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RELIQUES OF
STRATFORD-ON-AVON



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SHAKESPEARE'S
BIRTH-PLACE.

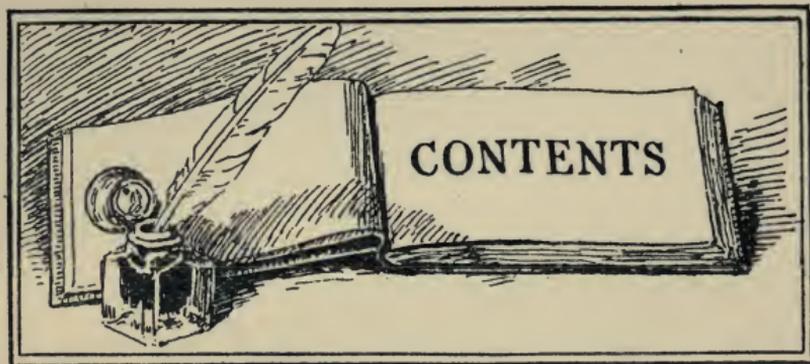
RELIQUES OF STRATFORD-
ON-AVON: A SOUVENIR OF
SHAKESPEARE'S HOME ❀
COMPILED BY A. E. WAY
WITH LITHOGRAPHS BY ❀
THOMAS R. WAY ❀ ❀ ❀



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William Shakespeare

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564-1616

IN the little country town of Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire, Shakespeare was born on April 22nd, 1564, and so the place attained to the greatest honour which any town in the British Isles can lay claim to : that in it first saw the light the poet of poets and the dramatist of all time.

Stratford had quietly existed for centuries before, and was very little affected by its good fortune ; and even at the present day it is but little changed from Shakespeare's time.

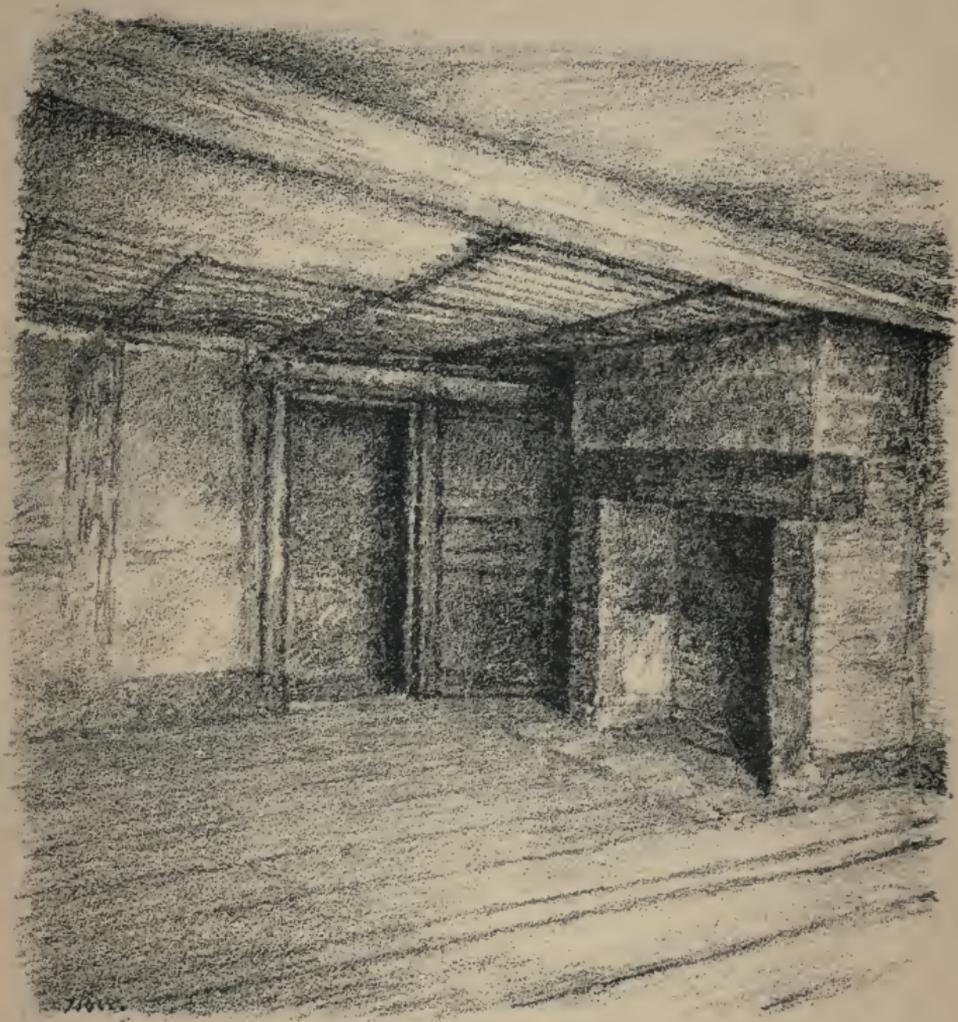
How different from the London to which he came, in his early days, to acquire that fame which so quickly became his. Could he now revisit the two places, he would hardly recognise a building in the London of to-day, certainly none in his old haunts in Southwark. But at Stratford, how different ! Three and a half centuries have not altered it to any great extent, and it is still easy to realise something of his life in the town where he was born, educated, and married, and whither he returned, after a moderate interval in London, to settle down and enjoy the latter end of his all too brief career.

