & for defalt of such issue to the second Sonne of her  
 bodie lawfullie issueinge & to the heires Males of the bodie of the  
 saied Second Sonne lawfullie yfsuinge and for defalt of such  
 heires to the third Sonne of the bodie of the saied Susanna  
 Lawfullie yssueing & of the heires males of the bodie of the saied third  
 sonne lawfullie yssueing And for defalt of such yssue the same soe  
 to be & Remaine to the ffourth Sonne ffyft Sixte & Seventh  
 sonnes of her bodie lawfullie issueing one after Anoth' & to the heires

present or prospective, on publications from his writings (the equivalent of copy-right then existed), nor is the subject of authorship or papers hinted at in his will.

It was not hastily written or executed. He was, when it was written, in good health, and comparatively young. His cumulative habits and nature would have suggested to him a money value, if no other, for such manuscripts or rights, if they had existed. All his contemporaries who were writers left indubitable evidence of their authorship. Milton, eight years old when Shaksper died, left his title to *Paradise Lost* and other writings indisputable. So of all his contemporary play-writers and poets, Burbage, Marlowe, Nash, Peele, Green, Fletcher, Webster, Kyd, Ben

LAST PAGE OF SHAKSPERE'S WILL.

(With facsimile of signature.)

Males of the bodies of the saied ffourth fifth Sixte & Seaventh sonnes lawfullie yssueing in such maner as yt ys before Lymitted to be & Remaine to the first second & third Sonnes of her bodie & to their heires males And for default of such issue the saied pmissis to be & Remaine to my sayed Neece Hall & the heires Males of her bodie Lawfullie yssueing & for default of such issue to my Daughter Judith & the heires males of her bodie lawfully issueinge And for default of such issue to the Right heires of me the saied Willm

Itm I gyve vnto my wief my second best bed w<sup>th</sup> the furniture Shakspeare for ever <sup>A</sup> Itm I gyve & bequeath to my saied Daughter Judith my broad silver gilt bole All the Rest of my goods Chattels Leases plate Jewels & household stufte whatsoev<sup>r</sup> after my Detts and Legasies paied & my funerall expences discharged I gyve devise & bequeath to my Sonne in Lawe John Hall gent & my Daughter Susanna his wief whom I ordaine & make execut<sup>o</sup> of this my

Last will & testam<sup>t</sup> And I doe intreat & Appoint <sup>A</sup> Thomas Russell Esquier & ffrancis Collins gent to be overseers hereof And doe Revoke All forin wills & publishe this to be my last will & testam<sup>t</sup> In Witness whereof I have herevnto put my hand

Seale the Daie & Yeaere first above written.

*By me William Shakspeare*

Witness to the publishing  
hercof, Fra : Collyns  
Julyus Shawe  
John Robinson  
Hamnet Sadler  
Robert Whattcott

Probatum corā Magri Willmī Byrde  
legum Dcorē Comiss<sup>m</sup> &c. xxij<sup>to</sup>-die  
mens Junij Anno Dni 1616 Juram<sup>to</sup>  
Johannis Hall vnus ex &c. Cui &c.  
De bene &c. Jurat.—Resvāt p̄tate  
&c. Susanne Hall alt ex &c. cū  
venit &c. petitur.

(Inv<sup>t</sup> ex<sup>t</sup>)

Jonson, and the earlier Spencer, Chaucer, and Beaumont. So of other great contemporary authors, Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others, we have already named. Oliver Cromwell was almost exactly seventeen years of age when Shaksper died; he and the galaxy of soldiers, sailors, statesmen, Puritan and cavalier, can be identified with their work by their letters and contemporary history; not so William Shaksper, the one now generally reputed most learned and renowned of all men of all the ages.

"Shaksper, if the author, would have, above other men, understood the imperishable character of his works, and taken pains to perpetuate his title thereto, for he was not without vanity, as is shown by his efforts to get the right to a '*coat of arms*' for his father, that he, the son, might be called a '*gentleman*.' This coat of arms was first applied for (1596) on the ground that John Shaksper's 'parents and late ancestors had rendered valiant service to King Henry VII'; then in 1599 the application was amended, alleging John's grandfather had been the valiant one; neither claim was accepted as true. William, neither then nor later, laid claim to authorship as entitling him to a '*coat of arms*,' or the rank of '*gentleman*,' or to fame, nor did his family.

"If Shaksper was so universally learned, why did he not educate at least one daughter, enough to enable her to read the simplest of his poems? What was the matter with the Stratford '*Free School*'? Why could not Susanna, Hamnet, or Judith learn there to read and write? Judith married two months before her father's death, and made her mark at the marriage altar. He was rich and could have educated his children.

"All contemporary biographical writings have been explored to discover something bearing on Shaksper's authorship, but in vain, save inferences and assumptions, with few exceptions.

A facsimile of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "William Shaksper". The word "William" is written in a highly stylized, looped cursive, while "Shaksper" is written in a more straightforward cursive. There is a small superscript "e" above the "s" in "Shaksper".

FACSIMILE OF THE SIGNATURE "WILLIAM SHAKSPERE."

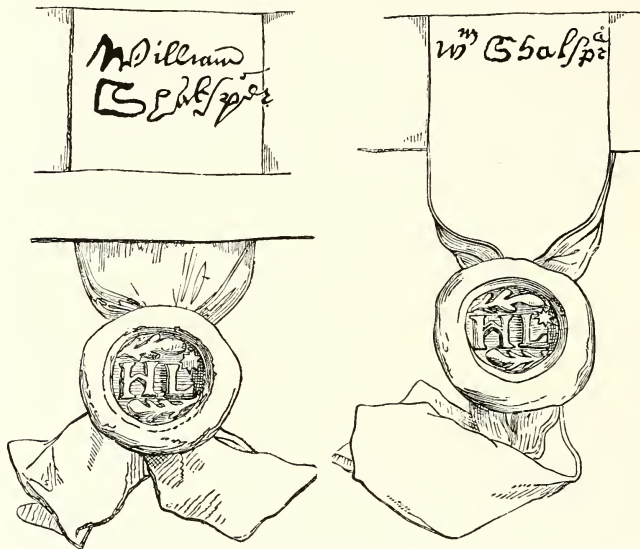
Found in a small folio volume, the first edition of Florio's translation of Montaigne. It is now in the possession of the British Museum, the trustees of which paid one hundred pounds for it. Since nothing further is known of the signature, its genuineness is in many quarters considered very doubtful.

"I cannot accord it to him, who, though rich, did not educate his children, and who, though he sought fame through a '*coat of arms*' claimed to have been earned by the valor of his great grandfather, nowhere, not even in his last will and testament, claimed the fame of authorship—*such authorship*—and whose sole posthumous anxiety centered on his '*dust*' and '*bones*' remaining undistributed in the chancel of Stratford church."

Is the name William Shakespeare a pseudonym, and must we fall back on the theory that Lord Bacon is the author of Shakespeare's works? Or how shall we solve the problem of their authorship?

One possibility only seems left, viz., to assume that the author of the poems, William Shakespeare, and the man who is commonly supposed to have written them, William Shaksper, are two differ-

ent persons. Both appear to belong to the same family; the latter (Shakspere) never wrote his name twice alike but always so as to indicate the pronunciation "Shacksper" with a short *a*; the former always spelled his name "Shakespeare" with a long *a* and frequently hyphenated, so as to indicate plainly that the *s* belonged to the second syllable. Obviously the poet repudiated the original significance of the name, which is "Jack's Pierre" (i. e., "Peter, the son of Jack"), and substituted for it the etymology of "sha-



This was originally attached to a mortgage deed which is now lost.

From a conveyance of property. Now in the possession of the corporation of London.

FACSIMILES OF SHAKESPEARE SIGNATURES.<sup>1</sup>

king a spear," which suggests descent from a family of knights. The spelling "Shakespeare" does not occur in the family of the supposititious author, the owner of New Place, to the time of his very death; but when the poet's publications became generally known it was finally accepted as the only one.

On the tombstones of the widow and the children of the owner of New Place no mention is made that they are relatives of a poet,

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Shakespeare's Home and Rural Life* by James Walter London, 1874.

yet they are no longer called "Shaksper," but "Shakespeare"; and there is at least one indication in the lines on the tombstone of Susanna which suggests that the survivors of the Shaksper family were not unwilling to accept the renown that was reflected upon their name, as their own.

The writer of these lines did not make a pilgrimage to Stratford; neither has he rummaged the original documents for new evidences; nor does he claim to be a Shakespeare scholar or a literary specialist. He has simply gone over presentations of the old traditions and evidences. Having sifted and tested the materials of the

february 20

To the Quene for Iudith Shaksper

JUDITH SHAKSPERE.

