

October 14, 2013

Stephen Hamnet Shakespeare
By Catherine L. Gowdy

Stephen Shakespeare died in San Rafael Saturday morning, March 22nd, 1902, of pneumonia at the age of 67 years. A military service was held from the First Presbyterian Church Monday afternoon and the casket was taken to Mt. Tamalpais Cemetery on a caisson drawn by four horses and draped in the flag of the United States. The escort consisted of cadets from the Mt. Tamalpais Military Academy; a bugler sounded taps, and a firing squad of cadets fired a salute over the grave. His obituary describes him as well known and highly respected, quiet and unassuming, ready to help others. (*Marin Journal*, 3/27/1902, page 1)

Shakespeare was held in such high esteem by the Academy that funds were raised and, about a year later, a ceremony was held at the cemetery for the "unveiling" of a monument to him. (*Marin County Tocsin*, April 25th, 1903)

Research to learn more about Shakespeare's ancestry has been interesting and Stephen has proved to be elusive. I have not found him on the 1850 census.

He enlisted in the Civil War in Bourbon County, Kentucky in July of 1863. The record states that he was age 35, single, born in Delaware, and a druggist. Interestingly, a B. A. Shakespeare, age 34, also born in Delaware, single, and a druggist, enlists with him. This suggested to me that they might be brothers.

Class I comprises all persons subject to the military duty between the ages of twenty and thirty-five years, and all unmarried persons subject to the military duty above the age of thirty-five years and under the age of forty-five. Class II comprises all other persons subject to the military duty.

SCHEDULE I—CONSOLIDATED LIST of all persons of CLASS I, subject to the military duty in the Seventh Congressional District, consisting of the Counties of Bourbon and Shelby State of Kentucky, enumerated during the month of July, 1863, under direction of Geo. H. Moore Provost Marshal.

RESIDENCE	NAME	AGE	STATE or TERRITORY	PROFESSION, OCCUPATION or TRADE	STATUS or CONDITION	PLACE OF BIRTH (Showing the State, Territory, or County)	FOREIGN MILITARY SERVICE	REMARKS
Bourbon Co.	Stuart Geo	26	Mo	Adltgt	Single	Kentucky		1
"	Shakespeare S	35	"	Druggist	"	Delaware		2
"	Shakespeare B. A.	34	"	"	"	"		3
"	Stuffman H	29	"	Merchant	Mar	Germany		4
"	Stanford Rogers	20	"	H. Carter	Single	Kentucky		5
"	Sullivan Mike	30	"	Butcher	"	Ireland		6
"	Smalley Geo G	26	"	Merchant	"	Kentucky		7
"	Spauld Mr	40	"	Farmer	"	"		8
"	Steele Shos	44	"	Farmer	"	"		9
"	Shannon Mr	38	"	"	Mar	"		10
"	Shannon Geo	27	"	"	Single	"		11
"	Shroat Mr	32	"	"	"	"		12
"	Stone Richd	22	"	"	"	"		13
"	Stiles Mr	44	"	"	Single	"		14
"	Smith J. B.	28	"	Booster	Mar	New York		15
"	Shuckford W	28	"	Preacher	Mar	Kentucky		16
"	Schroder Reaf	37	"	Farmer	Single	"		17
"	Smalley Geo	21	"	Teacher	"	"		18
"	Shuman H. B.	31	"	B. Smith	Mar	"		19
"	Shyler Telford	34	"	Farmer	Single	"		20

To Colonel JAMES B. FAY,
Provost Marshal General U. S.
Washington, D. C.

STATION: Headquarters July Cong. Dist. of Kentucky
DATE: July 16

Geo. H. Moore
Provost Marshal

Benjamin A. Shakespeare was a resident of Cantwells Bridge in New Castle County, Delaware in 1850, and was living in Bourbon County, Kentucky in 1860 where he was recorded on the census. He gives his occupation as druggist, and following his service in the Civil War he removed to Booneville, Missouri, where he was recorded on the 1870 census with the occupation of chemist. Apparently he died in this place.

Following the Civil War, Stephen Shakespeare is found in New York, New York enlisting in the U.S. Army in 1869; again he reports that he is a druggist and born in Delaware, this time in Newcastle, DE. He

was stationed at Camp Reynolds on Angel's Island, where military returns for him begin in November, 1869. While there, he worked as a hospital steward.

He pops up on the Marin County 1870 census as a soldier on Angel's Island from which place he was discharged from the Army in February, 1871. He stayed in California. Voter's Registers show him in Sonoma County in 1872, an artist; 1877 lists him in Suisun, an artist; 1879 he appears as a teacher in Mendocino. He does not appear on Ancestry.com's index to the 1880 federal census. I next locate him in San Mateo in 1890 as a teacher and by 1892 he appears in the Marin County Voter's Registers. He spent the rest of his life teaching in Marin at the Mt. Tamalpais Military Academy where he was known as Colonel Shakespeare. In fact, the 1900 census says he was a teacher of elocution. He was described on the 1892 register as 5'8" tall, grey eyes, brown hair, medium complexion.



The Barracks – Dormitory at Mt. Tamalpais Military Academy

The Question:

I asked infoplease.com "Are there descendants of William Shakespeare alive today?" and got the following information:

"No, there are no direct descendants of William Shakespeare living today."

Shakespeare, and his wife Anne had three children: Susanna, who was born in 1583 and twins Judith and Hamnet, who were born in 1585. Hamnet, a boy, died in 1596 at 11 years of age. (The source of our Marin County Stephen's middle name?)

Susanna married John Hall in 1607 and had one child, Elizabeth, in 1608. Although Elizabeth was married twice (in 1626 to Thomas Nash and in 1649 to John Bernard), she never had any children.

Judith married Thomas Quiney in 1616 and had three sons, one of whom died in infancy. The other two sons both died unmarried in 1639.

There are, however, numerous descendants of Shakespeare's sister, Joan Hart, who are alive today and can claim some relationship to the great bard.

The above information was taken from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

I have been in contact with descendent researchers of the Delaware Shakespeare family, and they also agree that Stephen H. and Benjamin A. are brothers; they also believe that they are sons of Benjamin Shakespeare and Mary McIntire who married December 29, 1818. Ben Sr. was born in PA Jan. 21, 1788 and died 1854; buried Newark, Del. Mary was born Dec. 25, 1799 in Delaware.

There are two Benjamin Shakespeares living in New Castle Co., Delaware in 1840; this entry appears to be the correct one.

Name:	Benjamin Shakespear
Home in 1840 (City, County, State):	[White Clay Creek, New Castle, Delaware
Free White Persons - Males - Under 5:	1
Free White Persons - Males - 5 thru 9:	1
Free White Persons - Males - 10 thru 14:	1
Free White Persons - Males - 20 thru 29:	1
Free White Persons - Males - 50 thru 59:	1
Free White Persons - Females - 15 thru 19:	1
Free White Persons - Females - 40 thru 49:	1
Persons Employed in Agriculture:	3
Free White Persons - Under 20:	4
Free White Persons - 20 thru 49:	2
Total Free White Persons:	7

If this is so, the brothers are grandchildren of Samuel Shakespeare, born 1731 in Coventry, Warwickshire, England, and died 1793; buried Welsh Tract Church, Iron Hill, Delaware. Samuel was married to Susanna Mister, who was born 1746 in Coventry, England.