

# ELIZABETHAN AGE

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# Characteristics of the Elizabethan Age(1550-1620)

Elizabeth(1558-1603);James I(1603-1625)



# Renaissance (1400-1550)

- 1474 - Caxton's Printing Press
- 1485 – Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*
- 1509 – Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*
- 1516 – More's *Utopia*
- 1525 – Tyndale's *New Testament*
- 1530s – sonnets and blank verse
- 1539 – The Great Bible
- 1557 – Tottel's Miscellany



# HISTORICAL CONTEXT (1455-1485)

W. War of the  
Roses







ANNO · ETATIS ·

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# The Tudor Dynasty

- In the 15<sup>th</sup> century: The Wars of the Roses:
  - ❑ War between York and Tudor Dynasty.
  - ❑ Henry Tudor claims the throne
- Tudor crowned as Henry VII.
- Henry VIII succeeded:
  - ❑ The Church of England (1534)
  - ❑ The abolition of monastery (1536 and 1541)
  - ❑ Made the new aristocracy, faithful to the king above all else.







Elizabeth I of England



*Henry VII*  
(1485 - 1509)



*Henry VIII*  
(1509 - 1547)



*Catherine of  
Aragon*



*Anne  
Boleyn*



*Jane  
Seymour*



*King Philip  
of Spain*



*m. Mary I*  
(1553 - 1558)



*Elizabeth I*  
(1558 - 1603)



*Edward VI*  
(1547 - 1553)





# Reign of Queen Elizabeth

- **Religious Tolerance**
- **Social Contentment**
- **Enthusiasm**
- **Literature**

# Religious Toleration

- Thirty Year's War on the Continent.
- Before the accession of Elizabeth:
  - ❖ The Kingdom was divided into 4 separate units:
    - ✓ North England was Catholic.
    - ✓ Southern nations were Protestant.
    - ✓ Scotland followed its Reformation.
    - ✓ Ireland was strictly Catholic.
    - ✓ Ireland and Scotland were rebellious towards England.
- Religious tolerance due to the queen's influence.
  - ✓ Elizabeth preferred both Catholics and Protestants.
  - ✓ She was a Protestant.
  - ✓ She allowed Catholic symbols and Catholic ceremonies.



# The Paintings of Queen Elizabeth





# Social Contentment

- The defeat of the Spanish Armada (12 July 1588).
- Peace and Serenity within the Kingdom :
  - ❖ Rapid increase of manufacturing towns:
    - ✓ Thousands were employed.
    - ✓ There was increase in trade.
    - ✓ Enormous wealth from outside England.
    - ✓ Rich taxed; poor under the care of parishes.
    - ✓ New standard of living.



# The Defeat of the Spanish Armada





# The Lawful Pirate: Sir Francis Drake



# Enthusiasm

- It was an age of dreams, of adventure, of unbounded enthusiasm.
- Drake and others sailed around the world:
  - ❖ Writings about colonization:
    - ✓ Bacon in his essays.
    - ✓ Hakluyt's *Collection of Voyages* and *Purchas, His Pilgrimage*.
    - ✓ In *Eastward Ho* by John Marston.
    - ✓ In *Tempest*.



## Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake and John Hawkins

- Cabot, Drake, Frobisher, Gilbert, Raleigh, Willoughby, Hawkins and various others ruled the seas.
- Most of them were pirates, patronized by Queen Elizabeth.
- It was because of them England came to be called The Mistress of the Seas



## Pirates of the Caribbean as an allegory





# Literature

- The age of Elizabeth was a time of intellectual liberty, of poetry, prose and drama.
- It is compared to the Age of Pericles in Athens and the Age of Augustus in Rome.
- It was mostly an age of drama.
  - ❖ Important writers of the age:
    - ✓ Shakespeare
    - ✓ Marlowe
    - ✓ Spenser
    - ✓ Bacon







# Predecessors of the Elizabethan writes

**Sir Thomas Wyatt**  
(sonnet)

**Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey**  
(Blank verse)



# A Recap

- War of the Roses
- The Tudors
- Henry VIII
- Anglican Church
- Queen Mary
- Queen Elizabeth
- Elizabeth's policies: religious tolerance and peace
- Spanish Armada
- Adventure
- Literature
- Predecessors: Wyatt and Surrey



# Literary Characteristics



# The Important writers

- The University Wits
  - John Lyly
  - Robert Greene
  - Thomas Kyd
  - Thomas Nashe
  - Christopher Marlowe
    - William Shakespeare (The greatest of the dramatists and poets)
      - Thomas Dekker
      - John Fletcher (The
      - John Webster minor
      - Thomas Middleton dramatists)
- Ben Jonson (Comedy of humours)
  - Edmund Spenser (The
  - John Donne important
  - Philip Sidney poets)
- Francis Bacon (The only representative writer of prose)
  - George Puttenham
  - Isabella Whitney
  - Sir John Harington
  - Arthur Golding



# Poetry: Spencer

- Spencer: a child of Renaissance and Reformation.
- “poor scholar”: a sizar.
- Cambridge - Then goes to Lancashire.
- Comes to London: Sidney and Raleigh
- The Shepherd's Calendar (1579):
  - An artificial pastoral
  - Inspired by Virgil and Theocritus
  - Allegory

# Continuation

- “Colin Clout’s Come Home Again” (1595).
- *Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596):
  - Ireland
  - Gloriana and the 12 knights
  - Allegory
- “Amoretti”, “Epithalamion” (1595)
- “Prothalamion” (1596)



# Minor Poets

**Philip Sidney**



**Thomas Sackville**



**Michael Drayton**



# Minor Poets

- Thomas Sackville (1536-1608):
  - *The Mirror for Magistrates*:
    - ✓ Allegory.
    - ✓ An imitation of *Inferno*.
- Philip Sidney (1554-1586)
  - a soldier, a writer, a patriot, an ideal gentleman.
  - *The Arcadia*: a pastoral romance.
    - ✓ Shepherds and shepherdess sing of the delights of the rural life.
  - *The Apologie for Poetrie* (1595)
    - ✓ Also called *Defense of Poesie*
    - ✓ An answer to Stephen Gosson's *The School of Abuse* (1579).
    - ✓ First critical essay.
  - *Astrophel and Stella*
    - ✓ A collection of songs and sonnets addressed to Lady Penelope Devereux.
    - ✓ Exquisite lines, intense poetic feeling and expression.



