

## THE GARRICK-SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL

THE recent publication of a full and perhaps definitive *Life of David Garrick* would have reminded Hendonians that he was Lord of the Manor there in the 18th century. But the gradual decay of the memorials that were once the ornament of his substantial grounds at Hendon Hall had already raised a keen interest among those who like to preserve the memory and the memorials of the heroes of an earlier age.

From 1550 to 1756 the Manor of Hendon belonged to the Herberts, first of Pembroke, then of Powis; and a few years after the death, without issue, of William, the last Marquis, the lordship of the Manor and the advowson of the Parish Church were purchased by David Garrick, then at the height of his fame as an actor, and the friend of Johnson, Boswell, Goldsmith and Burke. After his death, in 1779, the manor was left in trust for his nephew, the Revd. Carrington Garrick, a most unsuitable vicar of Hendon; but he only survived till 1787, when he was 35, and in 1798 it passed to John Bond, who already owned much of the manor's copyhold. Hendon Hall is a well planned red brick mansion of early Georgian design, with a handsome portico, occupying the whole of the main front, brought from Wanstead House in Essex, when that absurdly extravagant place was dismantled.

When E. T. Evans published his *History of Hendon*, nearly 60 years ago, all the memorials in the grounds were in good order and the same was true until the driving of the road through the Parklands of Hendon Hall, from the Watford By-pass across Holder's Hill Road to Finchley. When that was in the making I had a warning message to go over and inspect the octagonal temple in classic style, with glass paintings and busts, statues and inscriptions, which Garrick had built with such care. I went one afternoon and persuaded the foreman to do nothing till the following day. When I arrived quite early in the morning the whole of the building had been levelled overnight to the ground, crushed into the foundations of the new by-pass road, and I was presented with two square blue tiles as a souvenir of Garrick!

There were also two obelisks of stone to Garrick and Shakespeare quite close to Hendon Hall, and these may still be preserved. The memorial to Garrick had these lines:—

“As an actor confest, without rival to shine;  
 A wit, if not first, in the very first line.  
 In joy to his spirit wherever it flies,  
 It acts as an angel and plays in the skies.  
 Will Shakespeare then greets him with praise and with love,  
 And Beaumont and Ben are his poets above.”

The verses which were thought appropriate to Shakespeare were these:

“He glanced from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,  
 And his imagination bodied forth.  
 The forms of things unknown, and his pencil  
 Turned them to shape, and gave to aery nothing  
 A local habitation and a name.”

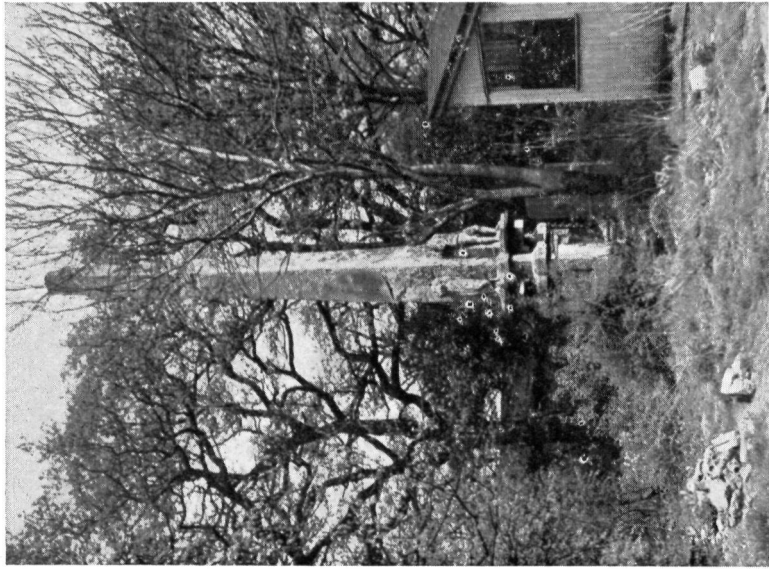
“He was not of one age, but for all time.”

“The Elements,  
 So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
 And say to all the world, this was a man.”

“Dear son of man, great heir of fame,  
 A self-raised monument transmit thy name;  
 'Tis not that ought of thee will e'er be hid,  
 Here stands a stony pointing pyramid.”

