

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.

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* For some years these visits were repeated annually. † Reminiscences of Kenilworth appear in "A Midsummer's Night's Dream," and of Stratford-on-Avon in "The Taming of the Shrew," "Henry IV. Part II." and "The Merry Wives of Windsor." ‡ In comparing this sum with modern currency multiply by eight.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE,

Shewing what is Proved and what is not Proved about Shakespeare's Life and Work.

SHEET II.—JACOBEAN PERIOD, 1603-1616.

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FACTS.	TRADITIONS.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS AND ALLUSIONS.	UNPROVED.
<p>(a) STRATFORD-ON-AVON.</p> <p>1605 Buys for £440[‡] half the unexpired lease of Stratford TITHES. <i>Susanna, his elder daughter, aged 24, marries John Hall, aged 32, physician of Stratford, June, 1607. Elizabeth, his grand-daughter, born Feb. 1608. Mary, his mother, buried in Parish Church, Sept. 1608.</i></p> <p>1608 GODFATHER to William Walker, son of Henry Walker, mercer and alderman.</p> <p>1609 Wins case against DEBTOR, who then absconds. Sues Hornby, who had gone bail for debtor. Legal difficulties about tithes begin.</p> <p>1610 Buys 20 ACRES from John Combe.</p> <p>1611 Signs PETITION for Bill in Parliament to repair Stratford Highways.</p> <p>1613 Visits London. Buys HOUSE, with shop and yard in Blackfriars, for £140[‡]. <i>Fine on Players for acting in the town increased from 10s. to £10. Feb. 7th, 1612. His youngest brother, Richard, is buried in the Parish Church, Feb. 4th. Slander case in the Ecclesiastical Court about Susanna's honour. Defendants, Lane and Smith, fail to appear, July, 1613. A Preacher entertained at New Place, 1613.</i></p> <p>1614 Mentioned with some neighbouring gentry as a LEGATEE in John Combe's will. Secures from Combe's heir, William, a deed of indemnity against personal loss if COMMON-FIELDS are enclosed. Does not support protest against the enclosure.</p> <p>1616 Receives first draft of his WILL; wife's name not included, nor those of his fellow actors, Jan. 25. <i>Judith, his younger daughter, aged 32, marries Thomas Quiney, aged 28, in Parish Church during Lent without license. Summoned before Ecclesiastical Court they fail to appear and are "excommunicated," Feb. 1616.</i> Revises and SIGNS Will, March 25. Assets: £350[‡], in cash, personal belongings, and estate bought for £1,200[‡]. The mayor and leading townsmen sign as witnesses. LEAVES to his wife, his second best bed with its furniture: to his daughter Judith, £300, and his silver and gilt bowl: to his grand-daughter, Elizabeth, all the rest of his plate: to his sister, Joan Hart, the Henley Street Cottages, during her lifetime, £20, and his wearing apparel: to her three sons, £5 each: to Thomas Combe, his sword: to his godson, a gold piece: to the Poor, £10: to Heminge, Burbage, Condell, and four townsmen, money for memorial rings: to his daughter, SUSANNA, all the remainder of his property, including New Place, Stratford lands, tithes, shares in London theatres, and the Blackfriars' house, with reversion to her issue, Elizabeth, in strict entail to the male heirs, and afterwards to his rightful heirs: to her and to her husband, the rest of his furniture and effects. Buried in the CHANCEL of the Parish Church in a grave 17 feet deep, which has never been opened. Entry in Parish Register:— Burials, 1616. April 25, Will: Shakespeare, Gent. Monument gives date of death, Apr. 23, and age, 53.</p>	<p>(b) LONDON.</p> <p>1603 SECOND on the list of players licensed by the King to act in Globe playhouse or elsewhere. FIRST on the list of players receiving scarlet cloth as King's Servants. They are paid £30[‡] for acting before the King at WILTON (Dec. 2); and an additional £30[‡] in consideration of losses due to the Plague in London.*</p> <p>1604 The KING impersonated on the "Globe" stage in a play setting forth the "Gowrie Conspiracy" of 1600. Twelve of the company paid £1 16s. each for 18 days' attendance at Somerset House during visit of SPANISH ENVOY.</p> <p>1605 Lodging now, or recently, with Mountjoy, a wig-maker, in SILVER STREET, Cripplegate. Receives 30s. from a fellow player, PHILLIPS, for a memorial ring. Not mentioned in the CAST (printed 1616) of Ben Jonson's "Volpone."[†]</p> <p>1607 His brother, EDMUND, a player, buried at S. Saviour's, Southwark, the Great Bell being tolled, Dec. 31.</p> <p>1608 TAKES one Seventh Share in BLACKFRIARS' THEATRE, of which Burbage has now purchased the remaining lease. Chapel Royal Children cease acting there, 1609-10. His share in the "GLOBE" now reduced to one Twelfth, and ultimately to one Fourteenth.</p> <p>1610 [About this time he may have retired to Stratford.]