# Continuation

- George Chapman(1554-1586)
  - Intentionally a playwright, but remembered for his translations:
    - ✓ *Iliad* (1611)
    - ✓ *Odyssey* (1614)
  - He was the finisher Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*.
- Michael Drayton(1563-1631)
  - The most voluminous poet; remembered for his 3 long poems:
    - ✓ *Polyolbion*
    - ✓ *Baron's Wars*
    - ✓ *The Heroic Epistle of England*
  - The best of his short poems:
    - ✓ "Ballad of Agincourt"

# Drama: first plays

- The first play with a regular plot: *Ralf Royster Doyster* (about 1552).
- *Gorboduc* (1561) by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville is the first tragedy. First play in blank verse.
- *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (acted at Cambridge in 1566; anonymous author): one of the first plays.
- They adhered to the classic models.
  - ❖ But we see in these plays, the Englishness of:
    - ✓ Characters
    - ✓ settings
    - ✓ Language (blank verse)



# University Wits

- **John Lyly** (c. 1553 or 1554 – November 1606) was an English writer, poet, dramatist, playwright, and politician:
  - Magdalen College, Oxford
  - best known for his books
    - ✓ *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578)
    - ✓ *Euphues and His England* (1580).
    - ✓ Lyly's mannered literary style, originating in his first books, is known as 'euphuism'.
- **Thomas Lodge** (c.1558 – September 1625) was an English physician and author during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods:
  - Trinity College, Oxford
  - *Defence of Poetry, Music and Stage Plays* (1579 or 1580)
  - Plays:
    - ✓ *A Looking Glass for London and England* (published 1594)—with Green
    - ✓ A few poems and prose pieces.

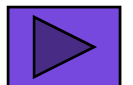
# Continuation

- **George Peele** (baptized 25 July 1556 – 9 November 1596) was an English translator, poet, and dramatist:
  - Broadgates Hall, Oxford.
  - He is most noted for his collaboration with William Shakespeare on the play *Titus Andronicus*.
  - Play:
    - ✓ *The Arraignment of Paris*.
- **Robert Greene** (baptised 11 July 1558, died 3 September 1592) was an English author popular in his day.
  - Cambridge.
  - He is best known for a posthumous pamphlet attributed to him:
    - ✓ *Greenes, Groats-worth of Witte, bought with a million of Repentance*  
(attack on William Shakespeare)
  - Plays:
    - ✓ *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*
    - ✓ *The History of Orlando Furioso*
    - ✓ *A Looking Glass for London and England* (with Thomas Lodge)
    - ✓ *The Scottish History of James the Fourth*
    - ✓ *The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Aragon*

*William Shakespeare*  
*The Bard*



1564-1616





# Childhood

- Born April 23 (we think), 1564
- Stratford-upon-Avon, England
- Father was a local prominent merchant



# Family Life



- Married Ann Hathaway 1582 (when he was 18, she was 26)
- Three children: Susanna born in 1583, twins Judith and Hamnet born 1585
- Hamnet died at age 11; the girls never had any children





# 1585-1592

## *The Lost Years*

- We have no records of his life during this time period
- It is speculated that he might have been a teacher, a butcher, or an actor to support his family.
- In 1592, he is in London, while Ann and the kids are still in Stratford-upon-Avon





# 1590's

- Queen Elizabeth I ruled
- English explorers were crossing the ocean to the New World
- And travelers coming to England LOVED watching plays...



# The Playwrights...

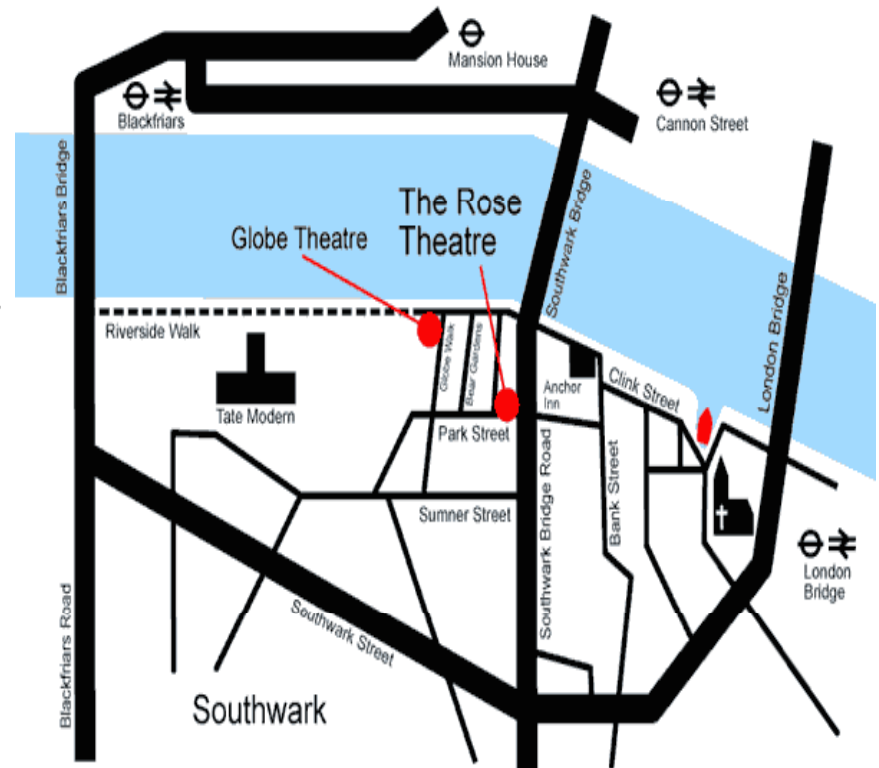


- **Christopher Marlowe**  
*(more about him later)*
- **Thomas Kyd**
- And **William Shakespeare** was the original “New Kid on the Block”



# The Theatres...

- The Theatre, built in 1576
- The Rose, built in 1587 (London's first "Bankside" theatre)
- The Swan, 1595
- The Globe (Shakespeare helped construct in 1598-1599)





