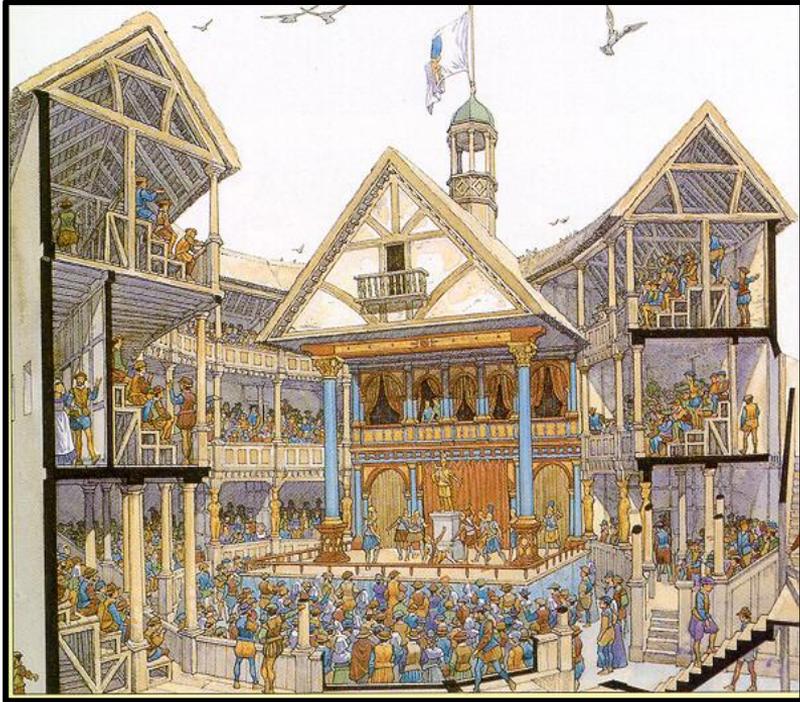


A Discussion of English Renaissance Theatres

**By:
Lauren Reynolds, Hanah Sims, and Heather Hammonds**

Introduction

English Renaissance Theatres, a brief synopsis



- Around the mid 1500s acting started appearing in and around London.
- But not for a few decades would organized theatre start to appear.
- First, there were Inn-Yard Playhouses, and those evolved into playhouses being built just for the purpose of theatre (Kathman 154).

Cost Breakdowns (approximate estimates)

Building and Running a Theatre Playhouse

- The Theatre (1576) and The Globe (1599) each cost about 700 pounds (168,000 pence) to build, while The Fortune cost about 520 pounds (124,800 pence).
- An acting company would have been paid about 10 pounds (2,400 pence) per play.
- Purchasing a playbook cost about 6 pounds (1,440 pence)--The Rose purchased about 84 (20,160 pence) pounds worth of playbooks in 1595
- The Master of Revels was paid 3 pounds (720 pence) to license each play.
- The owner of the Rose collected about 100 pounds (24,000 pence) per year for his share of the profits (Cerasano 386-387).

