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Stratford-upon-Avon

Shakespeare's Birthplace

A brief Guide to
the Shakespeare Library

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A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE SHAKESPEARE
LIBRARY AND MUSEUM,
STRATFORD-ON-AVON.



HERE are two classes of visitors to localities of historical and literary interest—those who take a hasty glance at them as of things that “ought to be seen,” and no more—others more intelligent, whose leisure indeed may not enable them to dwell long upon the objects, but who are anxious to form an independent judgment as to their value, and, in the present case, to comprehend what there is now in Stratford of real association with the memory of the great dramatist. The following very slight notes may perhaps be of some little assistance to a flying visitor of the latter description.

THE BIRTHPLACE.

Admission Fee, Sixpence.

A STRUCTURE of the sixteenth century, situated in Henley Street, lately restored, but clearly showing a vast portion of the old work and timbers. The room in which the Poet is traditionally said to have been born is in its original state. There are deeds in the Museum which prove that his father resided at this house, a fact which, taken in conjunction with the old independent tradition, leaves no reasonable doubt of the truth of the latter—that this house is really the Birthplace of Shakespeare.

In one of the upper rooms at the Birthplace is a very interesting oil portrait of Shakespeare, presented by W. O. Hunt, Esq. This painting, now generally known as “the Stratford Portrait,” is of undoubted authenticity, having belonged to Mr.

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Hunt's family for upwards of a century. Opinions differ as to its date. Some consider it to be a painting of the first part of the last century, copied from the bust in the church. Others believe it to be the original painting whence the bust was taken.

THE SHAKESPEARE MUSEUM.

Admission Fee, Sixpence.

THIS Museum is contained in rooms at the Birthplace, admissible by a second fee. Among the many rare and curious relics here exhibited, the following are especially worthy of notice:—

Deed made in 1596, proving that John Shakespeare, father of the Poet, resided in the House called the Birthplace.

The original Fine levied on the purchase of New Place by Shakespeare—Easter Term, 1597.

The celebrated letter from Mr. Richard Quynne to Shakespeare, 1598, asking for a loan of £30; *the only letter addressed to Shakespeare known to exist.*

Conveyance, dated 15 October, 1579, from John Shackspere, and Mary, his wyeffe (Shakespeare's parents), to Robt. Webbe, of their moiety of 2 messuages or tenements in Snitterfield; consideration £4.

Bond, dated same day, for the performance of the covenants in the above Conveyance.

Original grant of 4 yard lands in Stratford fields—William and John Combe to Shakespeare, 1602.

Copy of Court Roll, 1602. Surrender by Walter Getley to William Shakespeare of premises in Chapel Lane, Stratford, (copyhold of the Manor of Rowington), which the Poet specifically devised by his will.

Declaration in an Action in the Borough Court—William Shakespeare *v.* Philip Rogers, to recover the price of Malt sold by Shakespeare: 1604.

Assignment of lease of a moiety of the Tithes of Stratford-on-Avon—Ralph Huband to William Shakespeare, 1605.

Deed with the autograph of Gilbert Shakespeare, Brother of the Poet, 1609.

Original Precepts in the Borough Court in Shakespeare's suit against John Addenbrooke, 1609.

Settlement of Shakespeare's estates in 1639 by his Daughter, Susan Hall; his Grand-daughter, Elizabeth Nash; and her Husband, Thomas Nash.

Declaration of uses relating to New Place and other Shakespearean property, 1647. Susan Hall, Daughter, and Elizabeth Nash, Grand-daughter of the Poet, are parties to this Deed.

Disposition of New Place and other estates of Shakespeare, made by his Grand-daughter Elizabeth Barnard in 1653.

Probate of Lady Barnard's Will, 1669.

Shakespeare's gold Signet Ring, with the initials *W. S.* and a true-lover's knot between.

Charter of foundation, 22 Edw^d. IV, 1482, by Thomas Jolyffe, of the Free Grammar School at Stratford, at which Shakespeare was educated.

Ancient Desk, said to have been Shakespeare's, removed from the Grammar School.

Cast (considered to be the best), from the Bust in the Chancel, by G. Bullock—*two only were taken.*

The old sign of the Falcon at Bidford, where Shakespeare is said to have drunk too deep.

Model, in Plaster, of Shakespeare asleep under the Crab-tree by *E. Grubb.*

Shakespeare's Jug, from which Garrick sipped wine at the Jubilee in 1769.

A Phial, hermetically sealed, containing juice from Mulberries gathered from Shakespeare's Mulberry Tree—the Tree was cut down in 1758.

Specimen from an original copy of "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

Portrait of Garrick, in the character of Kiteley.

Sir J. Reynolds.

Portrait of Mrs. Garrick—Painter unknown.