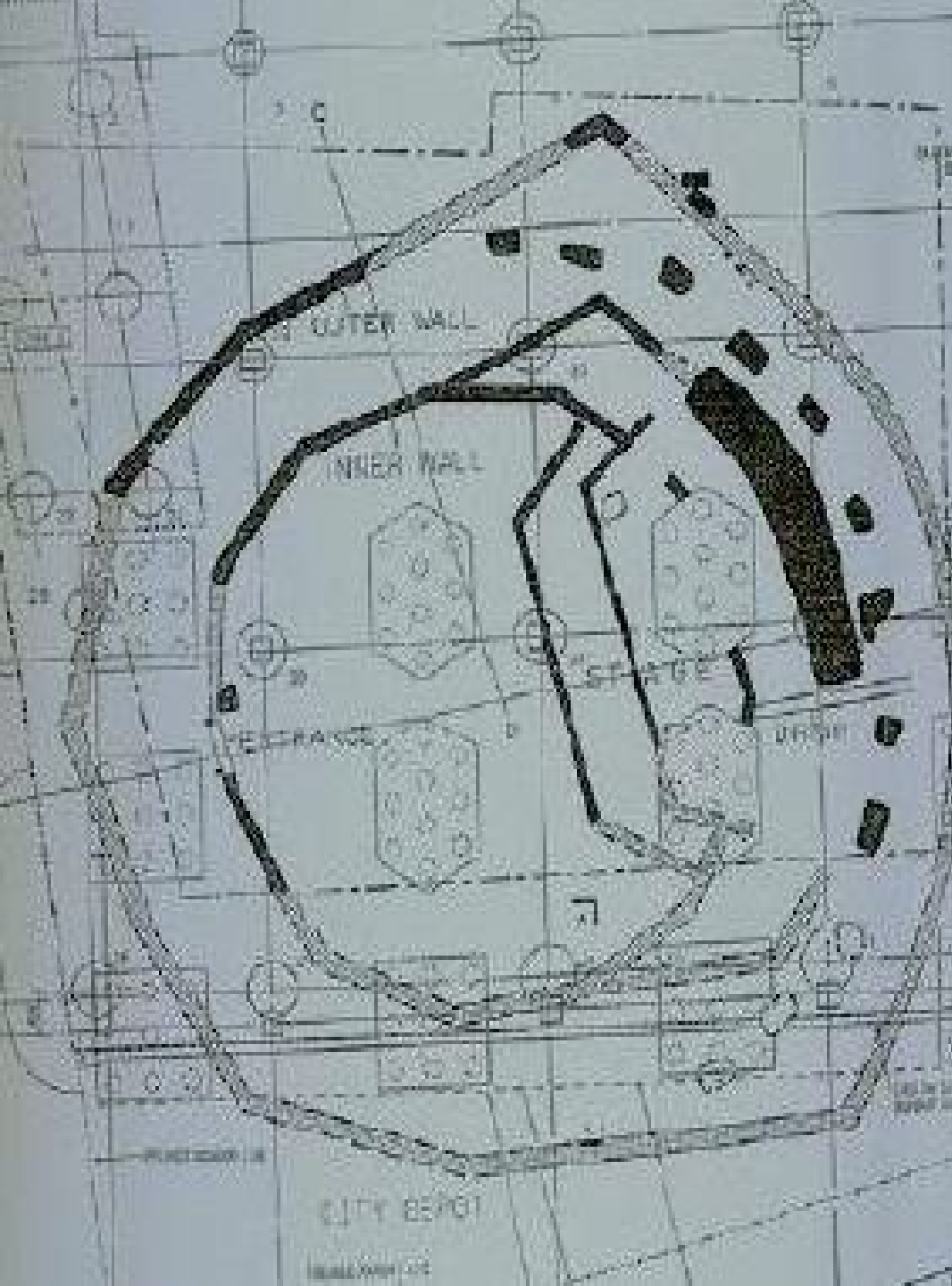
## About the theatres

- Protestants condemned the plays
- Theatres were on the outskirts of London--away from the authorities
- People who attended the theatres included:



- merchants
- lawyers
- laborers
- prostitutes
- visitors from other countries
- nobility & royalty





- No lighting
- No scenery--Just a curtain
- Could hold around 2,000 people



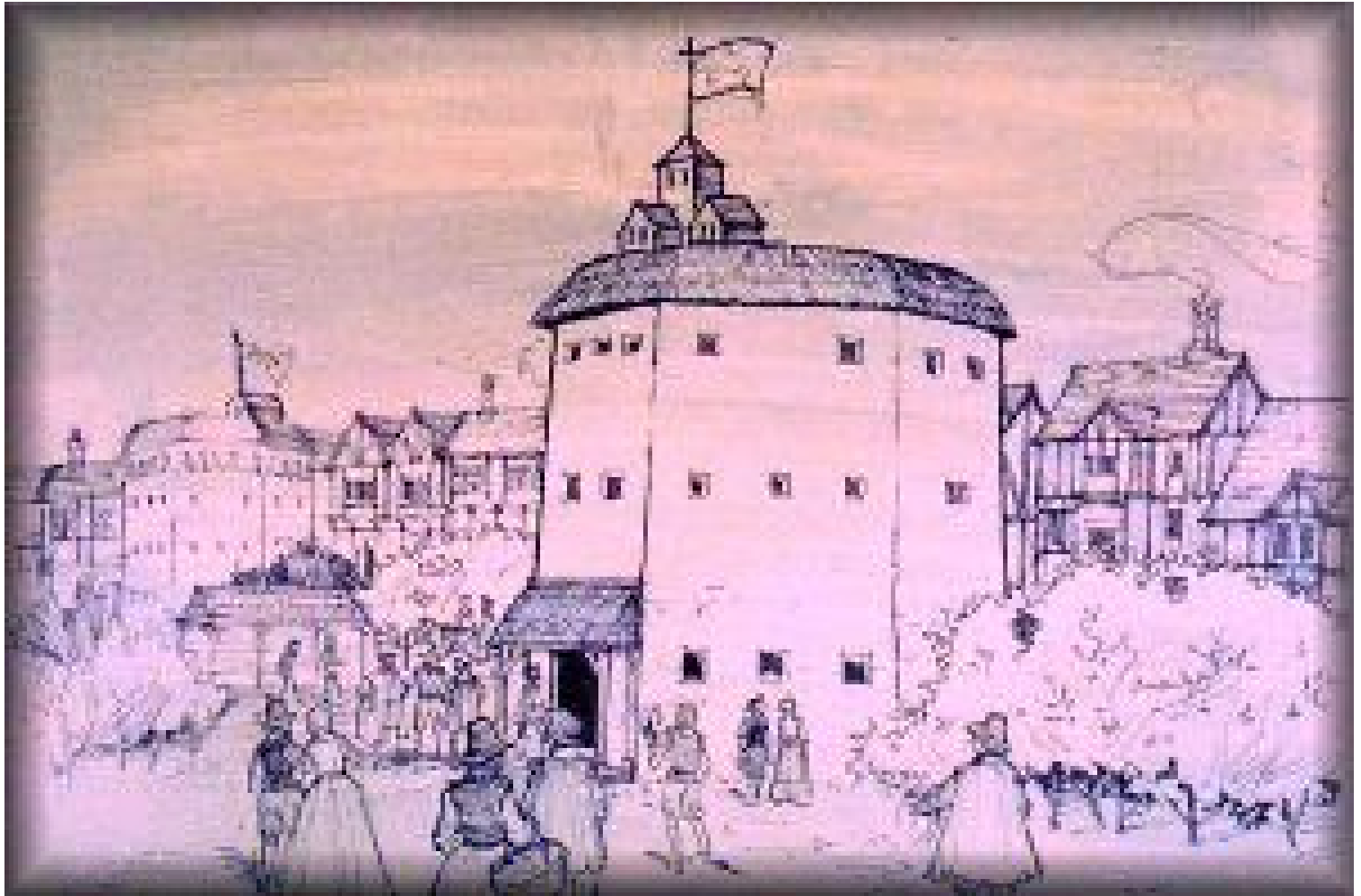


The most expensive seats were directly behind the stage, called the gallery.