At the top of the hill opposite to Hendon Hall, on the other side of the By-pass, and close to Hendon Golf Course, is Garrick's real monument to Shakespeare, which by 1947 was in partial ruin. A letter to *The Times* prompted me to write as President of the Mill Hill and Hendon Historical Society and Chairman of Council of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society asking for help in restoration, then thought possible. Several generous folk replied, enclosing donations towards the repair of this brick pylon, about 40 feet high, faced with cement rendering, and having the remains of cast cement statues, and a plaque beneath, the whole being in poor condition. The contributors included the Countess of Cawdor.

It was hoped that the Office of Works might schedule the memorial as an ancient monument, but the custody of it was not accepted. Accordingly, the Mill Hill and Hendon Society appointed Mr. J. L. Naimaster and Mr. K. C. Reid as an *ad hoc* Committee, and the London and Middlesex Society appointed me as their representative. The Garrick Club, after long delay, found itself unable to help, and no reply was received from the Hampstead Garrick Society.



GARRICK SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL FROM S.W. 19TH APRIL, 1948.

[Photos by H. E. Chiosso

Meantime, the memorial has been inspected by Mr. Naimaster and Mr. Reid, and Mr. Basil Kingsley Maile very kindly gave an estimate for its restoration. As a conservative estimate suggested at least some hundreds of pounds, it was felt that this was an impossible sum to raise, especially as "the monument's value lies in its historical interest rather than in its architectural or sculptural qualities, which are of little merit." The plaque at the base of the monument has been broken and the lettering worn away by weathering. Had it been in good repair it could have been placed suitably elsewhere, and "thus the historic continuity preserved."

This report was sent to Mr. Percy Davenport, as Chairman of the Mill Hill and Hendon Historical Society, and suitable reference was made in the local press. The parent Society for London and Middlesex instructed its photographic secretary, Mr. H. E. Chiosso, to visit the memorial, and make a photographic record. His report is dated 19th April, 1948, and it records the fact that "the memorial is situated in thick undergrowth on a grassy space between houses on the N.E. of Manor Hall Avenue; it is surrounded by a builder's hut, a watchman's box, mounds of rubbish, and derelict builders' plant, all of which obstructed the view and made photographing difficult. The memorial stands on a rectangular pedestal 10 feet high, which makes the total height nearly 50 feet. The sides face the cardinal points of the compass, and the four life-sized figures, standing with their backs to the obelisk, are all headless. Those on the N.E. and W. brackets are female figures in classical drapery, Thalia, Melpomene and Terpsichore. The figure on the south bracket is of a man in tight hose from foot to waist, and a short tightly fitting coat, close-buttoned down the front, and stopping at the waist; with a cloak thrown open and hanging back from the shoulders. The arms of this figure are missing, but they may have supported a scroll or open book. The costume of the figure of Shakespeare differs from that employed in the Poets' Corner memorial, whereas the clothes worn by the sculptured figure of Garrick in the Abbey South Transept closely resemble those of Shakespeare in the Abbey.

Each side of the pedestal contains a recessed rectangular space for a tablet, and under Shakespeare there is the inscribed stone which is in such bad repair."

Mr. H. E. Chiosso is much to be congratulated on his deciphering of the almost illegible and seriously damaged inscription.

He actually gives a more accurate rendering than E. T. Evans, who had the tablet in perfect condition to guide him.

“SHAKESPEARE”

Born A.D. 1564; Died A.D. 1616.

With mirthful mind, with pensive look,  
 Conning a play from Nature's book;  
 He stands uncertain if to choose  
 The Tragic or the Comic Muse;  
 Melpomene or Thalia's lyre  
 Vieing his Genius to inspire.

Evans actually omitted in line 5 the “'s lyre.”

His photographs are the most satisfactory that could possibly be obtained in the very difficult circumstances.

Two of the three female figures are noted in the verse on the plaque; the association of Terpichore with the Muses of Tragedy and Comedy was doubtless intended as a compliment to Garrick's wife, Eva Maria Violette, who was a Viennese dancer and made her first appearance at Drury Lane in 1749.

The thanks of all interested in the efforts made to preserve these very interesting memorials are specially due to Messrs. Naimaster, Reid and Chiosso for sparing so much time and using such discretion.

It is a sad story of past neglect and wilful destruction, and, while it is impossible to advise any useful step which we might take to preserve the little that is left, we may well take warning for the future, and safeguard other treasures by taking suitable steps in time.

N. G. B.-J.