August 11 Hamnet filius William Shaksper

HAMNET FILIUS WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.

September 8 m<sup>r</sup> Johannes Shaksper

JOHANNES SHAKSPERE, William's father, (died Sept. 8, 1601).

August 8 m<sup>r</sup>s Shaksper

MRS. SHAKSPERE, William's wife, (died August 8, 1623).

#### FACSIMILES OF BURIAL ENTRIES.

case, accessible to him, he presents his solution (suggested by a critical consideration of the facts) not as final,—not as a solution at all, but merely as a suggestion for further investigation—for refutation or verification.

#### THE SHAKESPEARE FAMILY.

The name Shakespeare is written in many ways. It appears as Chacksper, Shaxpur, Shaxper, Schaksper, Schakesper, Schaksper, Schakespire, Schakespeyr, Shagspere, Saxpere, Shaxpere,

Shaxpeare, Shaxsper, Shaxspere, Shaxespere, Shakspere, Shakspear, Shakspeere, Schakspear, Schackspeare, Schackespeare, Schackespere, Shakspeyr, Shaksper, Shakespare, Shakyspere, Shakeseper, Shakespire, Shakespeire, Shakespear, Shakaspeare, and finally Shake-speare, as the poet wrote his name.

We must bear in mind that in those days the spelling of words was not yet so rigorously settled as it is now, and so we must not wonder that names also were written in various ways. There is no reason to doubt that all these names which occur in church entries, court proceedings, and guild registers,<sup>1</sup> have reference to the same family.

There were many Shakespeares living in the neighborhood of Warwick and Worcester. Many of them, says Mr. H. N. Hudson in his edition of Shakespeare's works,<sup>2</sup> "are spoken of as belonging to the town of Rowington, where the name continues to be met with for a long time after; a William Shakespeare being mentioned as one of the jury in 1614, and a Margaret Shakespeare as being married there in 1665. And for more than a century later, the name is met with in the Rowington papers. It appears also that there were Shakespeares living at Balsal, Woldiche, Claverdon, Hampton, and other places in Warwickshire: a John Shakespeare was living at Warwick in 1578, and a Thomas Shakespeare in 1585; and a William Shakespeare was drowned in the Avon, near that town, in 1579; a Thomas Shakespeare, also, was chosen bailiff of Warwick in 1613 and again in 1627."

There is one Richard Shakspeare mentioned in old records, who was a farmer of Snitterfield, a village near Stratford-on-Avon. He had two sons, John and Henry, and may in addition have had nephews of the same name, viz., Shakspeare, or whatever spelling it may have been. One thing is sure, his son John married the daughter of his landlord Robert Arden, of Wilmecote, three miles from Stratford. While the Shakespeare family was of little account, the Ardens belonged to the gentry of the land, and are mentioned as landed proprietors of the Arden district in Warwickshire before the Norman conquest. Their ancestor Turchill (also written Turkill) of Arden was left in possession by the invaders, because he had not helped Harold and did not oppose William's title to the crown of England.

Mary Arden married John Shakespeare one year after her fa-

<sup>1</sup> The name Shakespeare occurs most frequently in a manuscript "Register of the Brothers and Sisters of the Guild of St. Anne of Knolle" from 1407 to 1535.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction, pp. xxix, xxx, *The Works of Shakespeare*.

ther's death, which seems to indicate that the old Saxon nobleman would not have given his consent to so unequal a match, but nothing further is known about it.

We know positively that there were two John Shakespeares (the husband of Mary Arden, a glover, and a poor shoemaker,) living simultaneously in Stratford. We know further that there were at least three William Shakespeares that were almost contemporaneous, one of whom we have just mentioned as having been drowned in 1579.

Under the date of November 28, 1582, William Shakespeare took out a marriage license at the court of the see at Worcester. The bride's name was Anne Hathaway of Shottery, and it is note-



MARY ARDEN'S COTTAGE.<sup>1</sup>

worthy that no friends or relatives of the groom are entered as witnesses, while friends of the bride's family, Fulk Sandell and John Richardson, assumed security in the sum of forty pounds on account of the irregularity of the wedding which might involve the Bishop in difficulties. Further light is thrown on the situation from the church entry of the birth of a daughter Susanna, born to the young couple five months afterwards, May 26, 1583. The young husband was a minor, and his wife whose age is mentioned on her tombstone, was eight years his senior. This William Shakespeare is the man who is commonly identified with the poet Shakespeare.

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Shakespeare's Home and Rural Life*, by James Walter, London, 1874.

Another license is recorded having been granted at the same bishop's court on November 27<sup>1</sup> (presumably of the same year) in a similar fashion to another William Shakespeare whose bride was Anne Whately from near Stratford.

The poet Shakespeare is commonly supposed to be the husband of Anne Hathaway, the son of John Shakespeare the glover.

#### JOHN SHAKESPEARE THE GLOVER AND HIS SON.

John started in life with good prospects. Possessed of his wife's goodly inheritance, he was appointed a juror of the court, an alderman, a bailiff, and finally chief among the aldermen. His education had been poor, for we know that he could neither read



ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE. RECONSTRUCTION.

After an engraving in Richard Grant White's edition of *Shakespeare*.<sup>2</sup>

nor write, yet on that score his wife was not his superior. He had worked as a glover, but he soon abandoned his trade. Several children were born to him, the two first being daughters who died early in infancy. It is reported that on the 23rd of April, 1564, a son was born to him whom he christened William and who is commonly believed to have been the author of the dramas that go under the name "William Shakespeare."

John's prosperity did not last. He mortgaged his estate and grew poor and poorer. When William was only fourteen years

<sup>1</sup> I cannot at the time definitely state the year. The fact is mentioned by Prof. L. A. Sherman in his book *What is Shakespeare?* p 245. He says: "There were other William Shakespeares in the see of Worcester to which the Stratford parishes belonged at the time."

<sup>2</sup> By permission of Little, Brown, & Co. of Boston.



old, his father was forced to take him from school because he needed his assistance at home. His debts increased, and the former

1564  
April 26

*Nicholus filius Johannis Shakespeare*

FACSIMILE OF BAPTISMAL ENTRY OF WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

May 26 Susanna daughter to William Shakespeare

FACSIMILE OF BAPTISMAL ENTRY OF SHAKSPEARE'S DAUGHTER SUSANNA.

February 2 Hamnet & Judith borne & daughter to William Shakespeare

FACSIMILE OF BAPTISMAL ENTRY OF SHAKSPEARE'S TWINS HAMNET AND JUDITH.

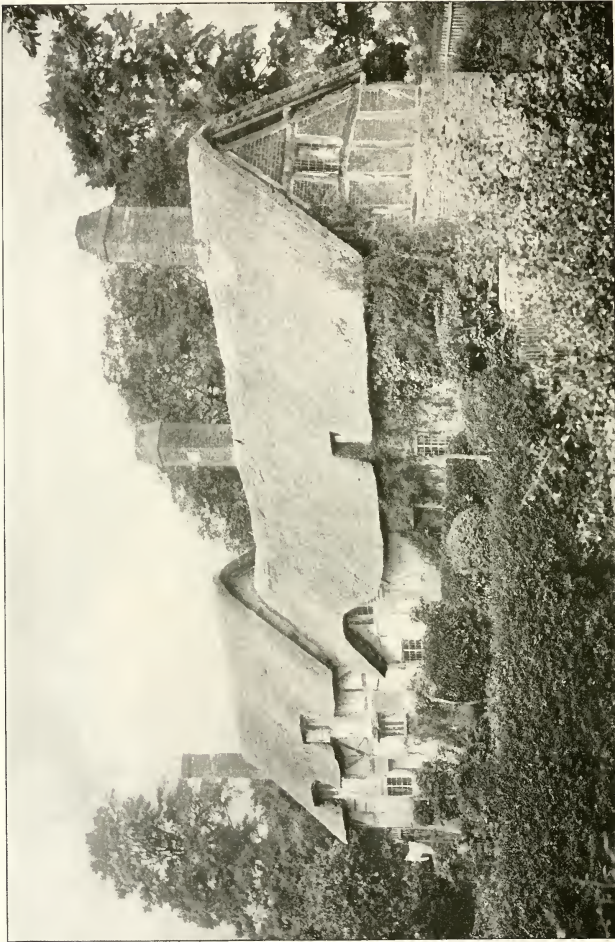
July 5.