Though the people sitting there could only see the actors from behind, they themselves could be seen by everyone in the audience.

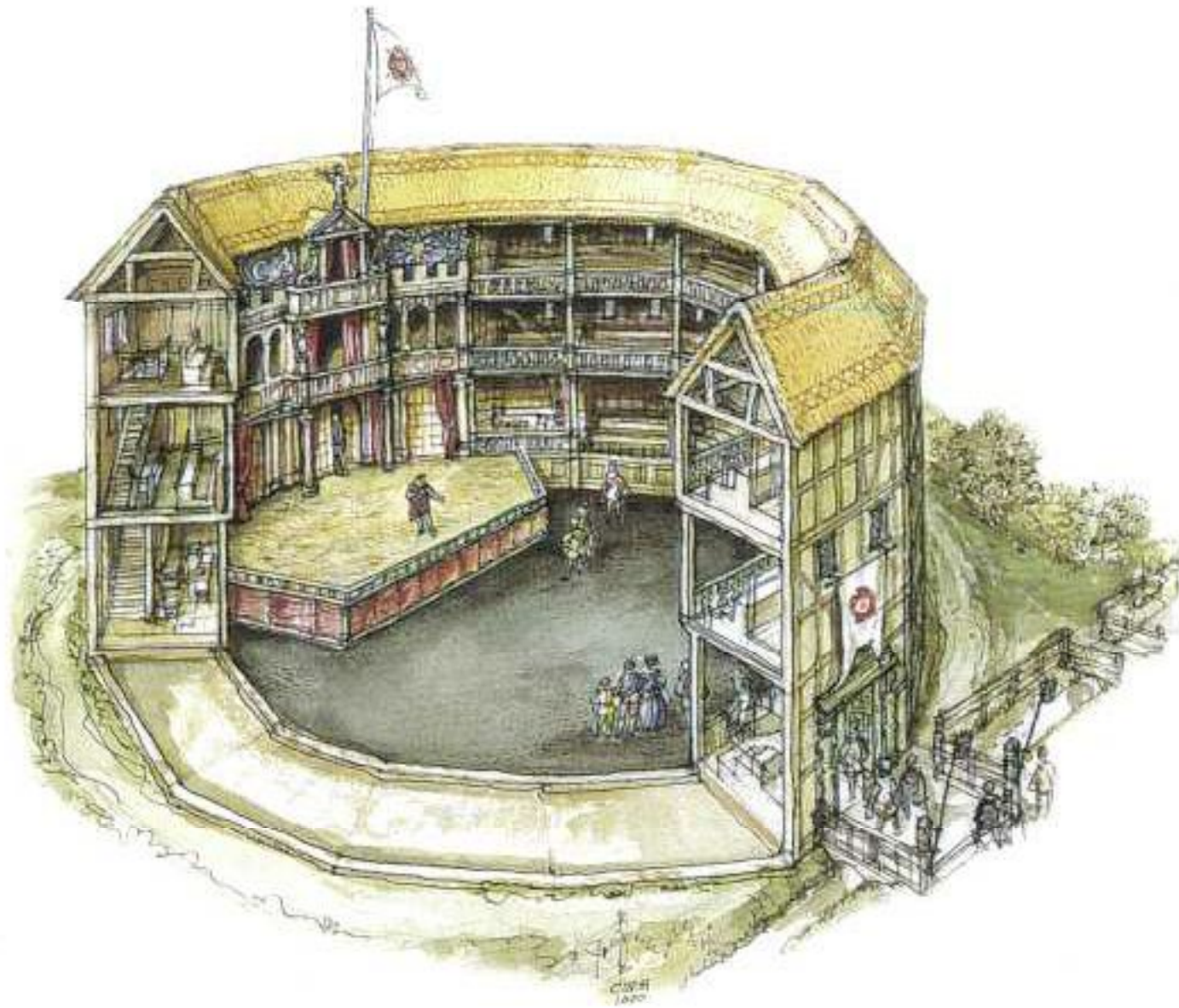


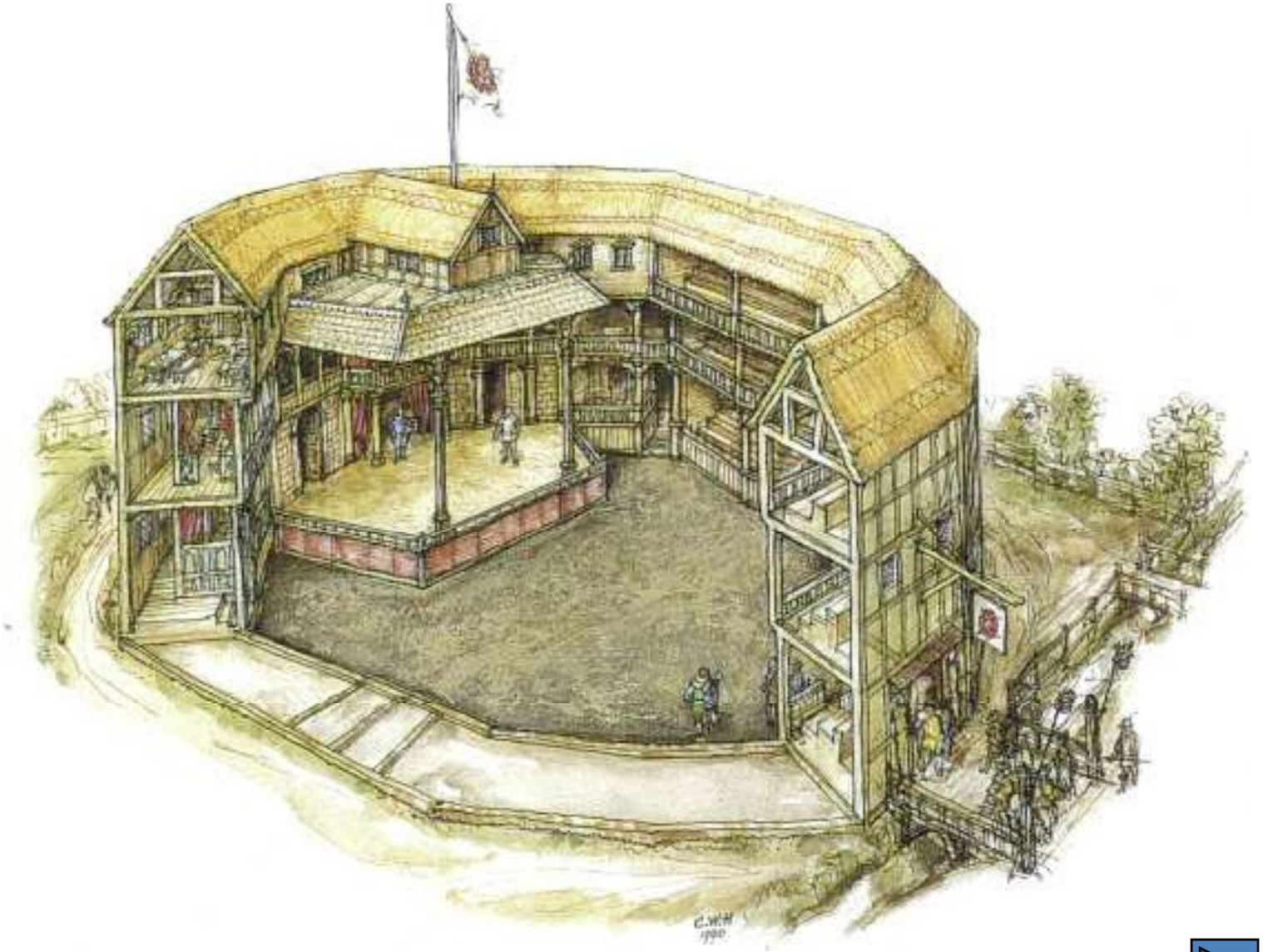




The theatres were closed during the plague.









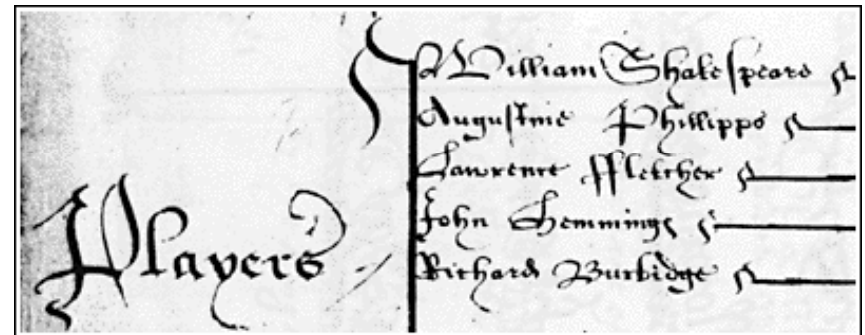
# Costumes...

- Richly decorated
- Didn't always match up to the time period of the play
- Looking good was more important than being realistic!



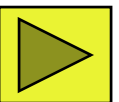
# Who were the Players?

- **The Lord Admiral's Men**
- **The Lord Chamberlain's Men** (Shakespeare founded; Richard Burbage was their leading actor)
- The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed mostly in The Theatre



# Acting

- The actors were all men; young boys (age 12-14) played the female parts
- They were considered “shareholders” and owned stock or shares in the play texts, costumes, and props
- Their pay depended on admission sales
- Actors only had about 3 weeks to practice a new play
- In one week, the troupes may perform 6 different plays (as many as 4,000 lines!)





# 1603

- Queen Elizabeth dies
- Shakespeare's troupe changes their name to The King's Men, becoming the first OFFICIAL theatre company of England's new king, James I

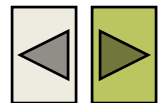


# Shakespeare's Last Days



**His will, which he revised a month before dying, left the bulk of his estate to his oldest daughter, and the bed to his wife.**

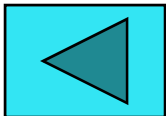