A variety of interesting articles discovered in making the excavations at New Place, the last residence of Shakespeare.

A fine Impression from the Seal of the ancient Gilde of Holy Cross, Stratford-on-Avon. The Matrix is in the British Museum.

A ditto from the Seal of the Peculiar of Stratford-on-Avon.

Old Sword of State, anciently borne before the Mayor of Stratford.

The Address from "The Free German Hochstift" to the Corporation of Stratford, congratulating the people of Great Britain on the Tercentenary of the Birth of William Shakespeare, 1864.

Two Deer's Horns from Fulbrooke Park; buried since 1519.

A Rough Sketch of the Deer Barn in Fulbrooke Park.

A Stone from the old Church of Fulbrooke, which was demolished in Henry 8th's reign.

Two rude Drawings of Shakespeare's Crab-tree taken some years before the tree was cut down.

A pair of Stirrups, said to have been Shakespeare's, purchased from the Birthplace about 50 years ago.

A Sword, formerly in the possession of Alderman Payton, and given by him to a friend, as Shakespeare's Sword.

An ancient oak Corbel, one of the supports to the Roof of the Chancel of the Parish Church when the first alteration was made.

A variety of oak Figures, chiefly full length, curiously carved, taken from the Chapel of Holy Cross, Stratford-on-Avon.

Ancient Chair from the Falcon Inn, Bidford, called Shakespeare's Chair, in which Shakespeare is said to have sat when he held his Club Meetings there.

An ornamented Gilt Table, purchased at the sale of the furniture of the College of Stratford-on-Avon, in 1797.

A Chair from the Chinese Temple erected by Mr. W. Hunt, at the Stratford Jubilee, 1769, to entertain Garrick and his friends.

A large writing Table, made of the wood of the boundary elm, called the One Elm.

The Songs and Ballads of Shakespeare, illustrated by the Etching Club, and presented by the members to the Museum; 18 sketches framed and glazed.

Cast, by Bullock, from the Bust in the Chancel, painted in the original colours; when the Bust was taken down in 1861, to be repainted, this cast was placed under the Canopy, in the place of the original.

Cast, by Warner, from the Face of the Bust in the Chancel.

Cast, by Warner, from the Face of Garrick.

Reduced Copy of the Statue of Shakespeare at the Town Hall, rare: a few copies only were taken.

Portrait of Shakespeare (called the Ely Portrait) which formerly belonged to the late Bishop of Ely, by whom it was highly prized.

Portrait of Shakespeare—Chromo-lithograph, from the Lumley Portrait, belonging to Mrs. Rippon.

Fourteen old Deeds, lately discovered at Birmingham, relating to property on the Eastward side of the Birthplace, in some of which the Poet and his Father are mentioned as Owners of that House.

A wreath of Oak Leaves and Acorns which was placed upon a Bust of Shakespeare, at Frankfort, on the occasion of the Tercentenary celebration, presented by the English Circle at Frankfort, to be deposited as a Memorial in the Museum.

Portrait of Shakespeare—copied in Crayons by Ozias Humphrey, R.A., in 1783, from the Chandos Portrait, expressly for Malone, who on the back has written that it is a very faithful copy, and in his opinion invaluable:—thinks Shakespeare was about 43 when the Portrait was painted.

Portrait of Shakespeare—Lithograph from the Felton Portrait.

Portrait of Shakespeare—Photograph, painted in oil by S. Collins, from the Stratford Portrait.

Portrait of Shakespeare—Photograph by Cundall and Co., from the Stratford Portrait.

Portrait of Shakespeare, in Oil copied from Vertue's Engraving of the Chandos Portrait.

Portrait of Shakespeare—Lithograph from Chandos Portrait, taken, 1863, for Mr. Scharf, Secretary to the National Portrait Gallery.

Portrait of Shakespeare—Houbraken's Engraving from Chandos Portrait.

Mask of Shakespeare—Photograph from the Mask in the possession of Professor Owen, alleged to have been taken from the face of Shakespeare when dead.

Portrait, in oil, of the Rev. Joseph Greene, Master of the Free Grammar School at Stratford, 1735 to 1772.

Old View of Stratford-on-Avon—showing the Church with its wooden Spire; taken from the meadow opposite. (Oil painting).

View of Stratford-on-Avon—taken from the Cross on the Hill. (Oil painting).

Engraving of "Garrick, surrounded by his friends." Hogarth pinxt. Shury sculptst.

A view of the Interior of Stratford Church before the alteration in 1839.

A Window of the old Chancel House which stood at the back of Shakespeare's Tomb; taken down in 1800.

Two stone Mullions found in the excavations at New Place.

A variety of encaustic Tiles removed from the Chancel of Stratford Church in 1835.

All the articles in the Museum are labelled with the names of the liberal donors.

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