*Johann Gullgenther & Susanna Shakespeare*

FACSIMILE OF MARRIAGE ENTRY OF DR. HALL AND SUSANNA SHAKSPEARE.

bailiff was now compelled to abscond. He was deprived of his alderman's office, the reason being given in these words:

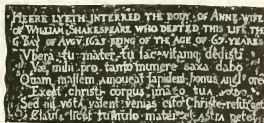
" Mr. Shaxpere dothe not come to the halles when they be warned, nor hathe not done of longe tyme." \*



ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE, PRESENT STATE. (After a Photograph.)

Finally, he was arrested and imprisoned. His boy in the meantime acquired a bad reputation and is said to have got into trouble

on account of repeated deer-stealing. His early marriage with Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a well-to-do farmer of Shottery (mentioned above), cannot have improved the chances of the young man who was then only eighteen years old.



TOMBSTONE OF ANNE, WIFE OF WILLIAM SHAKSPEAR.<sup>1</sup>

Anne Hathaway's name is omitted (and apparently on purpose) from her father's will, and in her husband's will it is only inserted in an interlinear correction in which the latter offers her no better bequest than his "second best bed"; but the inscription on



NEW PLACE OF STRATFORD-ON AVON.

After an engraving in Richard Grant White's edition of *Shakespeare*.<sup>2</sup>

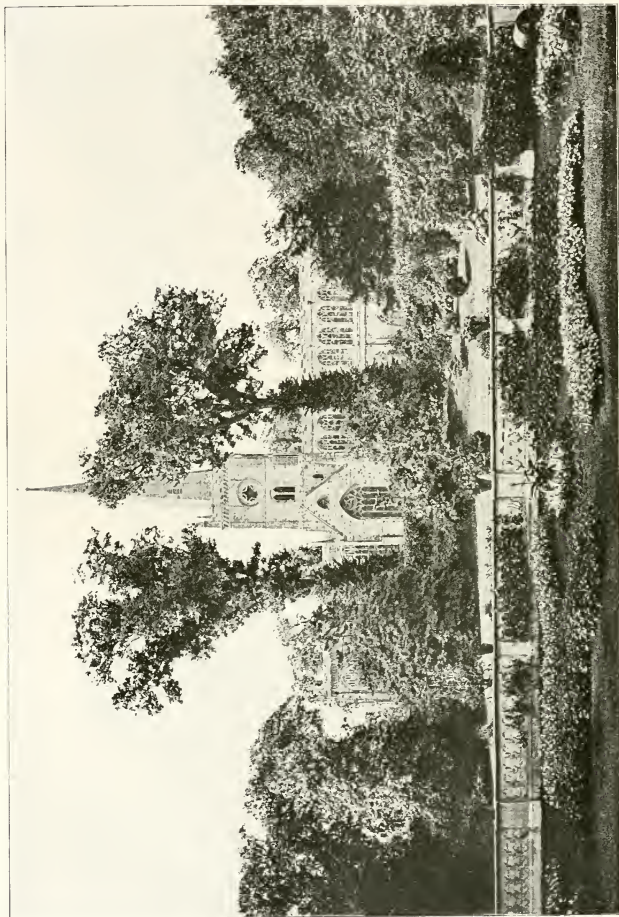
her tombstone, apparently written by her learned son-in-law, Dr. Hall, speaks of her in general but tender terms as a mother.

The glover's son went to London, or (as tradition has it) he fled from justice on account of his habit of deer-stealing. There

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Shakespeare's Home and Rural Life*, by James Walter, London, 1874.

<sup>2</sup> By permission of Little, Brown, & Co. of Boston.

he became connected with London theaters, not as a poet, but in the less ideal occupation of taking charge of horses. Nor can there



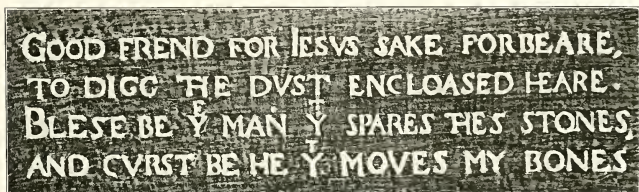
TRINITY CHURCH AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON. (From *Shakespeare's Home and Rural Life*, by James Walter.

be any doubt either that he mounted the stage and became an actor. I am further inclined to believe that, being unusually shrewd in the management of business affairs he (not his cousin

the poet) finally gained control of the Globe Theater. He may have had his faults, but he could not be accused of shiftlessness in money affairs. Obviously he had learned thrift by the straightened circumstances of his father. We know of some of his business dealings and his enterprises must have been successful. He possessed houses in both London and Stratford and became one of the richest citizens of his native city.

We must assume that William not only released his father from debts but also assisted him in his suit for a coat of arms at the Herald College which was granted in 1599.

We have seen that William had business dealings in London and was somehow there connected with the stage, but how long he lived there is not known. At any rate, his family stayed at Stratford and he seems to have remained a citizen of that community. Finally he bought and restored New Place, one of the best residences of the town. When in 1643 Queen Henrietta Maria passed



INSCRIPTION ON TOMBSTONE BEFORE THE CHANCEL RAIL.

through Stratford, the building was considered the most appropriate place for her reception, and Mrs. Hall, Shakespeare's daughter Susannah, had the honor of entertaining the royal guest.

William Shakspeare died at Stratford April 25th, 1616, and lies buried in the Stratford Trinity Church near the chancel rail under the well-known tombstone with the odd inscription cursing any one that should move his bones.

The old parish clerk, Mr. Dowdall, wrote to Mr. Edward Southwell in a letter, still extant, which is dated April 16, 1692, that the epitaph was written by Shakespeare himself a little before his death.<sup>1</sup> If the man buried under this tombstone did so, and if the author of these lines was indeed the dramatist Shakespeare, we

<sup>1</sup> I am sorry that I could not find a facsimile of the letter. The wording of it will be of importance. Yet I assume that the old clerk had met so many persons who identified the poet with the owner of New Place who lay buried in Trinity church, that he had naturally adopted the identification.

must assume that in his last illness the poet's mental spirits had degenerated, and also that his views concerning death, so nobly expressed in many sublime passages of his dramas, were completely changed on his deathbed. However, this seems so impossible that Shakespeare scholars as a rule prefer to assume the epitaph to be the fabrication of a later date. Mr. White says:

"It is more probable, however, that to prevent the removal of Shakespeare's remains to the charnel-house of the church, when time made other demands upon the space they occupied, in compliance with a custom of the day and place, some member of his family, or some friend, had this rude, hearty curse cut upon his tombstone."

If we assume that Shakspeare, the owner of New Place, was another person than the poet, we may after all put some credit in Mr. Dowdall's information that the lines of the tombstone were inscribed at his request—i. e., at the request of the man whose body is entombed underneath. William Shakspeare of New Place may either have written the epitaph himself or (and this is more probable) have engaged for a trifling honorarium some local tombstone rhymster.

We may assume for certain that Dr. John Hall, the husband of Johanna, attended on Mr. Shakspeare in his last illness. He left notes of his medical practice containing all remarkable cases that came under his observation, but unfortunately his diary does not begin until the year 1617, the year following the death of his father-in-law.

THE MARK OF  
JUDITH, SHAKS-  
PERE'S DAUGH-  
TER.

Such in outline are the most significant facts of William Shakspeare's life. We know nothing about his education except that it seems to have been very scanty. His children remained illiterate, for we have a public document in which his daughter Judith signs her name with a scrawl after the fashion of her illiterate grand-

THE LEGALLY ATTESTED MARKS OF JOHN SHAKSPAR AND MARY SHAKSPAR.

parents. William could write, but his writing is not only illegible but also inconsistent in spelling and plainly indicates an unedu-

cated man. We know of no opportunity at any time of his life when he might have acquired Latin, Greek, French, and Italian, let alone jurisprudence and other accomplishments which the author of the dramas must have possessed to a high degree.

#### THE WILL AND THE TOMBSTONES OF THE SHAKESPEARE FAMILY.

Good fortune has preserved the will which William Shakspeare, the owner of New Place, made. It refers to a number of trifles in his possession which are all duly disposed of, and an interlinear addition shows that on afterthought he remembered his "fellowes John Hemyngs, Richard Burbage & Henry Cundell" each one with twenty-six shillings eight pennies "to buy them ringes," but no reference whatever is made to his dramas, nor to the rights and privileges of his literary remains, while (if he was the poet) he ought to have known that he had left in the hands of two of them, Hemyngs (also spelled Heminge) and Cundell (also spelled Con-dell), the manuscript of his dramas of which not fewer than fifteen had at the date of his death not as yet seen the light of publication.