</p> <p>1612 Signs affidavit in the Bellot v. Mountjoy case. Described as of Stratford-upon-Avon, Gentleman, of the age of 48 or thereabouts. <i>He deposes that the defendant authorized him to promise Bellot a marriage-portion with his daughter, Mary: failing this marriage defendant would no longer support her, May 7.</i></p> <p>1613 Globe playhouse burnt down June 29. Rebuilt next year at a cost of £1,600[‡].</p> <p>1614 "My cosen, Shakspeare, comyng yesterday to towne, I went to see him how he did."—T. Greene, Nov. 17. Since 1603 ten more plays, not counting "Pericles," had been written, 4 of them being printed: 15 extra editions had been published: 2 more "Venus," 13 more of "Lucrece," and the "Sonnets," which included "A Lover's Complaint." One hundred and thirty plays, of which at least 17 were Shakespeare's, had been acted by the "Globe" players at Court. The 5 compositions most frequently mentioned, and quoted from, during his life-time were Venus, 42: Hamlet, 33: Lucrece, 25: Romeo, 16: Rich. III., 14. The character of Falstaff, 15 times.</p>	<p>1603 WILLIAM CAMDEN names Shakespeare, among others, as one of the "most pregnant wits of these our times, whom succeeding ages may justly admire." <i>Queen Elizabeth buried, Apr. 28.</i> JOHN DAVIES of Hereford writes that Shakespeare and Burbage have "wit, courage, good shape, good partes, and all good"; elsewhere he mentions Shakespeare personally: "Some say (good Will) which I, in sport, do sing, Had'st thou not plaid some kingly parts in sport, Thou hadst bin a companion for a King, And beene a king among the meaner sort." <i>Hampton Court Conference. The King's threat to the Puritans, Jan.</i></p> <p>1604 ANTHONY SCOLOKER writes that an Epistle to the Reader should resemble one of "friendly Shakespeare's tragedies"; it should "please all, like Prince Hamlet." Elsewhere he describes the stage antics of the Prince, "Puts off his cloathes, his shirt he only weares, Much like mad Hamlet; thus a passion tears." <i>Peace with Spain, followed by the Gunpowder Plot, Nov. 5.</i></p> <p>1605 BURBAGE says the Queen has seen all the NEW PLAYS, and that the revival of "Love's Labour's Lost" at Southampton's House should "please her exceedingly." <i>Owing to the Act of Uniformity, fifteen hundred ministers surrender their livings.</i></p> <p>1606 DRUMMOND, the poet, has read this year "Venus and Adonis," "Lucrece," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and "Romeo & Juliet." <i>Many Nonconformists take refuge in Holland, 1608.</i></p> <p>1609 EDWARD ALLEYN notes in his Diary that he paid 6d. for a copy of the "Sonnets." The author of the PREFACE to "Troilus and Cressida" asserts that even those who dislike the theatre are pleased with Shakespeare's comedies.</p> <p>1611 DAVIES reproves Shakespeare for his choice of the Venus legend as a subject for his "eternal lines." Dr. FORMAN notes that he saw "Cymbeline," "Macbeth," and "A Winter's Tale," at the "Globe." <i>Authorized version of the BIBLE published.</i></p> <p>1615 PHILIP HENSLOWE, theatrical manager, buried in the CHANCEL of S. Saviour's Church, with "afternoon knell of the Great Bell." <i>First Congregational Church in England formed 1616.</i> During this period some seventy or more writers quote or parody lines from Shakespeare's poems and plays, occasionally giving his name. Burbage's Company of Players visited the following provincial towns:— 1605 Oxford, Banastaple. 1606 Marlborough, Oxford, Leicester, Saffron Walden, Dover, Maidstone. 1607 Banastaple, Oxford, Cambridge. 1608 Marlborough, Coventry. 1609 Ipswich, Hythe, New Romney. 1610 Oxford, Dover, Shrewsbury.</p>	<p>That he was loved by Ben Jonson during his lifetime, "Discoveries," printed 1641: that he wrote plays without blotting a line, Heminge and Condell, 1623: that he wrote "The London Prodigal," "The Yorkshire Tragedy," and "Pericles," all acted at the "Globe," and printed with his name on the title-pages, 1605-9: that he wrote the "Henry VIII." printed in the First Folio, 1623: that he was joint author with Fletcher of "The Two Noble Kinsmen," the title-page of which gives both their names, 1634: that he was the "Mr. Shakespeare" who, with Burbage, was paid for an herald's device designed for the Earl of Rutland, 1613.</p> <p>UNKNOWN.</p> <p>Whether all the "Sonnets," published in 1609, were written before 1598: the chronological order of the plays: date of his final retirement to Stratford: whether he survived all his three brothers: on what terms he lived with his wife: who paid for his monument in Stratford Church, and who wrote the inscription for it: whether he wrote the verses inscribed on his grave-stone (1616): whether any of his books and MSS. were in his family's possession at the time of his death.</p>

* The first time players had received a Royal Gift.

† Probably he had now given up acting.

‡ In comparing this sum with modern currency multiply by eight.