- Between 1611-1612, Shakespeare returns to Stratford to his wife and family.
- Dies April 23, 1616 at the age of 53



## Shakespeare's Epitaph...



***"Good Friends, for Jesus'  
sake forbear,  
To dig the bones enclosed  
here!  
Blest be the man that  
spares these stones,  
And curst be he that moves  
my bones."***





# *Love of the Language*



*In Shakespeare's time, everyone loved the English language.*

*There were no grammar rules, punctuation keys, OR spelling!*

*The language was evolving and everyday new words were being made up.*

*Shakespeare's language reflects this freedom and experimentation.*



# Iambic Pentameter



- Is a sound pattern
- IAMB: one unaccented (or unstressed) syllable with one accented syllable
- It's like a heartbeat: ba-bum, ba-bum, ba-bum
- Five "ba-bum"s in a row make one line of iambic pentameter (10-syllable lines)
- Example: he WENT to TOWN toDAY to BUY a CAR
- OR: In SOOTH / I KNOW / not WHY / I AM / so SAD



# Why go to all the TROUBLE???

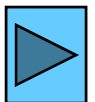
- Using iambic pentameter kept things moving in the play (like a drum beat)
- It made the words & play more interesting
- It helped the actors remember their lines (like a song)



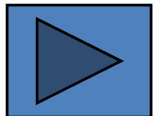
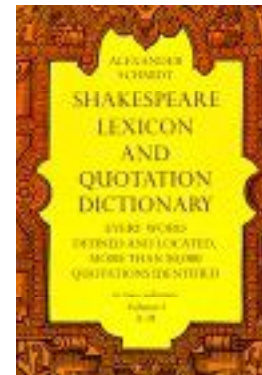
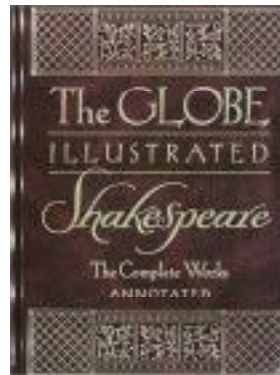


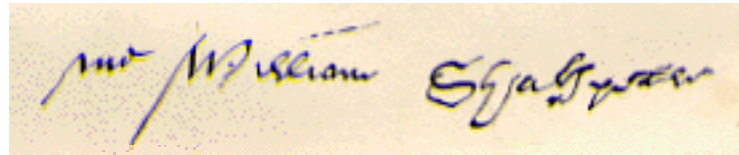
# Where Did it Come From?