There is no author who is not greatly concerned about the fate of his writings, especially those which have not yet been published. Shall we assume that Shakespeare was utterly indifferent on this point? Although the owner of New Place is quite particular about the smallest item, he utterly neglects to give any instructions as to what shall be done with his manuscripts.

We ought also to assume that the poet was in possession of at least some books which were more valuable in those days than they are now. Yet apparently no book was found in the possession of the owner of New Place and no interest is shown in literature of any kind.

The poet, as we positively know, had many friends in high positions and received from them many favors. We may be sure that he received letters and tokens of friendship from scholars such as Ben Jonson and Drayton, and from noblemen, the Earl of Southampton, the Earl of Essex and Lord Pemberton. Keepsakes of noblemen and famous authors would have been as highly appreciated as an old sword by almost any man, but more so by the owner of New Place, as he shows himself in his will. Nothing of the kind is alluded to in the will.

The only indication that the owner of New Place was "Shakespeare," meaning the dramatist whose name became better and

better known, is found in Mrs. Hall's tombstone, whose puritanical piety was tempered with a joyous disposition. We read that she was "wise to salvation," but it is added "something of Shakespeare was in that." Otherwise we have no proof that the owner of New Place was a poet. No scrap of his handwriting, no manuscript poem of his, is known to have been preserved in the hands of the family of the owner of New Place.

#### THE POET.

Now what do we know of the author of the dramas? He wrote his name William Shakespeare, more often with a hyphen between *e* and *s*, as if to emphasise that he was not a Shakspeare.

The poet's name occurs for the first time in English literature in the first edition of *Venus and Adonis*, a poem that appeared in 1593.

The poet Shakespeare's name is sometimes mentioned in contemporary literature. Robert Green, a playwright during the latter half of the sixteenth century expressed his jealousy of the rising Shakespeare in a pamphlet entitled *Groat's Worth of Wit Bought with a Million of Repentance*, published by Henry Chettle in 1592. Green says:

"There is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a countrie. O that I might intreate your rare wits to be employed in more profitable courses, and let those apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions! I know the best husband of you all will never prove an usurer, and the kindest of them all will never proove a kinde nurse; yet, whilst you may, seeke you better maisters, for it is pittie men of such rare wits should be subject to the pleasures of such rude grooms."

That the attack on the man who "is in his own conceit the only 'Shake-scene'" was aimed at Shakespeare cannot be doubted as the passage italicised in the quotation is a parody of a line that occurs in the third part of Henry VI., "O! tiger-heart wrapp'd in a woman's hide."

The glover's son married Anne Hathaway in 1582 and is supposed to have reached London in the eighties as an untutored youth, but in 1592 his fame as a dramatist excited the jealousy of a prominent Oxford bred dramatist.

Robert Green died soon afterwards, and in a little book entitled *Kind Hart's Dreame* Henry Chettle made an apology for Mr. Green's



abuse to which he (Chettle) had given publicity. Shakespeare's name is not mentioned in it but the facts stated above and the con-



TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
Henrie VVriothesley, Earle of Southampton,  
and Baron of Titchfield.



*Right Honourable, I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolisht lines to your Lordship, nor how the worlde will censure mee for choosing so strong a proppe to support so weake a burthen, onely if your Honour seeme but pleased, I account my selfe highly praised, and vowe to take aduantage of all idle houres, till I haue honoured you vvith some grauer labour. But if the first heire of my inuention proue deformed, I shall he sorie it had so noble a god-father : and neuer after eare so barren a land, for feare it yeeld me still so bad a haruest, I leaue it to your Honourable suruey, and your Honor to your hearts content vvich I wish may alvvayes ansvwere your owne vvish, and the vvorlds hopefull expectation.*

Your Honors in all dutie,

William Shakespeare.

FACSIMILE OF THE DEDICATION, PAGE IN THE FIRST EDITION OF "VENUS AND ADONIS," PUBLISHED AT LONDON, 1593.

This is the first appearance of William Shakespeare's name in the history of English literature.

text of the passage makes it sure that he is the man referred to. Mr. Chettle says :

"How I have all the time of my conuering in printing hindred the bitter inuering against schollers, it hath been very well knowne; and how in that I dealt, I can sufficiently prove. With neither of them that take offence was I acquainted, and with one of them I care not if I never be. Tho other, whome at that time I did so much spare as since I wish I had, for that, as I have moderated the heate of

living writers, and might have used my own discretion,—especially in such a case, the author being dead,—that I did not I am as sorry as if the original fault had been my fault, because myself have seen his demeanor no less civil, than he excellent in the quality he professes;—besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art."

Shakespeare, the poet, was at the same time an actor, for there are some contemporary allusions which suggest the idea that the dramatist sometimes appeared on the stage. A poem by John

## The Stationer to the Reader.



*Set forth a booke without an Epistle,  
were like to the old English proverbe, A  
blew coat without a badge, & the Au-  
thor being dead, I thought good to take  
that piece of worke upon mee : To com-  
mend it, I will not, for that which is good, I hope every  
man will commend, without intreaty : and I am the bol-  
der, because the Authors name is sufficient to vent his  
worke. Thus leauing every one to the liberty of iudge-  
ment : I haue ventured to print this Play, and leaue it  
to the generall censure.*

*Yours,*

Thomas Walkley.

FACSIMILE OF PUBLISHER'S PREFACE TO SHAKESPEARE'S "OTHELLO."

This is a posthumous publication and the first mention that is made in English literature of Shakespeare's death.

Davies entitled "Scourge of Folly" and published in 1607 praises Shakespeare as "the English Terence" and speaks of him as having played the parts of kings.

We may assume that the glover's son and the poet were two distinct persons, but we cannot deny that both of them were playwrights and moved in theatrical circles. We must leave the question open whether the former or the latter assumed the financial



THE STRATFORD MONUMENT.

control of the Globe Theater. Ben Jonson, so far as we know, never refers to the poet as the owner of a theater, nor does he ever refer to the great advantages he ought to have had by being able to have his dramas brought out at his pleasure.

The poet must have died before 1622, for in that year an edition of his *Othello* appeared in the Preface of which the publisher (or as he calls himself, "The Stationer,") speaks of "the author being dead."

#### THE IDENTIFICATION AND THE STRATFORD MONUMENT.

We have many scattered references to the poet Shakespeare, but nothing (except one isolated fact, the Stratford monument) that would positively identify him with the owner of New Place. All the stories that describe his family relations are of late origin, finally based upon assumptions. Further, we know a good deal of the owner of New Place, and various financial dealings are on record which (if the owner of New Place be the poet) would go far to prove that a man can be a dramatist and owner of a theater and at the same time a shrewd (albeit honest) real estate dealer, money lender, and leading financier of a small town. Mr. L. A. Sherman says (*loc. cit.*, p. 280) that "various financial dealings show him to have been anchored beyond the dream side of existence and to have divined business chances as readily and as unerringly as the proper construction of a play." Yet all unequivocal evidence that the playwright and the owner of New Place are one and the same person is missing. There is but one fact that can be adduced as contemporary evidence of their identity. It is the Stratford monument.

The inscription of the Shakespeare monument in the Stratford church reads as follows:

IVDICIO PYLIVM, GENIO SOCRATEM, ARTE MARONEM,  
TERRA TEGIT, POPVLVS MÆRET, OLYMPVS HABET  
STAY PASSENGER WHY GOEST THOU BY SO FAST?  
READ IF THOU CANST, WHOM ENVIOUS DEATH HATH PLAST,  
WITH IN THIS MONUMENT SHAKSPEARE WITH WHOME  
QUICK NATURE DIDE WHOSE NAME DETH DECKY TOMBE  
FAR MORE TEN COST SEH ALL Y HE HATH WRIT T,  
LEAVES LIVING ART, BVT PAGE, TO SERVE HIS WITT  
OBIT ANO D<sup>o</sup> 1616  
ÆTATIS, 52. ANO 7349

The Latin verses that precede the English lines mean :

"[Him who was] a sage like Nestor, a genius like Socrates, and an artist like Virgil, the earth covers, the people lament, Olympus holds."

The sentiment of the Latin verses bears such a striking similarity to the tombstone inscription of Dr. Hall that the idea of a common authorship readily suggests itself. We have either to do here with a professional tombstone writer, or should Dr. Hall himself be considered responsible for all the verses of the Shakespeare family tombstones, except the English inscription on the monument, but perhaps including the eulogy on his own grave?

The Stratford monument is attached to the wall on the left hand side of the altar. It is said to have been made by Gerard Johnson, a professional tombstone manufacturer, but the old Gerard Johnson may have been dead at the time, and the probability is that it was made by his son who with his brothers followed their father's profession.

