

H. W. Kibbe (1853-1905)

Mr. H. W. Kibbe, whose work during the past quarter of a century in penmanship and engrossing has been so frequently seen in our penmanship journals, and whose portrait which appears above for the first time in public print, and whose death which occurred February 8th of the present year, which was announced in the May Business Educator, was born in Somers, Conn., Jan. 4, 1853. Twenty-two years later he completed the business course in Eastman College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., in which school he was employed as assistant teacher in penmanship. In 1875 and '76 he taught mathematics and penmanship in Beatty College, Belleville, Ont. In May of the Centennial Year he opened a studio of penmanship and art work in Utica, N.Y., from which point he did quite an extensive publishing business in those days. For many years at this place he gave personal instruction in penmanship and artwork. He also taught penmanship in the McCreary & Shields Business College of that city. About twenty years ago he published "Kibbe's Chirographic Quarterly" and issued from time to time Kibbe's Alphabets, etc. As an artist Mr. Kibbe was somewhat mechanical, which was due to the fact that he had never received much, if any, professional training. But his work possessed an individuality and distinctness of which schooling would have robbed it more or less. As a penman, his writing combined in enviable and well-balanced proportions the elements of accuracy and facility of execution.

In 1890, Mr. Kibbe went to Boston and opened an office for engrossing, in which city he remained until his death, conducting a profitable business. His work improved until the last, indicating that progress was his watchword. As he grew older his work became more and more artistic. But what is so rare, his skill seemed to remain unimpaired. Few men indeed possess the quality of nerve and muscle control that he possessed, and few men, too, perhaps, are as temperate as was he. His skill, however, was surpassed by his extreme modesty and true sincerity. There was nothing of the blatant in his make-up, and he was too retiring for his own professional good, for there were few people in our profession who knew him well.

Mr. G. B. Jones, teacher of penmanship in the Lockport, N. Y., public school, and a pupil of Mr. Kibbe's, has written thus to us of him "He was a very pleasant man and a thorough teacher; his criticisms were brief and to the point.

"I never knew him to lose one moment during working hours, always resting by changing work. I was with him while he was publisher of the Chirographic Quarterly. He seemed to be as familiar with setting type as making letters with the pen. He did his best writing from 5 to 6 o'clock in the morning."

His business is being conducted by his son, R.G.E. Kibbe, who kindly furnished us with facts contained in the above, and in whose writing we can see traces of his father's instruction.