William Shakespeare

William was the eldest son of John and Mary Shakespeare, who were glovers in the town, and lived in Henley Street, in an unusually large house for a small tradesman. A room on the first floor in this same house is shown to this day as the birth-room of the great poet. He was baptised on April 26th, 1564. The house was built early in the sixteenth century; but much of its old charm is gone. Many people have inhabited it since the Shakespeares, and sundry alterations and repairs have taken place.

Between the ages of four and five years our young William started his education, or rather the learning of his letters from the horn-book. Both his parents were more or less illiterate, but they quite understood how necessary an education was for their son. John Shakespeare, his father, was at this time High Bailiff of Stratford, a position of dignity in the town.

When William was nearly seven years old he entered the Free Grammar School, called "The King's New School of Stratford-on-Avon," it having been restored by Edward the Sixth; to this day Stratford boys are educated there. He learnt a good deal of Latin, a small amount of Lilley's grammar, and something of classical works. The books in those days were chained to the desks, and were most likely



SHAKESPEARE'S
BIRTH-ROOM.



William Shakespeare

the only volumes of the kind in Stratford ; there were not more than twenty or thirty in the whole town, excepting, of course, Bibles and Church books.

Most of the boy's studies were from Nature's great volume. His school life was not a long one, his father having need of him in his business, which had at this time begun to decline a little; and so at thirteen or thereabouts William was taken from school and turned to helping his father, to whose business as glover were added the trades of butcher and wool dealer. For four years, from 1577 to 1582, this continued.

During this time he was able to see many theatrical performances, his father having a great passion for the drama. Different companies of players used to visit Stratford-on-Avon, and at one time the Queen's and the Earl of Leicester's actors came and played before the Council. The first-named were paid nine shillings and the latter twelve pence for their performance ; the public were admitted free. At subsequent performances a small charge was made. In those days the Queen and certain noblemen patronised companies of actors, who travelled about the country and were styled their "servants ;" and they were often allowed by mayors of different towns

William Shakespeare

to give performances. Doubtless William Shakespeare in this way saw many dramas of the day.

About this time his father got into money difficulties, and in the midst of his troubles, in 1579, lost one of his little daughters, Anne, of whom William was very fond. So far no mention has been made of the poet's brothers and sisters: Gilbert, who was a year or two younger than William, Joan, Anne, Richard, and Edmund; the last-named was born about a year after the death of Anne.

In the summer of 1582 William Shakespeare first met Anne Hathaway, who lived at Shottery, in the cottage which still stands, happily but little changed, a mile's walk across the fields from Stratford, and one can easily imagine him wending his way across the flower-strewn meadows. He was nineteen, and Anne was twenty-six, and they were married in the autumn of the same year. In May, 1583, their little girl, Susanna, was baptised. The union continued happily for three or four years, when, Rowe says: "He had, by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and amongst them some, that made a frequent practice of deer stealing, engaged him with them more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near



ANNE HATHAWAY'S
COTTAGE.



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William Shakespeare

Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by this gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely, and, in order to revenge that ill-usage, he made a ballad upon him; and though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London." The date of his leaving Stratford must have been near February, 1585, for in this month his twin children, Hamnet and Judith, were baptised. And now we follow Shakespeare on his reaching the great city. It is a little doubtful what was his first occupation, but certain it is that after a very short time he was engaged at a theatre, in some humble capacity at first, but his wit, cleverness, and natural talent for the stage soon made his name well known, if not as an actor, then as a very excellent writer.

But his early theatrical life must have been a great struggle for him, as he had a wife and three children to support in Warwickshire, and he could scarcely look for help from his father, who had been in difficulties for many years past. In London he lived near the theatres, in Southwark. The dramatic

William Shakespeare

works of Shakespeare were mostly written between this time and 1611, extending over a period of about twenty years, from his 27th to his 47th year. It is not in his London life, though, that we wish to follow him, but rather in his native town of Stratford. In 1596 he returned to his old home, and, having become a fairly wealthy man, at once started to repair his family's fortunes. Creditors who had been worrying his father for many years were paid off, and from this time (although Shakespeare lived in London a good part of every year) he never failed to visit Stratford regularly. He kept up till his life's end his old associations with the place, and was always described as "of Stratford-on-Avon, gentleman." In 1611 he lived at "New Place," which he had bought a few years previously. This house had been built nearly a century before by Sir Hugh Clopton, who was once Lord Mayor of London, and had made his fortune as a mercer and become a great benefactor to Stratford. The chapel standing by New Place and also the bridge across the river were built by Sir Hugh.