In Comparison: Living Costs

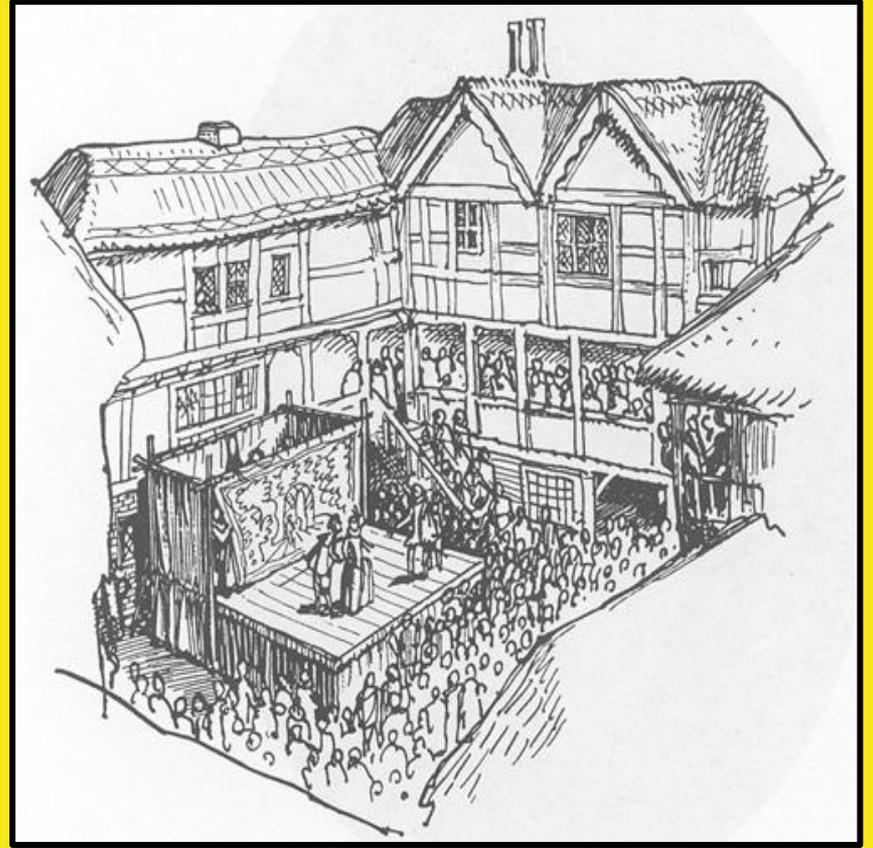
- A general merchant made about 120 pounds (29,000 pence) per year.
- Wages for commoners--maids, servant men, labourers, soldiers, craftsmen etc--were paid between 6 and 12 pence per day or 9 to 17 pounds per year (2100 and 4200 pence).
- Food was about 4 pence per day or 6 pounds (1,460 pence) per year.
- Ground floor entrance to a play was 1 penny and a gallery seat was 2 pence.
- A book of Shakespeare's plays was about 1 pound (240 pence), and a Bible would have cost about 2 pounds (480 pence) (Agabond).

Early Beginnings

Overview

- Inn-Yard Playhouses
 - What were they
 - How they were used
- The Unsuccessful Red Lyon Theatre
 - Usage
 - Stage description
 - Legal issues
- The Theatre
 - Building the theatre
 - Plays performed
 - Deconstruction

Inn-Yard Playhouses



What Were They?

- Some of the least known playhouses of this era are the inn-yard playhouses, which were used before permanent theatres were built.
- Little evidence remains of these playhouses, but we know that Inns started being used for theatre around the 1540s and that they seem to have disappeared by the 1580s.
 - There is no explicit evidence of why, though the building of physical theatres is most likely the reason (Kathman 159)



Oh the debauchery!

- The Inn owners who allowed the use of their buildings constantly dealt with authorities trying to shut down the performances:
 - April 1st, 1543, The Court of Common Council made Ambrosius Chapman, citizen and draper (merchant), sign a bond agreeing to “no longer stage any disguisings or plays to ‘allure & gather any multyude of people in a certayn yard” (Kathman 154).
- There are documents that indicate that early inn-yard playhouses led to debauchery and lewd behaviors:
 - “The Bull Inn there...had even infected the inhabitants with corrupt and lewd dispositions...a place haunted with such pernicious and obscene plays...able to poison the very Godly...” (Kathman 159).

