

**A CALENDAR OF THE SHAKESPEAREAN
RARITIES, DRAWINGS AND
ENGRAVINGS FORMERLY PRESERVED
AT HOLLINGBURY COPSE, NEAR
BRIGHTON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649093304

A calendar of the Shakespearean rarities, drawings and engravings formerly preserved at Hollingbury copse, near Brighton by Ernest E. Baker

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ERNEST E. BAKER

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A CALENDAR
OF THE
HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS
COLLECTION OF
SHAKESPEAREAN RARITIES.

MS. 0-1-48

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1891

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the preparation in 1887 of the first edition of this Calendar, which was printed for private circulation and for presents only, the literary and more especially the Shakespearean world, has had to deplore the loss of its highly-talented editor, the late J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, Esq., F.R.S., &c. The deceased scholar, by his Will, proved in the spring of 1889, left very special directions as to the disposal of the Shakespearean treasures, which were catalogued in the volume, and as they are still in the hands of his executors, and as the copies of the Calendar have been exhausted, it appears to be a very proper step not only to print a second edition, but also to quote the clause in his Will which relates to the sale of the many perfectly unique rarities, and to the mode in which they are to be dealt with. The clause is as follows:—

“And whereas my collection of Shakespearean rarities, described in a printed catalogue, entitled ‘A Calendar of the Shakespearean Rarities, preserved at Hollingbury Copse, near Brighton,’ 8vo., 1887, is unrivalled and of national interest, and being desirous of its being kept in this county, I direct my Trustees to offer it to the Corporation of Birmingham, in the county of Warwick (where as the leading town of Shakespeare’s native county such a collection would be appropriately located), on condition of the said Corporation paying for it to my Trustees the sum of £7,000 sterling. And in case the said Corporation do not accept this offer within one year after my decease, then I give to my Trustees the last mentioned collection upon trust, to deposit it at the Chancery Lane Safe Deposit until they can sell it for the sum of £10,000, or more, or if such price be not obtained within twelve years after my decease, then upon trust, &c., &c.”

The Corporation of Birmingham, notwithstanding the strong recommendation of their Free Libraries Committee to acquire the literary treasures, were unable, mainly owing, I think, to legal difficulties, to see their way to accept the offer contained in the Will, and to make the purchase of the collection, which, therefore, now temporarily awaits a purchaser at the higher sum named.

The circumstances having, of course, considerably changed since the compilation of the first edition, I have thought it well to vary the original plan and to enlarge the volume considerably by notes descriptive of the various items, and also to particularise the bindings. Many of the books contain memoranda, written in them by their late owner, pointing out their special Shakespearean interest, and the reason of their being included in the collection; these memoranda I have for the most part copied in full, and I have drawn largely from the seventh (1887) edition of the well-known "Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare," for the notes.

In conclusion, I would express a sincere wish that this really national collection of Shakespearean deeds, books, and illustrations may find a permanent home in the native land of the Great Dramatist; and I feel sure every Englishman will fully endorse this and agree with the remark made by *Punch*, when referring to it last September, that "The World is the richer for his words, and certainly to the country of his birth belong the records of his deeds."

ERNEST E. BAKER.

Weston-super-Mare,
April, 1891.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

FOR nearly half a century I have been an ardent Shakespearean collector, being most likely the only survivor of the little band who attended the sale of the library of George Chalmers somewhere about the year 1840. But for a long time, attempting too much in several directions with insufficient means, and harassed, moreover, by a succession of lawsuits, including two in the Court of Torture—I mean Chancery,—I was unable to retain my accumulations: and thus it came to pass that bookcase full after bookcase full were disposed of, some by private contract, many under the vibrations of the auctioneer's hammer. This state of affairs continued till February, 1872, but since that period, by a strict limitation of my competitive resources to one subject,—the Life of Shakespeare,—I have managed to jog along without parting with a single article of any description, nor is there a probability that the collection described in the following pages will ever be dispersed.

When the reader, or, rather, I should say, the inspector, of this calendar bears in mind that, exclusive of the Blight sketches, all but the whole of this collection has been formed within the last fifteen years, and that it already stands pre-eminent amidst the libraries of the world in no less than four of the most important divisions of Shakespeareana, the product will be regarded with no small astonishment by those who know how exceedingly difficult it is, and how very rarely, as a rule, it is possible, to

obtain even a single document of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, or a single original drawing of the eighteenth, that is perceptibly illustrative of the poet's biography. Half-a-dozen of either would be infinitely more difficult to obtain* than an impenetrable fifty-thousand-volume library† of modern books on the works of the great dramatist. The four divisions to which allusion has here been made

