

1902

THE MAN HE KILLED

Thomas Hardy

Hardy, Thomas (1840-1928) - English novelist who initially wanted to be a poet but turned to novel writing when he could not get his poems published. Hardy, who wished to be remembered merely as "a good hand at a serial," returned to writing poetry after earning enough money to forego fiction. The Man He Killed (1902) - This poem was collected in Hardy's "Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses" (1909). Opening lines: 'Had he and I but met / By some old ancient inn, ...

THE MAN HE KILLED

'Had he and I but met By some old ancient inn, We should have sat us down to wet
Right many a nipperkin!' But ranged as infantry, And staring face to face, I shot at him
as he at me, And killed him in his place.

'I shot him dead because Because he was my foe, Just so: my foe of course he was;
That's clear enough; although 'He thought he'd 'list, perhaps, Off-hand like- just as
I Was out of work- had sold his traps No other reason why.

'Yes; quaint and curious war is!

You shoot a fellow down You'd treat if met where any bar is, Or help to half-a-crown.'

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THE END