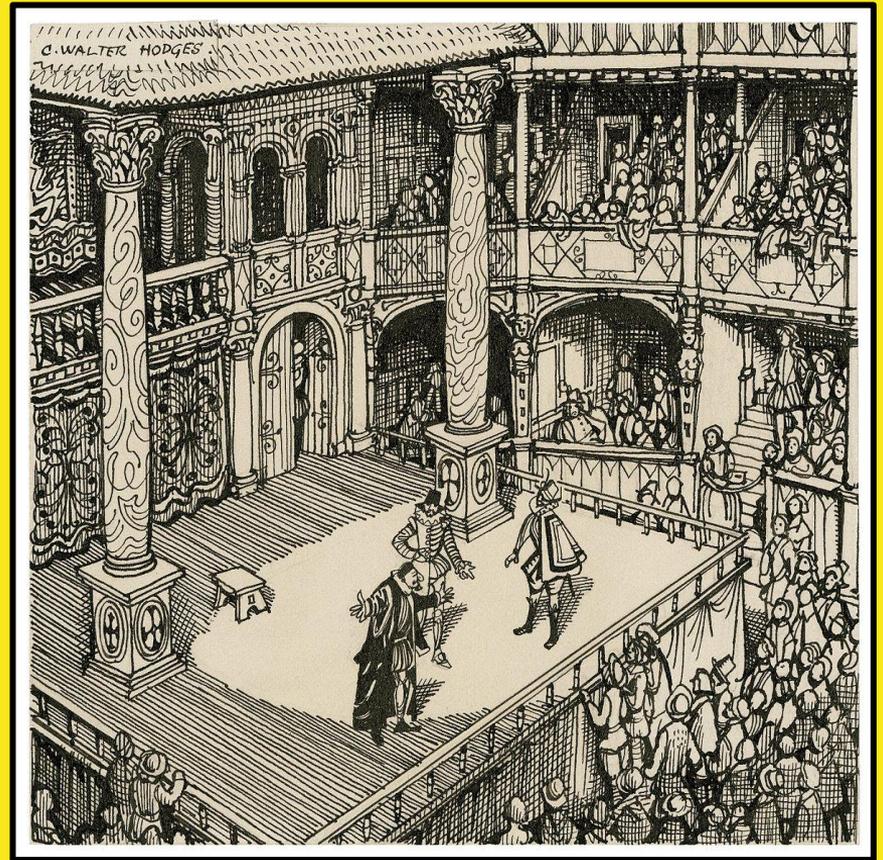


Performances and Permission



- In 1583, The London Court of Alderman gave the newly formed Queen's men a license to perform, but
 - only at The Bull and The Bell,
 - only on Wednesdays and Saturdays,
 - and only from late November to early March (Kathman 158).
- Another example is a letter from a patron of Lord Chamberlain's men to the Lord Mayor, where he asked that they be able
 - "To play this winter time within the City at the Cross Keys in Gracious Street, as they had been accustomed to do" (Kathman 159).

The Red Lyon Theatre

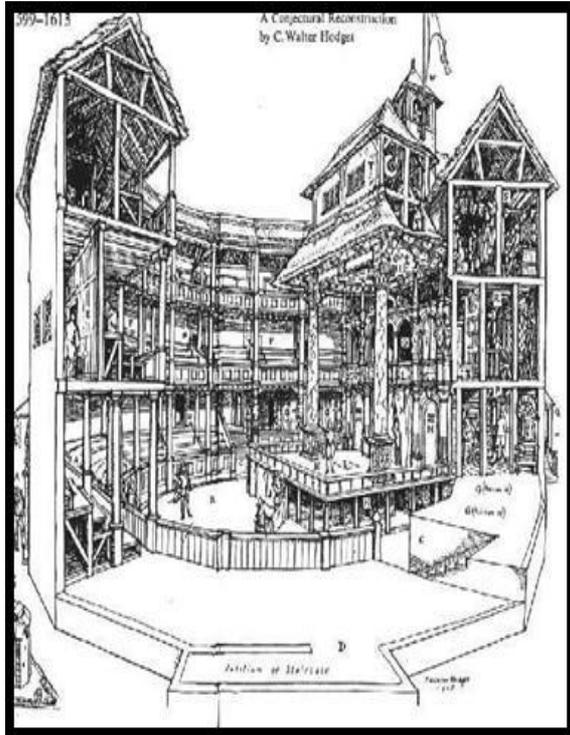


Building on Past Festivities

- This farmhouse and the land around it had previously been used often by both the public and the military.
- The theatre addition was not the main attribute of the Red Lyon; feasts, military shows, archery competitions and more were held before and after the theatre was added (Berry 136).