* The market has been swept and the day has now gone by for reasonable expectations to rise beyond the endless acquisition of modern Shakespeareana and the occasional gleaning of an important rarity. So it was with no small amusement that those who are conversant with such matters observed the alarm that was expressed by more than one journal at a recent movement which was supposed to involve the danger of the Shakespearean interests of London being sacrificed to those of Warwickshire. Perhaps the worthy critics imagined that the dulcet tones of a committee of solicitation would attract early editions and title-deeds from the firmament,—it is difficult to understand how else they could be gathered to an extent that would allure metropolitan students to the bank of the Avon. At the same time it is only fair to recognise the local utility of the collection that is now being formed in the elegant library which Stratford owes to the generous liberality of Mr. Charles Flower.

† It may be well, in view of the present tendency to herald numerical supremacy as a test of value, to observe that no ambition of the kind has stimulated the gathering of the collection which is described in the succeeding pages. The whole, indeed, is comprised in about two hundred volumes, a striking contrast to the seven thousand that are already accumulated in the recently-formed Shakespearean Library at Birmingham; but victory in these cases is not always with the largest battalions, and the accomplished Shakespearean Director of that town, Mr. Sam. Timmins, would be the first to acknowledge that at least 50 per cent. of its modern acquisitions could be consigned to the waste-paper basket without the slightest prejudice to the interests of literature or to the honour of the great dramatist. I speak feelingly, in the hope that the Shakespeare drag-net may be relieved of its weeds and sand, for if a much larger percentage of my own writings in this kind could be eliminated, the operation would add very much to my complacency. Perhaps, however, in my own individual case, it is better as it is;—"our virtues might be proud, if our faults whipped them not."

are,—1. Early engraved portraits of Shakespeare. 2. Authentic personal relics. 3. Documentary evidences respecting his estates and individuals who are connected with his biography. 4. Artistic illustrations of localities connected with his personal history.

1. The most important of these is of course the copy of the Droeshout portrait (No. 220) of Shakespeare *in its original proof state before it was altered by an inferior hand into the vitiated form in which it has been so long familiar to the public.* This is the earliest engraved portrait of the great dramatist, and differs so materially from the later impressions that it gives a new and more pleasing idea of his features. Here we have the most reliable likeness of Shakespeare in existence, the only one which has not been injuriously tampered with, while, at the same time, the evidences of its genuineness and its antiquity are incontestable, and it is most unfortunate that the appliances of modern art are inadequate to its satisfactory reproduction. The collection includes several other impressions of the engraving in various states of the plate, as well as all the known engraved portraits of the great dramatist up to that which was published by Rowe in 1709; but scarcely any have been admitted that were issued after that year, none of the latter being of real value, and very few that can be fairly said to be of the slightest interest.

2. Very few authentic personal relics of the great dramatist, that is to say, articles that were at one time *indubitably* in his own possession, are known to be in existence. They are, in fact, restricted to the will, now preserved at Somerset House, and to a small number of title-deeds, for there is not a single other domestic memorial of any description the genuineness of which is not open to either doubt or suspicion. But that the title-deeds of his unmortgaged estates, those that are dated previously to the

twenty-third of April, 1616, were once in his own hands, does not admit of rational question; documents of this kind having been, in his day, jealously guarded by their owners, never being entrusted, as now, to the custody of solicitors. Of these title-deeds there are no fewer than six in the present collection, the four New Place indentures, Nos. 143 to 146, and the two (No. 140) original indentures of a fine between the poet and Hercules Underhill that was levied in the year 1602.

To these may in all probability, though not with absolute certainty, be added the original conveyance (No. 148) of Shakespeare's Blackfriars estate, 1613, which was unquestionably on the table when the poet executed the concurrent mortgage, and as it must have been formally passed over to him, it is altogether most unlikely that he did not touch it with his own hands. This was the deed that was enrolled in Chancery soon after the purchase, the official endorsement still remaining in a perfect state of preservation, and it was for many years one of the leading treasures of the Sainsbury collection. It subsequently passed into that of the late Sir William Tite, who very kindly, on December the 20th, 1872, transferred the purchase to me. I afterwards had the good fortune to acquire the other Shakespearean ornament of the Sainsbury hoard, the original deed (No. 149) transferring the house in the Blackfriars in trust to follow the directions of the poet's will, a document that was executed in 1618, and handed over to his daughter Susannah. A record of later date respecting the same estate, the exemplification of a fine that was levied in 1647, will be observed at No. 124.

3. Amongst these may be noticed, in addition to the six interesting title-deeds above-mentioned respecting New Place, the series of documents relating to the same estate, Nos. 125 to 131; two