A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE SHEWING WHAT IS PROVED AND WHAT IS NOT PROVED ABOUT SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND WORK

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It is hoped that the accompanying Table will prove useful not only to students of the period of literature to which it refers, but also to the general reader.

The incidents given in the column headed "Traditions" appear in all writings on Shakespeare's life, where they are usually referred to as "probable," and it is possible that the current opinion as to their probability will be to some extent corrected or modified by this method of presenting the material.

The Table, for sake of convenience, has been arranged in two sheets, the first covering the Elizabethan period, 1564-1603; the second the Jacobean period, 1603-1616.
### FACTS.

#### a) STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

- **1564** Baptism, April 26th.
- **1587** Marriage. Bishop's license issued to William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway, Nov. 28th.
- **1596** Son dies; buried August 5th.
- **1598** Third largest owner of corn in his ward.
- **1602** Buys one hundred and seven acres of land for £60.

#### b) LONDON.

- **1592** Dedicates his poems, Venus and Adonis, and Lucrece, to Southampton; they are published by Field, formerly of Stratford.
- **1594** Named as one of the Authors paid March 15th, for songs before the Queen at Christmas; two several comedies or enterludes.
- **1596** Assessed 15s. 4d. on property valued at £51 in the parish of St. Helen's; he was now lodging in Bankside.
- **1598** Acts in Ben Jonson's comedy, Every Man in his Humour. Refers to Spenser in A Midsummer Night's Dream.

### TRADITIONS.

- That his father was a butcher, Aubrey, 1608: a wool-dealer, Rowe, 1709: that Shakespeare went to the Stratford Free School, Rowe, 1709: that he was once a schoolmaster, Aubrey, 1680: that he was apprenticed to a butcher, Downdall, 1693: that he held horses for theatre-goers, Old Tradition, quoted by Colley Cibber, 1705: that he received £1,000 from Southampton, Rowe, 1709: that he got Ben Jonson's first play acted, Downdall, 1693: that he held wit combs with Ben Jonson, Fuller's Worthies, 1650: that he played the Ghost in Hamlet, Rowe, 1709: and Adam in As You Like It, Oldys, 1700: that he returned home once a year, Aubrey, 1680: that he planted a mulberry tree at New Place, R. B. Whelen, 1693.

### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS AND ALLUSIONS.

- **1593** Death of Marlowe, June 18th.
- **1594** Jonson wrote Esteemed Earl Marshal and head of Herald's College; Camden, King of Arms.
- **1597** Blackfriars Hall bought by Burbage for £600. Dutchman makes a sketch of Swan Theatre from description given by a friend. Death of James Burbage, the first builder of playhouses.
- **1600** Francis Meres, a University graduate and divine, quotes a line of Falstaff's, and says that Shakespeare's dramatic art among the English is the best for comedy and tragedy. He names six comedies and six tragedies which had been acted.
- **1603** Marston, the dramatist, says that "Romeo and Juliet" was acted at the Curtain playhouse and applauded there. Henshaw, a foreigner, writes that Shakespeare's "Venus" delights young folk, but "Lucrece" and the tragedy of Hamlet were the worse not.

### UNPROVED.

- That Shakespeare was the actor attacked by Robert Green and defended by Henry Chettle, 1592: that Shakespeare wrote the "Talbot Scenes" (Hen. VI. Part I), which attracted crowds of spectators (Nash) 1592: that the "Errors" played at Gray's Inn, Dec. 28, was Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors," 1594: that Shakespeare was the "W. S." mentioned on the title-page of "Locrine," a tragedy: and also the "W. S." alluded to in an anonymous poem, "Willibye His Advice," 1595: that Shakespeare's Sonnets, 1558 c., were autobiographical: that they are printed in the order in which they were written: that "The Passionate Pilgrim," by W. Shakespeare, and "The Phoenix and the Turtle," by William Shakespeare, were the work of Shakespeare, 1599: that the Queen alluded to Shakespeare's play when she said, "I am Richard II. know ye not that?" (Aug. 4th, 1601): that Shakespeare is to be identified with "the silver-tongued Melicert," who according to Chettle, "did not drop from his honied Muse one sable tear" for the death of Elizabeth, who "to his lays and reputation." (Undated Tract, before 1605)
1605 Buys for £440 half the unexpired lease of Stratford Tithes.

Stratford Tithes.

Legal difficulties about tithes begin.

1606 Receives first draft of his Will; wife's name, Elizabeth.

Bequests:
- to his daughter, Mary:
- to his godson, Thomas Combe:
- to his wife and daughter (no list provided)
- to his rightful heirs: to Elizabeth and her husband.

1613 Printed 1605:
- William Camden names Shakespeare, among others, as one of the "most pregnant wits of these our times, whom succeeding ages much and admirably."