It is not known who paid for the monument, but the inscription shows that it was intended as an ornament of the tomb. There is no possibility of giving any other construction to the words "within this monument." Obviously the sculptor attended to his job and cared little for historical accuracy.

Mr. Norris in his well-known and elegant work, *Portraits of Shakespeare*, quotes the lines of the monument and adds :

"This inscription was certainly not written by a native of Stratford, for it refers to the body of Shakespeare being 'within this monument,' when we know that his grave is under the floor of the chancel, in front of the monument."

We cannot doubt that the sculptor came to Stratford as an outsider with instructions given him by the poet's unknown admirers, also outsiders. We must assume that at Stratford he went to the parish clerk, Mr. Dowdall, and looked up the church entries for the sake of determining the date of the poet's death. Mr. Dowdall as well as other inhabitants of Stratford knew Mr. William Shakspeare of New Place very well, for he was one of the wealthiest citizens and his residence was one of the most conspicuous houses of the town. We can scarcely doubt that Mr. Dowdall sent the sculptor to Dr. Hall, Mr. Shakspeare's son-in-law, and the latter was presumably glad to learn that his father-in-law had staunch friends who had collected money for a monument. Mr. Shakspeare had been connected with the London stage, and so there was nothing absolutely incredible in the assumption that he was a dramatist.

It is, to say the least, a very strange coincidence that the

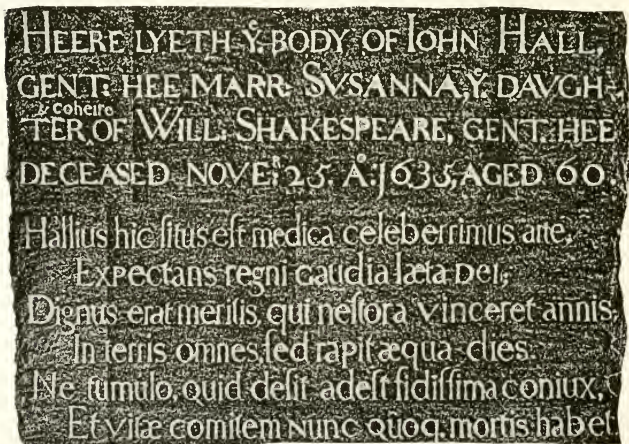
spelling of the name on the monument does not tally with the spelling which the poet had adopted, without any single exception, for all his works, but with the commonly accepted spelling of the owner of New Place.

*April 25 with Shakspeare gent*

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE'S BURIAL ENTRY IN THE CHURCH REGISTER AT STRATFORD.

It reads under the general heading, here 1616, as follows: "April 25,  
Will. Shakspere, Gent."

While the poet always wrote his name either "Shakespeare" or "Shake-speare," the monument reads "Shakspeare." This corroborates the assumption that the sculptor, sent to Stratford to set up the monument, consulted Stratford authorities, presumably Mr. Dowdall, and the latter determined the date of the poet's death



DR. HALL'S TOMBSTONE.<sup>1</sup>

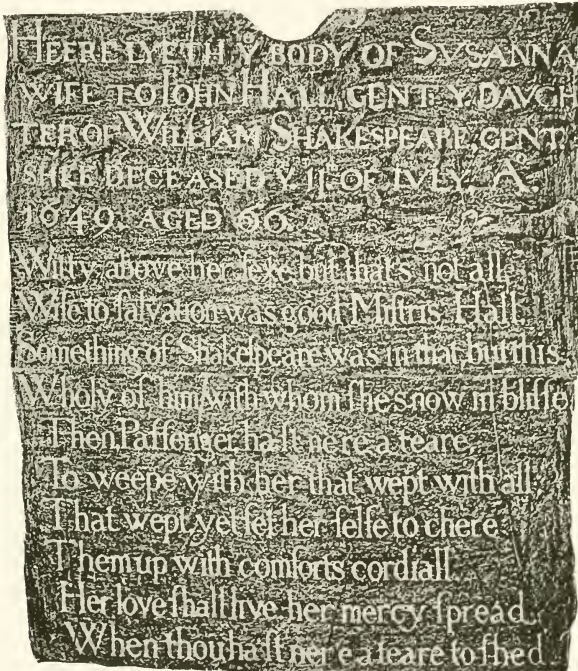
from the church registers. There he found the entry of the burial of William Shakspere, gentleman, the owner of New Place, under the date of April 25, 1616. And since funerals took place on the third day after death, he concluded that Shakespeare, the poet, must have died on April 23, 1616.

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Shakespeare's Home and Rural Life*, by James Walter, London, 1874.

On the correctness of the inscription under the poet's bust will depend the identity of the poet Shakespeare (on the monument exceptionally spelled Shakspeare) with Mr. Shakspere of New Place, and the question is, Can we assume that the manufacturer of the monument was well informed?

THE TOMBSTONES OF DR. AND MRS. HALL.

It does not seem incredible that Dr. Hall is the author of the tombstones of the Shakspere family including his own, for all of



TOMBSTONE OF SUSANNA, WIFE OF DR. HALL AND DAUGHTER OF MR. SHAKSPERE OF NEW PLACE.<sup>1</sup>

(Presumably written by Dr. Hall.)

them are written in the same stilted and grandiloquent style. His own tombstone reads in a literal English translation as follows :

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from *Shakespeare's Home and Rural Life*, by James Walter, London, 1874.

“ Hall lies here, most famous in the medical profession,  
 Hoping for the great joys of the kingdom of God.  
 He was worthy of merit who was superior in years to Nestor,  
 But on earth the same fate carries away all.  
 That nothing should be missing in the tomb there is present his most faithful wife  
 And the companion of his life he has now also in death.”

If these lines were written by Dr. Hall himself, we may very well imagine how readily he accepted the rumor perhaps first as quite likely and finally as indubitable that his father-in-law had been a great dramatist.

His wife's tombstone reads as follows :

“ Witty above her sexe but that's not all,  
 Wise to salvation was good Mistris Hall.  
 Something of Shakespeare was in that, but this  
 Wholy of him with whom she's now in blisse.  
 Then, Passenger, hast ne're a teare,  
 To weepe with her that wept with all.  
 That wept, yet set her selfe to chere  
 Them up with comforts cordiall.  
 Her love shall live, her mercy spread  
 When thou hast ner'e a teare to shed.”

#### THE POSTHUMOUS FOLIO EDITION.

The folio is the only authenticated, although not authorised, edition of his works, and contains fifteen dramas which are otherwise unknown. They are stated to have been reproduced from the author's original manuscripts. Other dramas are reproduced from the prior publications of the so-called quarto texts. The editors are Messrs. John Heminge and Henry Condell, self-appointed executors of the poet's literary remains. In their edition they denounce all prior publications as spurious and unauthorised, but they themselves reprint them with all the mistakes and without taking any pains with the text, which abounds in mis-spelling and other corruptions.

The author of the dramas is praised by the editors for his clean and neatly written manuscript. They say :

“ His mind and hand went together : And what he thought, he vttered with that easnesse, that wee haue scarce receiued from him a blot in his papers.”

We shall see that the statement is verified by Ben Jonson as a fact “often mentioned” by “the players.” We know positively that William Shakspeare, the owner of New Place, wrote a very poor hand.

The folio edition is posthumous, the author being referred to in the preface, as well as in the sundry poetical dedications, as being



dead. The editors dedicate the poems to two lords who had "prosequuted both them, and their Author liuing with so much fauour." They add :

"We haue but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his Orphanes, Guardians, without ambition either of selfe-profit, or fame: onely to keep the memory of so worthy a Friend, & Fellow aliuie, as was *our SHAKESPEARE*,<sup>1</sup> by humble offer of his playes, to your most noble patronage."

If the poet left a widow or a family of any kind, we should expect that they as the heirs of his literary property should be mentioned by the editors of the folio edition; but as there is no allusion in the will of the owner of New Place to the dramas, of which a small part only had been published at the time, nor any allusion

## To the memorie of *M. W. Shake-speare.*

**W**EE wondred (*Shake-speare*) that thou went'st so soone  
From the *Worlds-Stage*, to the *Graues-Tyring-roome.*  
Wee thought thee dead, but this thy printed worth,  
Tels thy Spectators, that thou went'st but forth  
To enter with applause. An *Actors Ars*,  
Can dye, and liue, to acte a second part.  
That's but an *Exit of Mortalitie* ;  
This, a *Re-entrance to a Plaudite.*

I. M.

FACSIMILE OF THE FOURTH AND LAST POEM WRITTEN IN MEMORY OF THE DECEASED AUTHOR, AND PUBLISHED IN THE FOLIO EDITION OF 1623.