- The Greeks and Romans started combining drama & poetry.
- The English experimented with it, using verse and prose in their plays.
- In the 1590's "Blank Verse" (poetry that doesn't rhyme) was the new **Craze!**
- The English Language is harder to rhyme than French or Italian, and English is more heavily accented.

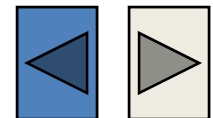


***What would you do if you just lost your only copy of the paper you wrote?***



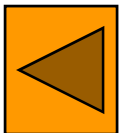
A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mr William Shakespeare". The ink is dark and the paper is aged and yellowed.

- In Shakespeare's time, you only had one copy of a play, and after you wrote it for the acting company, you no longer owned it!
- Scripts were thrown out when they were no longer wanted or needed.
- NO copies of Shakespeare's plays in his own handwriting have survived. The only known evidence of anything in his handwriting is his signature (shown above) on the play *Sir Thomas More* that Shakespeare might have written.





- Companies may perform plays for years before they became printed.
- Plays weren't thought of as works of literature. They were "entertainment."



# “Quartos”



- Small books of published plays were called “quartos.”
- The first published works of Shakespeare’s vary considerably, making it probable that they were written from actors’ memories, or shorthand notes from a scribe working for a publisher, as opposed to Shakespeare himself.
- Scholars believe these are faulty versions, calling them “bad quartos.” Or as we say today, “Pirated” versions.



The Workes of William Shakespeare,  
containing all his Comedies, Histories, and  
Tragedies: Truely set forth, according to their first  
*ORIGINALL.*



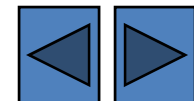
- The first full collection of Shakespeare's work was published in 1623, seven years after his death.
- It was called "First Folio"
- It contained 36 plays (compiled by John Heminge and Henry Condell--friends and fellow actors of Shakespeare's)



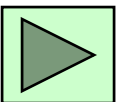
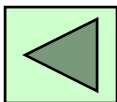


# A Case of Bad Editing!

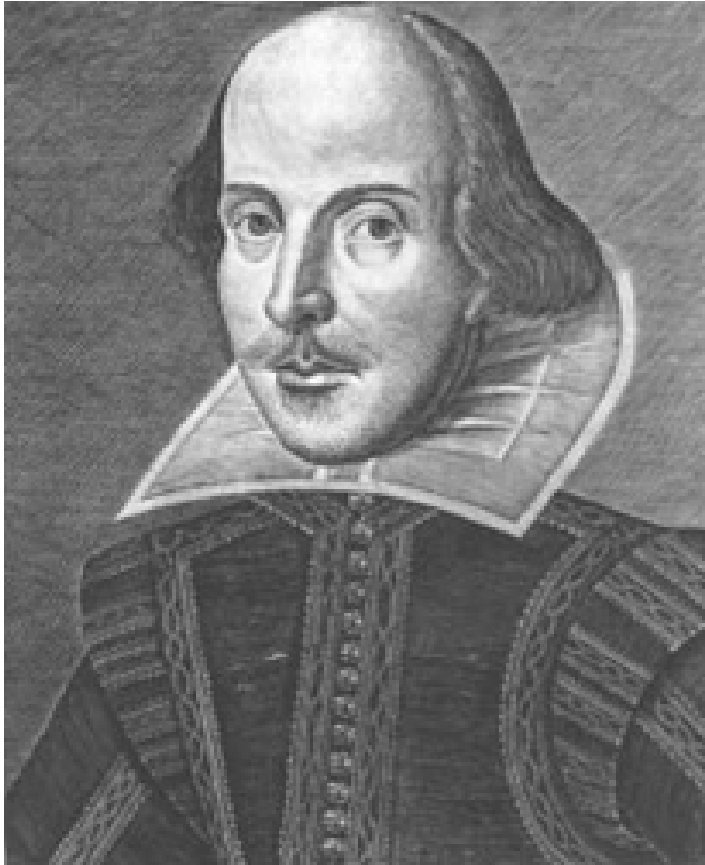
- “First Folio”, as well as many other works at that time, contained many errors, due to the fact sometimes the printers could not read the handwriting and had to memorize the lines as they set them on the press.
- The printers were the ones who decided how a line should be punctuated & spelled (not the writers)!



- “First Folio” contained multiple errors--for example, there was no indication where Acts or Scenes began or ended.
- Today’s Act and Scene divisions are based on shrewd “guesses” by generations of editors.
- There are many uncertainties, so even today’s editions have variations in the text.

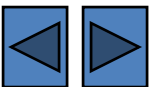


# Why study Shakespeare?



Chances are, you've quoted Shakespeare without even knowing it!

Have you ever said the following...



*“in a pickle”*

*“It’s Greek to me.”*

*“Too much of a  
good thing.”*



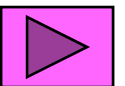
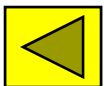


*“as luck would have it”*

*“good riddance”*

*“dead as a door-nail”*

*“foul play”*

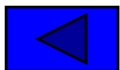


*“a laughing stock”*

*“an eyesore”*

*“send me packing”*

*“without rhyme or  
reason”*

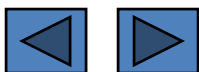


# Even today, Shakespeare lives on.



We can relate to his tales of love, hatred, revenge, courage, trust and deception.

So much of our world today has been influenced by Shakespeare.



*Ben Jonson*





# *Benjamin Jonson*

*(circa 11/06/1572 - 06/08/1637)*

- ❖ He was born in Westminster, London in 1572, the posthumous son of a clergyman.
- ❖ His father died a month before Ben's birth, and his mother remarried two years later, to a master bricklayer.
- ❖ Jonson attended school in St. Martin's Lane, and was later sent to Westminster School.
- ❖ About 1589, probably because of his poverty, instead of pursuing a university education he left Westminster to follow his stepfather's trade of bricklaying.

Ben Jonson married some time before 1592.

- ❖ The registers of St. Martin's Church state that his eldest daughter Mary died in November, 1593, when she was only six months old. His eldest son Benjamin died of the plague ten years later, and a second Benjamin died in 1635.

