

tions in regard to his early history vary. One says he came from Italy, others that he came from Greece, others that he was a native of Southeastern Europe. To account in these cases for his name, which is apparently English, it is said he changed it when he came to England, or, that it was originally Sheriff, a name that formerly was not uncommon in Greece, but was of Mohammedan origin, signifying, first, a descendant of Mahomet, and after, a nobleman. After his arrival in England he was knighted. Probably he was an Englishman who had been sent on some service in Italy or Greece by his government, and was rewarded for his conduct by a Knighthood.

He married Lady Elizabeth Fairfax, and had a son, William. Tradition says nothing of other descendants. The Fairfax family at that time were very prominent in England, and Sir William's marriage with one of its members indicates the high position in society he held.

William, the son, from his childhood upwards was a great favorite with the Lady Abbess of a convent in England, who was an old and intimate friend of his parents, and whom he frequently visited. At this convent, as is the custom at the present day, many young ladies, not only of the country, but of foreign countries, were educated.

Among these young ladies was a niece of the Abbess, the only daughter of the latter's brother, a wealthy nobleman living in Amsterdam, Holland, whose surname was Oara, and who had christened his daughter, Oara.

William and Oara met at the convent, and there occurred the old story even in those old days, and there never was a time so old that it was not the older old story, and then, as now and ever will be, the new, newest, sweetest story. William's young and impressionable heart knew henceforth no owner but the gentle and fair Oara.

Owing to the Abbess' warm affection for the one and her relationship to the other, William had many opportunities of meeting the young lady, and consequently becoming more and more devoted and attached to her, and, as the result showed, his attentions were not disagreeable.

The Abbess perceived, too late to mend it, the state of affairs, and though she would have been pleased with the union of her two young friends, felt it her duty, regretting her previous blindness, to write immediately to her brother. She acquainted him with the fact, knowing her pupil's and her friend's characters, that their mutual attachment was of no trifling nature; she mentioned William's position in society, her high opinion of him, and strongly recommended him to her brother's favor.