Notice the hyphenated spelling of the name which occurs also on several title-pages of the quarto editions, published during the author's lifetime.

whatever to unpublished manuscripts (in spite of the mention of Heming's and Condell's names!): so, *vice versa*, the first edition of the poet's works contains not a single line which would lead us to assume that he was ever married or left any one who was entitled to claim his literary remains.

There can be no doubt about the posthumous character of the folio edition; indeed, the lamentations of the editors and their poetical friends make the impression as if the poet's death were a recent affair. After the lapse of seven years one would expect other expressions than those presented by Ben Jonson, L. Digges, and an unknown poet, I. M.

<sup>1</sup> In the original print the type is as here, *our* in italics and SHAKESPEARE in small caps.

It is noteworthy that the poet I. M. always hyphenates the name "Shake-speare."

The poem by L. Digges, who also spells the name hyphenated (not in the inscription but all through the poem), reads as follows :

## TO THE MEMORIE

of the deceased Author Maister

W. SHAKESPEARE.

*S*Hake-speare, at length thy pious fellowes giue  
*The world thy Workes: thy Workes, by which, out-lie*  
*Thy Tombe, thy name must when that stone is rent,*  
*And time dissolues thy Stratford Monument,*  
*Here we aliuē shall view thee still. This Booke,*  
*When Brasse and Marble fade, shall make thee looke*  
*Fresh to all Ages: when Posteritie*  
*Shall loath what's new, think all is prodgie*  
*That is not Shake-speares; eu'ry Line, each Verse*  
*Here shall reuiue, redceme thee from thy Herse.*

. . . . .  
*Be sure, our Shake-speare, thou canst neuer dye,*  
*But crowned wit Lawrell, liue eternally.*

### VICAR WARD'S TESTIMONY.

When or where the poet died we do not know. There is an unverified tradition based upon a manuscript note of Mr. Ward's diary, who was Vicar of Stratford since 1662 and had some hearsay information concerning Shakespeare. At the end of the diary the statement is made that "the book was begun February 14, 1661, and finished April 25, 1663, at Mr. Brooks's house at Stratford-on-Avon," i. e., more than forty-five years after the death of Mr. Shakespeare of New Place. Mr. Ward says :

"Shakespeare had but two daughters, one whereof Mr. Hall, the physician, married, and by her had one daughter, to wit, the Lady Barnard of Abingdon.—I have heard that Mr. Shakespeare was a natural wit, without any art at all. He frequented the plays all his younger time, but in his elder days liv'd at Stratford, and supplied the stage with two plays every year; and for that had an allowance so large, that he spent at the rate of £1000 a year, as I have heard.—Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merry meeting, and, it seems, drank too hard; for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted.—Remember to peruse Shakespeare's plays, and be versed in them, that I may not be ignorant in that matter.'

If the statement concerning Shakespeare's death be true and mixed up with the fate of the owner of New Place, we must notice that the place where the poet died is not mentioned, and we may

infer that it was London; for how should these three authors meet in Stratford? Of course, we may assume that the poet had retired to his native city, and that his two friends had simultaneously decided to pay him a visit; but the situation is too improbable.

It is true that William Shakspeare, the glover's son, returned from London to Stratford, which remained the constant home of his family, and it is possible that his stay in London was shorter than is commonly assumed. But we have no positive evidence of the poet's ever having returned to Stratford. All we know is that his admirers who had the well-known monument erected in his honor, thought that he lay buried in the church at Stratford.

The comment on the poet's income and expenditure refutes itself; but we are told that all is hearsay, and the Vicar knows so little of the poet that he makes a memorandum to peruse Shakspeare's plays that he "may not be ignorant in that matter."

The good Vicar's words reflect the general astonishment of the Stratford people, that this Mr. Shakspeare, a man "without art at all," should be a writer of comedies, but they knew that he had been connected with the London stage, and so the report was not impossible, and they arrived at the conclusion that he was "a natural wit."

#### BEN JONSON'S TESTIMONY.

Ben Jonson's testimony is of great importance, because he must have known the poet Shakespeare personally. The folio edition contains two eulogistic poems from his pen, but Jonson's praise seems to have been inspired by mercenary considerations, for the poems do not express his real opinion which is given in his *Discoveries* (pages 245-246) where he censures Shakespeare rather severely as follows:

"I remember, the Players have often mentioned it as an Honour to Shakspeare, that in his Writing (whatsoever he penn'd), he never blotted out a Line. My answer hath been, Would he had blotted a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent Speech. I had not told Posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that Circumstance to commend their Friend by, wherein he most faulted. And to justifie mine own Candor (for I lov'd the Man, and do honour his Memory (on this side Idolatry) as much as any.) He was (indeed) honest, and of an open and free Nature; had an excellent Phantasie; brave Notions, and gentle Expressions; wherein he flow'd with that Facility, that sometime it was necessary he should be stop'd: *Sufflammandus erat*: as Augustus said of Haterius. His Wit was in his own Power; would the Rule of it had been so too. Many times he fall into those things, could not escape Laughter: As when he said in the Person of Caesar, one speaking to him; Caesar thou dost me wrong. He reply'd; Caesar did never

wrong but with just Cause, and such like : which were ridiculous.<sup>1</sup> But he re-deemed his Vices with his Vertues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned."<sup>2</sup>

Ben Jonson adds to Shakespeare's name, mentioned in a Latin marginal note, the word *nostras*, which means "he who is ours,"<sup>3</sup> as if to distinguish him from some other Shakespeare, who did not belong to the narrower circle of his friends.

## To the Reader.

This Figure, that thou here see'st put,  
 It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;  
 Wherein the Grauer had a strife  
 with Nature, to out-doo the life :  
 O, could he but haue drawne his wvit  
 As well in brasse, as he hath hit  
 His face ; the Print would then surpasse  
 All, that was euer wvit in brasse.  
 But, since he cannot, Reader, looke  
 Not on his Picture, but his Booke.

B. I.

BEN JONSON'S POEM, FACING AND REFERRING TO THE DROESHOUT ENGRAVING  
 IN THE FOLIO EDITION.

It is possible that he knew two Shakespeares and distinguished the two by calling the literary Shakespeare *nostras*. The term "*our*

<sup>1</sup> Ben Jonson mis-quotes Shakespeare. The passage reads :

"No, Cæsar doth not wrong ; nor without cause  
 Will he be satisfied."

The clause "without cause" belongs to the following sentence and not to "doth not wrong."

<sup>2</sup> The marginal note reads : "*De Shakespeare nostrat.*"

<sup>3</sup> *Nostras*, derived from *noster*, "our," means "one, who belongs to us ; ours ; our countryman ; our compatriot."

Shakespeare" is used also in the dedication and the memorial poems of the folio edition.<sup>1</sup>

Another piece of information, to be derived from Ben Jonson's remarks and from hints contained in the folio edition, is the fact that the author's home must have been Stratford-on-Avon, for the Stratford monument is referred to by the poet Digges, and Ben Jonson speaks of him as "Sweet swan of Avon."

Ben Jonson's poem is headed with this inscription:<sup>2</sup>

To the memory of my beloved,  
the AVTHOR

MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:

AND

what he hath left vs.

and the most important passages in it read as follows:

*"Soule of the Age!*

*The applause! delight! the wonder of our Stage!*

*My Shakespeare, rise; I will not lodge thee by*

*Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lye*

*A little further, to make thee a roome:*

*Thou art a Monument, without a tombe,*

*And art aliue still, while thy Book doth liue,*

*And we have wits to read, and praise to giue.*

*He was not of an age, but for all time!*

*And all the Muses still were in their prime,*

*When like Apollo he came forth to warme*

*Our eares, or like a Mercury to charme!*

*Nature her selfe was proud of his designes,*

*And ioy'd to wear the dressing of his lines!*

*Which were so richly spun, vnd wouen so fit,*

*As, since, she will vouchsafe no other Wit.*

*The merry Greeke, tart Aristophanes,*

*Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please:*

*But antiquated and deserted lye*

*.As they were not of Natures family.*

*Yet must I not giue Nature all: Thy Art,*

*My gentle Shakespeare, must enioy a part.*

*For though the Poets matter, Nature be,*

*His Art doth giue the fashion. And, that he,*

*Who casts to write a liuing line, must sweate,*

<sup>1</sup> See for instance the passage quoted from the Dedication (p. 91), and the last but one line of the Digges poem quoted on p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> We preserve the original spelling and imitate as closely as possible the old typography.