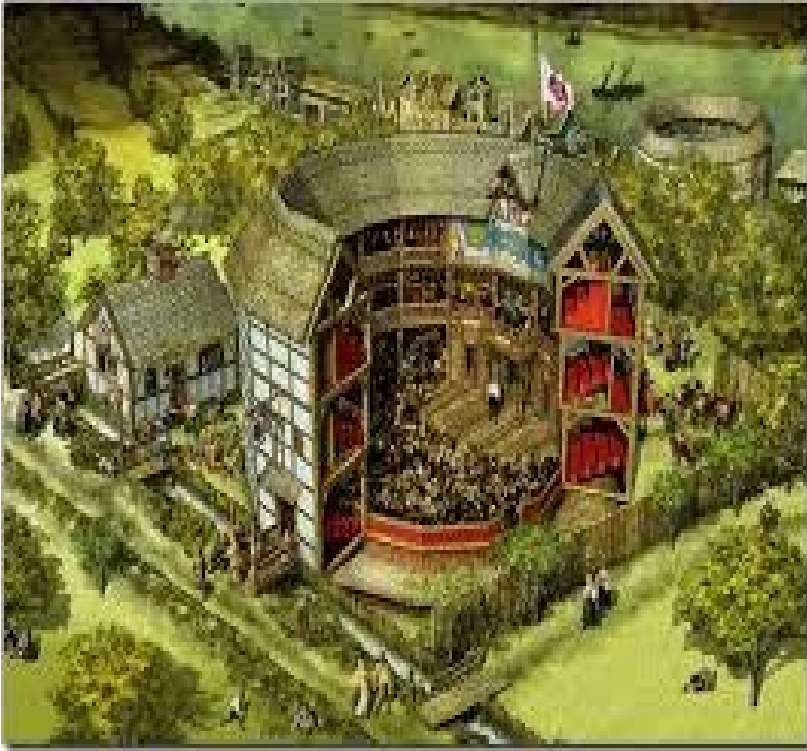
‘Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of the dramatic poets; Jonson as the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing.’

*Essay on Dramatic Poesy* -1668- John Dryden

- ❖ By September of 1597, Jonson had a fixed engagement in the Lord Admiral’s acting company, then performing under Philip Henslowe’s management at The Rose.
- ❖ In 1597 he was imprisoned for his collaboration with Thomas Nashe in writing the play *Isle of Dogs*.
- ❖ In 1598 , Jonson produced his first great success, *Every Man in his humour*.
- ❖ On September 22, 1598, Jonson killed his fellow-actor, Gabriel Spencer, in a duel.
- ❖ When brought to trial, he confessed and claimed right of clergy; his property was confiscated and his thumb branded.
- ❖ On January 6, 1605, he began his great career of masque-writing with the production of *The Masque of Blackness* at Whitehall, and during the reign of James he finished twenty of the thirty-seven masques presented at court.
- ❖ Early in 1606 he composed *Volpone*.

# Oxford

Then



Now





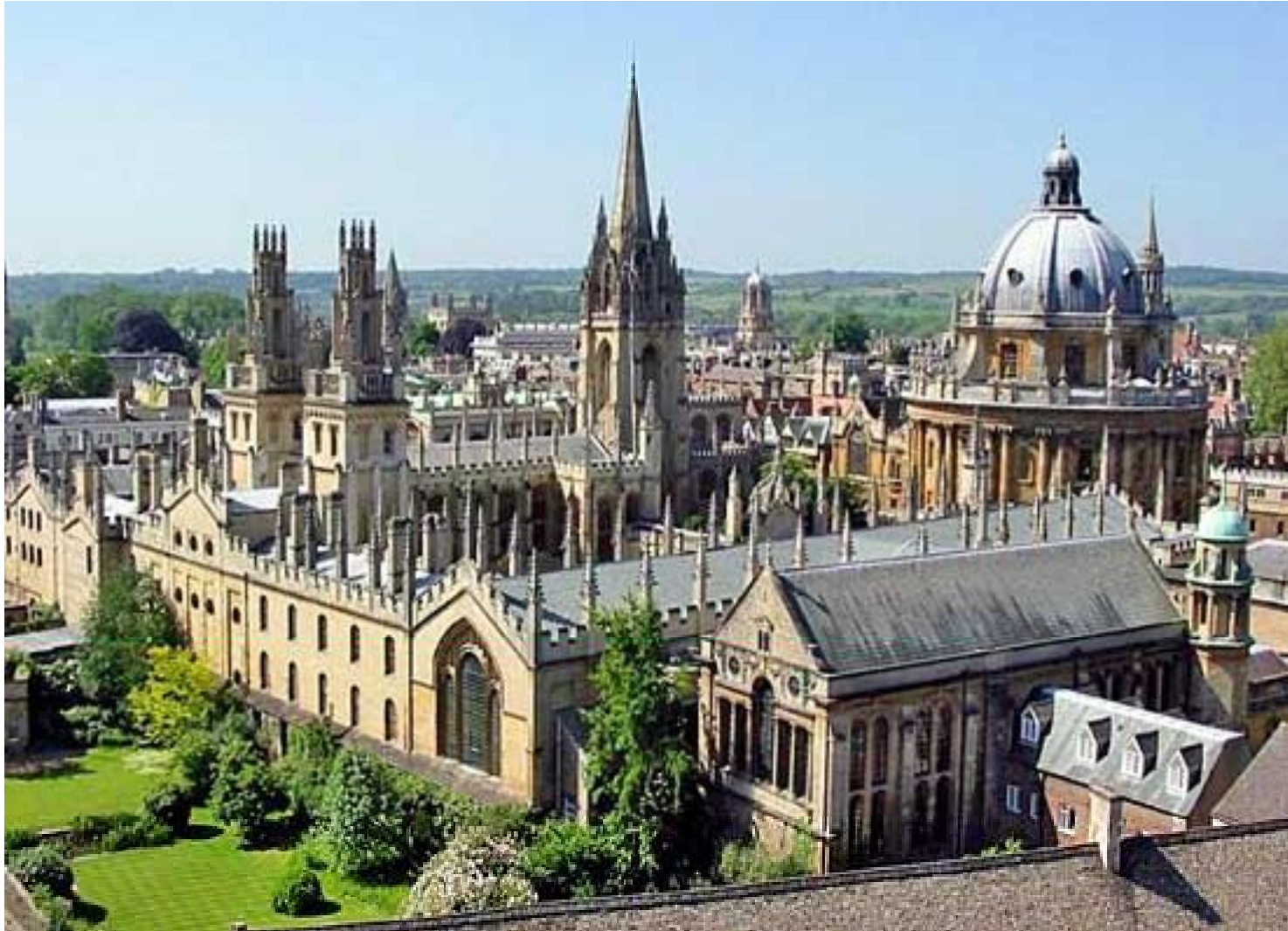
# *The Masque of Blackness*



Inigo Jones costume design for Torchbearer of Oceania in Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness*, 1605.