John Shakespeare died a couple of years after the purchase of New Place. It was in the garden of this house that Shakespeare planted his famous mulberry tree, which flourished for 150 years. It was then

William Shakespeare

cut down, and many relics and souvenirs were made from it.

After the death of John Shakespeare, his son inherited the houses in Henley Street, and his mother lived there till her death in 1608.

Shakespeare bought a great deal of land from time to time at Stratford-on-Avon, and became a very rich landowner. All this while the poet was busy writing tragedies, comedies, romances, sonnets, and whichever of these it might be, each was a masterpiece, full of brilliant genius and of sweetest melody. The plays were mostly performed at the Globe and the Blackfriars Theatres by "Shakespeare's Company of Players." He had a large monetary interest in the former house, and his income from that was supposed to be about £500 a year.

Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, died soon after his return to Stratford, to his great grief, and of his two daughters, Susanna and Judith, the elder married, in 1607, Mr. John Hall, a doctor, of Stratford, who had a large house in the old town; and the younger, Judith, nine years after married Thomas Quiney, son of Richard Quiney, an old friend of Shakespeare.

Soon after this we hear of him entertaining his friends Michael Drayton and Ben Jonson, and, as

William Shakespeare

some say, he had too much wine, which brought on a fever, from which he died after a few days' illness, at the early age of fifty-two.

On April 25th, 1616, he was buried in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon, and the following epitaph, supposed to have been written by himself, was engraven on his tomb :

GOOD FRENDE FOR IESUS' SAKE FORBEARE
TO DIG 'HE DUST ENCLOSED HEARE,
BLEST BE ^EY MAN ^TY SPARES 'HES STONES,
AND CURST BE HE ^TY MOVES MY BONES.

On the north wall of the chancel, immediately above the grave, is the monument with the well-known bust, which, having been erected within a few years of his death, is the most authentic of his portraits.



SELECTIONS FROM SHAKESPEARE
SUGGESTED BY THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Selections from Shakespeare's Works

THE BIRTH-ROOM.

Tell me where is Fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head ?
How begot, how nourishèd ?

—Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed ; and Fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring Fancy's knell :
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell :—
Ding, dong, bell.

“THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.” *Act iii., Sc. ii.*

Selections from Shakespeare's Works

KING EDWARD'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players :
They have their exits and their entrances ;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms :
Then the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.

“AS YOU LIKE IT.” *Act ii., Sc. vii.*



KING EDWARD VI.
GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



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Selections from Shakespeare's Works

ANN HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
Though yet, Heaven knows, it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life, and shows not half your
parts.

If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say, "This poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces."
So should my papers, yellow'd with their age,
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue;
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage,
And stretched metre of an antique song:
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice,—in it, and in my rhyme.

SONNET XVII.

Selections from Shakespeare's Works

THE RIVER AVON.

By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals ;
There will we make our beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies.

“THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.” *Act iii., Sc. i.*

Plenteous rivers and wide skirted meads.

“KING LEAR.” *Act i., Sc. i.*

There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.

“HAMLET.” *Act iv.*



THE RIVER AVON.



Selections from Shakespeare's Works

THE GUILD CHAPEL.

The sands are number'd that make up my life ;
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.

“HENRY VI., PART III.” *Act i., Sc. iv.*

And then, the justice ;
In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances ;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon ;
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side ;
His youthful hose, well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank ; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in its sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion ;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

“AS YOU LIKE IT.” *Act ii., Sc. vii.*

Selections from Shakespeare's Works

THE GUILD CHAPEL.

Let me not live
After my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff
Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses
All but new things disdain : whose judgments are
Mere fathers of their garments, whose constancies
Expire before their fashions.

“ ALL'S WELL.” *Act i., Sc. ii.*

His years are young, but his experience old ;
His head unmellow'd, but his judgment ripe ;
And, in a word (for far behind his worth
Come all the praises that I now bestow),
He is complete in feature and in mind,
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

“ TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.” *Act ii., Sc. iv.*



THE GUILD CHAPEL,
FROM NEW PLACE
GARDEN.



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Selections from Shakespeare's Works

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, HIS
RESTING-PLACE.

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages ;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages :
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke ;
Care no more to clothe and eat ;
To thee the reed is as the oak ;
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Selections from Shakespeare's Works

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder stone ;
Fear not slander, censure rash ;
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan :
All lovers young, all lovers must,
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee !
Nor no witchcraft charm thee !
Ghost unlaid forbear thee !
Nothing ill come near thee !
Quiet consummation have ;
And renownèd be thy grave !

“CYMBELINE.” *Act iv., Sc. ii.*



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH.



Selections from Shakespeare's Works

THE MONUMENT.

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten ;
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die :
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombèd in men's eyes shall lie.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read ;
And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead ;
You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where breath most breathes, even in the
mouths of men.

SONNET LXXXI.

Selections from Shakespeare's Works

THE MONUMENT.

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme ;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth ; your praise shall still find
 room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

SONNET LV.



THE MONUMENT.





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