*(such as thine are) and strike the second heat  
Upon the Muses anuile: turne the same,  
(And himselfe with it) that he thinkes to frame,  
Or for the lawrell, he may gain a scorne,  
For a good Poet's made, as well as borne.  
And such wert thou. Look how the fathers face  
Lives in his issue, euen so, the race  
Of Shakespeares mind, and manners brightly shines  
In his well torned, and true-filed lines:  
In each of which, he seems to shake a Lance,  
As brandish't at the eyes of Ignorance.*

*Sweet Swan of Auon! what a fight it were  
To see thee in our waters yet appeare,  
And make those flights vpon the bankes of Thames,  
That so did take Eliza, and our Iames!  
But stay, I see the in the Hemisphere  
Aduanc'd, and made a Constellation there!  
Shine forth, thou Starre of Poets, and with rage,  
Or Influence, chide, or cheere the drooping Stage;  
Which, since thy flight frō hence, has mourn'd like night,  
And despaire's day, but for thy Volumes light."*

## LEGENDS.

One important source of unverifiable Shakespeare stories seems to have been Sir William Davenant (1605-1668) a dramatist of mediocre accomplishments, fanciful and stilted in his poetry, whose romantic inclinations went so far as to make him pose before his friends as a natural son of Shakespeare.<sup>1</sup> His love of truth is not without suspicion, but later admirers of the poet claim his authority for many details of Shakespeare's career, especially that the poet first served in the mean capacity of a horse-boy at some London theaters and then as a keeper of horse-boys, before he became an actor and a dramatist, and finally the owner of the Globe Theater. A legendary interpretation of tradition is always specially noticeable in all the stories where the destinies of the two men appear blended.

Mr. Rowe in his *Account* has something to tell about Shakespeare's lampooning Sir Thomas Lucy, the nobleman whose deer the young poet was supposed to have stolen. "Mr. Malone thought that he had exploded the tradition by showing that Sir Thomas had no park, therefore could have no deer to be stolen."<sup>2</sup> But tradition once established has a tough life, and strange enough, an allusion to the

<sup>1</sup> See, e. g., *Enc. Brit.*, VII., p. 835.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Richard Grant White's "Memoirs of William Shakespeare," in his *Works of William Shakespeare*, Vol. I., p. xxxix.

pun of Lucy seems to be suggested in one of the Shakespeare dramas, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, where the Welsh parson speaks of "the dozen white louses" which "do become an old coat well," referring to the white "luses" or "pikes" in the coat of arms of Justice Shallow, in whom Shakespeare is supposed to hit Sir Thomas Lucy.

Tradition preserves a few rhymes which are assumed to have been written by Shakespeare on Sir Thomas Lucy in reference to the latter's prosecution of the poet for stealing deer; but they seem to be of a late date and are commonly and rightly regarded apocryphal.

#### BIOGRAPHIES.

Almost a century elapsed before the public at large took an interest in the poet Shakespeare's life. It was not until the year 1709 that the first biography of the great dramatist, written by Mr. N. Rowe, was published. Mr. Rowe's account is based mainly upon statements made by Mr. Betterton, an actor whose life on the stage extends from 1660 to 1700 and who died in 1710.

Mr. Betterton was an enthusiastic admirer of the poet and is said to have been a most excellent impersonator of the leading Shakespeare characters. He undertook a pilgrimage to his beloved master's native city, but the harvest which he gathered there was very meager. He found nothing, not even gossip, worth reporting. There are only a few stories in Mr. Rowe's account which seem to go back to Stratford information, viz., the legend of deer stealing and of the usurer Combe. Accordingly it appears that Mr. Betterton did not meet in Stratford anyone who could give him information of any kind. We know that Judith Quiney, Mr. Shakespeare's second daughter, died in 1662, and Lady Barnard, his granddaughter, in 1670.<sup>1</sup>

A new era began in the history of Shakespeare literature when his works were hailed in Germany by a circle of enthusiastic poets, foremost among whom must be mentioned Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller. With them Shakespeare's name became a watchword representing the standard of Teutonic poetry in contrast to the pseudo-classics of the French stage. Shakespeare had had admirers in limited circles of England from the start, but now his recognition became an object of national pride. Now at last a general

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Rowe's account of Shakespeare's life is very short, and being the oldest and comparatively the most reliable information that can be had, we publish it entire in the present number of *The Open Court* on pages 113-117.

interest in Shakespeare's life was aroused and so it happened that about two hundred years after the poet's demise, and one hundred and eight years after the publication of Rowe's account, an English litterateur by the name of N. Drake undertook the difficult task of presenting the poet's biography, which was done in two stately volumes in 1817. Drake was followed by J. Britton (1818), by Skottowe (1824), J. P. Collier (1835), T. Campbell (1838), C. Knight (1843), and J. O. Halliwell (1848, 1863, 1874), etc., etc., all of them enthusiastic admirers of the poet. Every new generation of writers is adding new volumes to the old ones and the material grows visibly under the hands of Shakespeare's biographers. The less we know, the greater the demand for information.

When the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was planned, an allowance of sixty to seventy columns was made for the greatest English poet, and the work was entrusted to Mr. T. Spencer Baynes, LL. D. How admirably Mr. Baynes acquitted himself of the task can be appreciated by those who read the article in search for facts of the poet's life.

It would be a vain undertaking to enumerate all the titles of the entire Shakespeare literature, so enormously has it been swelled by the results of scholarly investigation. However, none of the later biographies, in spite of their voluminous size, contain anything that may be considered more authentic than Mr. Rowe's meager account. Could the poet, in that country from whose bourn no traveller returns, take note of all his biographies spun from the very lack of evidence, he might write another comedy about "Much Ado About Nothing."

#### OUR CONJECTURE.

It is incredible that William Shaksper of New Place wrote the dramas that go under William Shakespeare's name, but by constant repetition mankind became accustomed to the idea that a poet is born, not raised, and that a genius needs no education, for he creates the most wonderful works of art out of his soul's own mysterious resources.

Why should there not have been born and grown up, either in Snitterfield, or Stratford, or Wroxhall, or Rowington, or Worcester, or some other place near by, another William Shakespeare than the owner of New Place, who also regarded Stratford his home. All the allusions to Shakespeare as the "Sweet swan of Avon" as having come from Stratford and even the dubious references to Sir Thomas Lucy could be explained on this assump-



tion; and, if there were two members of the same family bearing the same name, how natural does it seem that both should come from the home of the family which was the immediate vicinity of Stratford, that both should have gone to London, and that the one who came second, sought employment at the place where his cousin had gained a foothold. It appears that the glover's son resided more in Stratford, and the poet more in London, than is commonly assumed. The former left wife and children, the latter died unknown and unheeded either in London or Stratford.

The identification of William Shakespeare the poet with William Shakspere the owner of New Place, being once established, was naturally sustained in consideration of the fact that nothing was known of the poet's family relations.

#### PORTRAYALS OF THE POET.

The Droeshout portrait on the title page of the folio edition and referred to by Ben Jonson, is the only picture that can be considered as authentic. The artist was one of those second-rate engravers whose work is always coarse and spiritless. Another of his portraits, that of Fox, Penn's friend, is equally lacking in skill and artistic execution. There is a remote resemblance between the Droeshout portrait and the bust of the Stratford monument. But we cannot tell whether the manufacturer of the monument knew anything about the Droeshout picture which may have existed before the publication of the folio edition, or *vice versa*, whether Droeshout had seen the monument, or finally whether both engraver and sculptor utilised another original picture now lost. Ben Jonson who must have known the poet exhibits an ill-concealed disappointment at the engraver's art of portraying Shakespeare and concludes.

"Reader, look

Not on his picture but his book."

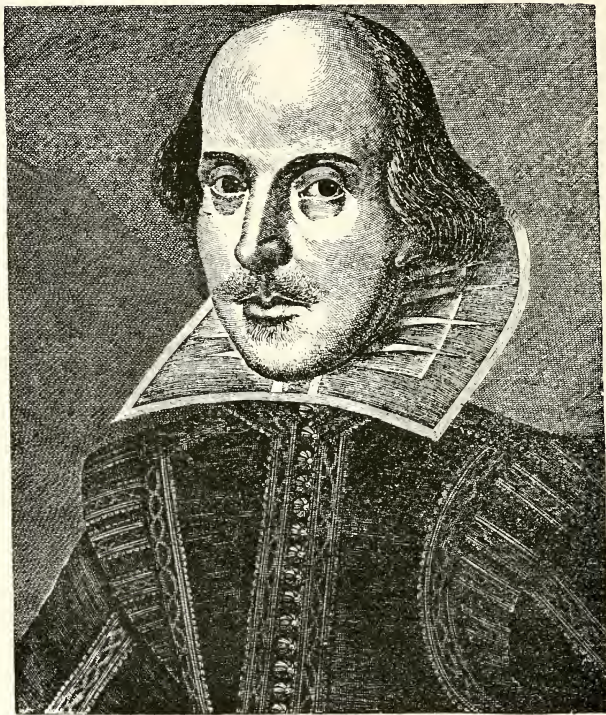
There is a picture which is claimed to be the original oil painting from which the Droeshout engraving and the Stratford monument bust have been made. It bears the date 1609, but it is strange that it could remain hidden so long. It has only recently been discovered, in the year 1892, and it goes without saying that its genuineness is suspected.<sup>1</sup>

The statue erected in Westminster Abbey is a compromise between the bust of the Stratford monument and the Droeshout engraving.