- ❖ On July 19, 1619, Jonson was made M. A. of Oxford.
- ❖ In 1628 he became city chronologer of London.
- ❖ He had suffered debilitating stroke that year, and in the following year he was granted a pension of £ 100 by King Charles.
- ❖ He died on August 6, 1637, and was buried three days later in Westminster Abbey.
- ❖ Several stories surround his unusual burial in the Abbey. The first says that, dying in great poverty, Jonson begged for '18 inches of square ground in Westminster Abbey' from Charles I.
- ❖ Another says that 'one day being railed by the Dean of Westminster about being buried in Poets' Corner, Jonson is said to have replied:" I am too poor for that, and no one will lay out funeral charges upon me. No sir, 2 feet by 2 feet will do for all I want." Either way, Jonson was buried in the Nave of the Abbey standing on his feet.

# Oxford



# *Theory of Humours*

- ❖ Ben Jonson modelled himself on classical authors and his characters were types like those of Theophrastus, or were intended to illustrate the theory of Humours.
- ❖ In early Western physiological theory, a Humour is one of the four fluids of the body that were thought to determine a person's temperament and features.
- ❖ In the ancient physiological theory still current in the European Middle Ages and later, the four cardinal humours were blood, phlegm, cholera (yellow bile), and melancholy (black bile).
- ❖ The variant mixtures of these humours in different persons determined their “complexions,” or “temperaments,” their physical and mental qualities, and their dispositions.
- ❖ The ideal person had the ideally proportioned mixture of the four; a predominance of one produced a person who was sanguine (Latin sanguis, “blood”), phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholic.



# Table of the four humours in Renaissance and Elizabethan time

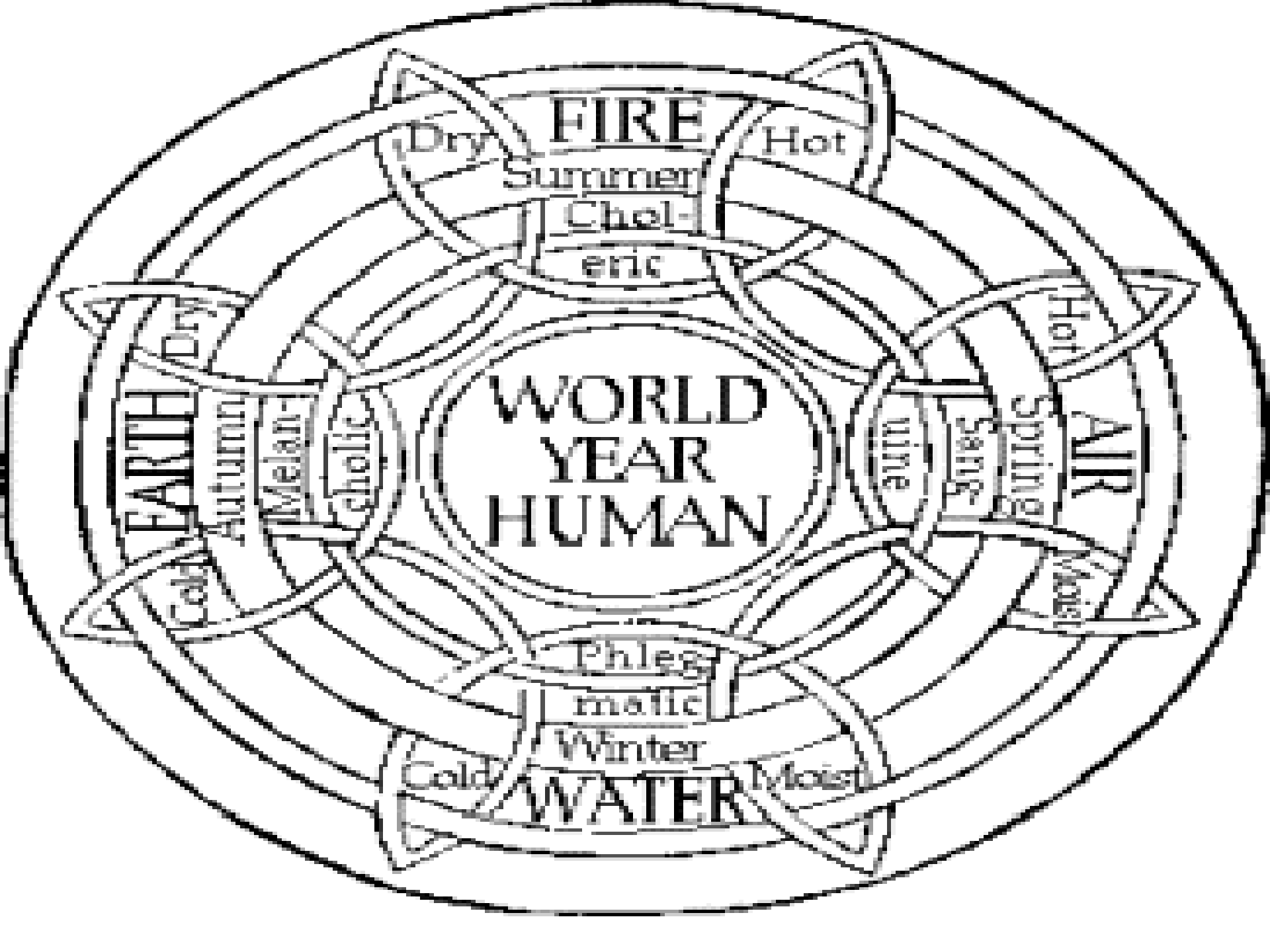
Humour	Body substance	Produced by	Element	Qualities	Complexion and body type	Personality
Sanguine	blood	liver	air	Hot and moist	Red-cheeked, corpulent	Amourous, happy, generous, optimistic, irresponsible
Choleric	Yellow bile	spleen	fire	Hot and dry	Red-haired, thin	Violent, vengeful, short-tempered, ambitious
Phlegmatic	phlegm	lungs	water	Cold and moist	corpulent	Sluggish, pallid, cowardly
Melancholic	Black bile	Gall bladder	earth	Cold and dry	Sallow, thin	Introspective, sentimental, gluttonous

# The 4 Humours



# The 4 Humours







# *Everyman in His Humour*



# Volpone



# *Things to remember:*

Ben Jonson

- had a passion for the varied and colourful London life of his time
- had a boisterous and even cruel sense of humour
- showed impressive originality even when working within classical models

Volpone is characterised with:

- savagery and humour
- moral feeling and grim characterisation of the monstrous absurdities of human nature

It could be read as:

- a moral exemplum
- a beast fable (a beast fable is a short tale in which the principle actors are animals. Jonson's characters are people, but they have the characteristics of animals, as their names reveal)
- a satire ( on English life in General)
- a humour play
- a tragedy



# *The Alchemist*





MARY LOUNGUE  
 MARY LOUNGUE  
 Elizabeth