

and Donne, Heminges, Condell, and Burbage may have been pall-bearers; Corbet, the witty Poet-Bishop of Oxford, may have pronounced the funeral oration; and Daniel the Master of the King's Revels may have sent either the Children of Windsor, or the Children of Paul's to sing a requiem in the chancel, which was hung with black, and adorned with a banner of arms and a coat of arms in gold; the coffin covered with a "herse cloth" of black velvet and a cross of crimson velvet down to the ground. Or, which is more probable, the Poet's body was placed in an ordinary wooden coffin and borne upon the shoulders of, or carried on a litter by six stout yeomen, followed by his affectionate wife, his family, relations, and his loving neighbours to the Church, where it was consigned to the grave with no other ceremony than the reading of that most beautiful, sublime, and solemn Liturgy, The Order for the Burial of the Dead in the Book of Common Prayer, according to the use of the Church of England—the chief mourner's comfort being that Heaven would take his soul, and that one, who had in his writings meted out judgment and righteousness to his fellow men with a terrible impartiality, would assuredly take part in the resurrection to eternal life.

When we consider that Shakespeare died from virulent fever, and somewhat suddenly; and only forty-eight hours, perhaps less, intervened his death and burial, there would have been no time for any funereal preparations beyond those of a simple