<sup>1</sup> Not having seen the picture, we venture no opinion. We regret being unable to reproduce it.

MR. WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARES  
COMEDIES,  
HISTORIES, &  
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.



*Martin Droeshout, Jussup, London.*

LONDON  
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE PAGE OF THE FOLIO EDITION OF 1623. WITH THE  
DROESHOUT ENGRAVING. (Somewhat reduced.)

The statue in Westminster Abbey, though fairly well done, lacks artistic discretion. Shakespeare poses before the visitor of



THE SHAKESPEARE MONUMENT IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.<sup>1</sup>

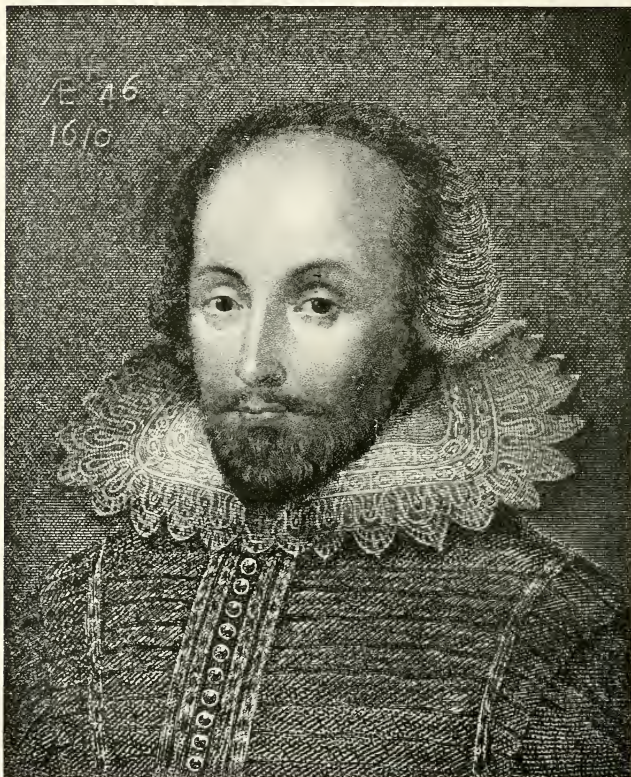
the poet's corner and points to a scroll on which are written the following lines, quoted from "The Tempest" (IV.):

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced by courtesy of J. Parker Norris from his *Portraits of Shakespeare*.

Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And like the baseless fabric of a vision  
Leave not a wreck behind."

The attitude is expressive, and if your imagination is vivid enough, you will see the marble lips open and say: "Look here, that is quoted from me!"



THE JANSEN PORTRAIT.

The Droeshout picture never appealed to the public, and the bust on the monument still less. Neither of them shows the poet's genius, and the demand for a dignified representation of Shake-

speare was soon supplied in an elegant painting of unknown origin, which commonly goes under the name of the Chandos portrait. It



THE KRAEMER PORTRAIT OF SHAKESPEARE.<sup>1</sup>

is thoughtful and noble, but more Oriental than Saxon, showing a certain family resemblance to Heine and Spinoza, while we should

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from a photograph by the Münchener Photographische Gesellschaft.

expect a face like Egbert's, or Chaucer's, or Bacon's, or perhaps the Teutonic features of Goethe or Schiller.

Another fine, idealised painting of Shakespeare goes under the name of the "Summerset" or the "Jansen" portrait. It is of unknown authorship and purports to represent the poet at the age of forty-six, in the year 1610. It is attributed to Jansen, (also spelled Janssen, Janssens, and Johnson,) a well-known portrait painter of the seventeenth century whose oldest picture is marked 1618, but the tradition is, by common consent of literary as well as art critics, deemed untenable.<sup>1</sup>

These five portrayals of the poet with all their shortcomings and lack of authenticity have forever determined the traditional conception of his appearance. Innumerable pictures of Shakespeare follow this type, and perhaps the most noteworthy among them is an oil-painting by Krämer, which seems to satisfy best the taste of the public, and has the advantage of offering an ideal portrait without deviating too much from the traditional conception. We do not hesitate to say that it is the best reconstruction of Shakespeare's features as they ought to (perhaps even as they must) have been.

#### CONCLUSION.

Here is a brief recapitulation of the facts:

There lived about 1600 a man who wrote under the name of William Shakespeare dramas and other poems. In the year 1623, a folio edition appeared of his collected works, bearing on the title-page the poet's portrait, containing prefaces and dedications which give it the unequivocal stamp of a posthumous publication. Some of the plays are extant in earlier editions, partly anonymous, partly bearing the same name.

The author must have been a highly educated person, well versed in the classics, an Italian and French scholar, and a penman who was distinguished by a clear and legible hand; but a man of slender means in constant need of the favor of noblemen who, at that time, used to pose as patrons of literature, and it seems that he died a premature death, presumably in loneliness and poverty before having attained the fame he deserved. Apparently he left no family nor heirs who could claim his literary remains: and the editors of the folio edition, two men somehow

<sup>1</sup>We omit here the reference to the death-mask of Shakespeare which, presumably fabricated after the Stratford bust, seems to be of very late origin and was discovered in Germany in the nineteenth century,

connected with the stage, mention only his spiritual children—the poems, which they call “his orphans.”

The monument in the church at Stratford-on-Avon was erected not before 1616 and not after 1623 in memory of the poet William Shakespeare. It exhibits a mediocre bust and an inscription with an unverifiable statement as to the date of his death. The bust bears a very remote resemblance to the Droeshout portrait of the folio edition of 1623.

This concludes our evidence concerning the poet William Shakespeare.

We have further good and unequivocal evidence that a man existed who according to the notions of the time possessed the same name. He signed his name “Shackspeare” or “Shakspere” or nearly so, and was apparently a man of no scholarly attainments, wayward as a boy, undisciplined as a youth, but thrifty, and in maturer years, after the acquisition of considerable property, a close-fisted, exacting business man. His parents as well as his children were illiterate, and he himself could write but poorly, for all his signatures are pretty illegible.

For some reason, mainly consisting in the dearth of other evidence, the poet Shakespeare and Mr. Shackspere, the owner of New Place, soon came to be regarded as one and the same person. This identification, even though it may be right, seemed so absurd that literary critics felt inclined to regard the name “William Shakespeare” as a pseudonym, and some of them discovered in Bacon a man who might have been the author of Shakespeare’s works. Their arguments, however, are far-fetched and do not convince; and unless new evidence should be brought to light, the best solution of the problem seems to be to accept the facts and leave out all speculation.

We believe: (1) that a man existed who wrote under the name William Shakespeare; (2) that William Shakspere, (or Shakespeare, or Shackspear, etc.,) the son of John Shaxpere, the glover, and of his wife Mary Arden, was the husband of Anne Hatheway and the owner of New Place; and (3) that Lord Bacon was the author of *Novum Organum* and other philosophical works.

All documentary evidences and statements made by contemporaries concerning the poet are disconnected and indicate nothing by which his connection with the Shakspere family can be determined. We only know that he came from Stratford, and that he was almost contemporary with William Shakspere, the owner of New Place. If they were two different persons, it is most likely

that both were cousins, and it is just possible that the poet was a few years the senior of the owner of New Place and may also have lived a few years longer, scarcely the reverse; but nothing definite can be said on the subject.

An identification of the poet Shakespeare with Lord Bacon is fantastical and without the slightest support, except so far as negative evidence is concerned. An identification of the poet with the owner of New Place is an assumption of doubtful value.

\* \* \*

The reader is once more reminded of the statement made at the beginning of this article that the writer has collected the most significant documentary evidences that are apt to give us any direct and undeniable information concerning the life and family relations of Shakespeare; and the solution offered in these pages should not be taken for more than it pretends to be—a mere suggestion, which, however, seems plausible enough to make a revision of the original documents and other materials of evidence desirable.