Descriptions of the Stage



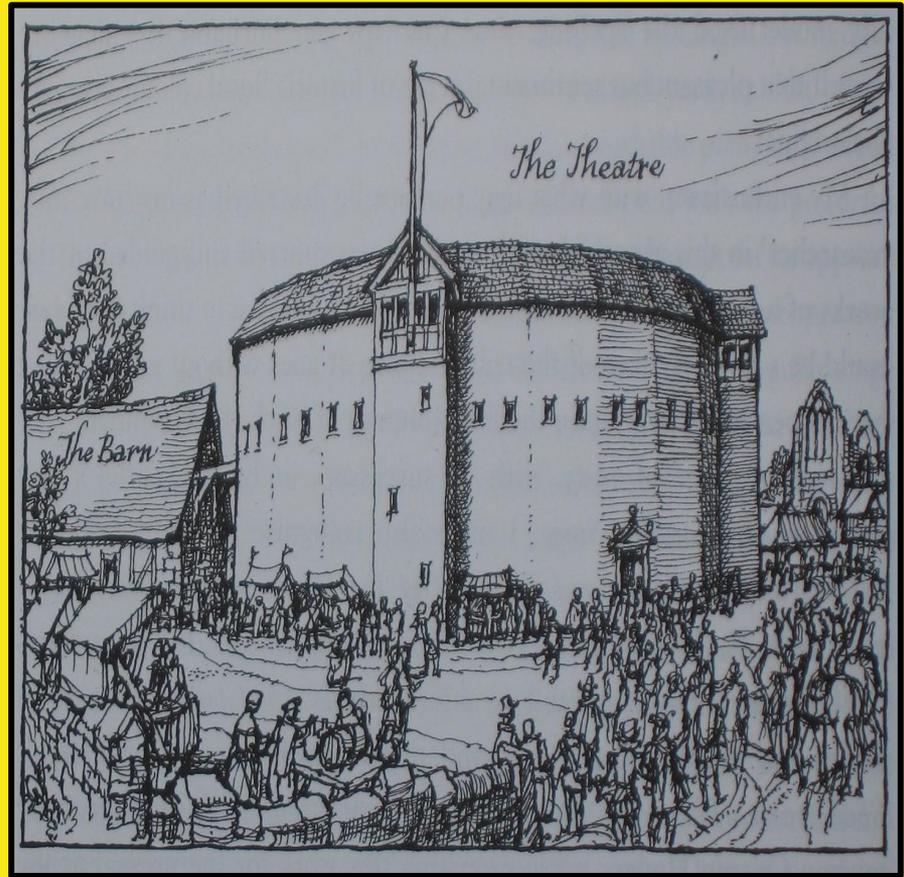
- The stage was described as "one Skaffolde or stage for enterludes or playes of good newe and well seasoned Tymber & boords" (a frame of timber).
- It needed to have "a certeyne space or voyde parte . . . left vnbordered."
- It was five feet high--the only stage of the time whose height is known. This stage also seems to be taller than previously thought.
- It was to be forty feet "in lenghte" (the Fortune stage was forty-three feet and the Boar's Head stage thirty-nine feet, seven inches) and thirty feet "in bredthe" (the Fortune stage was less).
- The stage at the Red Lion is the only one of the whole period for which all the main dimensions are available (Berry 137-138).

Skeptical about scaffolding

- John Brayne, a grocer, financed the new playhouse in 1567, to be called the Red Lyon. He was James Burbage's brother-in-law.
- He paid a carpenter named William Sylvester to build "skaffolds . . . at the house called the Red Lyon."
- However, Brayne disliked Sylvester's work, and got the courts involved. Sylvester was made to pay a fee and repair his work
- Then sixty years later, another complaint was found--Brayne had hired another carpenter, John Reynolds, and had complained about his workmanship, too. This time he only asked for monetary compensation (Berry 133).



The Theatre



James Burbage



- He and his associates procured the first royal patent ever granted in England--this gave them protection from the City authorities' constant opposition.
- Even with this patent, staging at the Inns continued to be difficult and the idea of a permanent theatre came up (Wallace 3).
- The name that he gave, 'The Theatre,' was both "bookish and contemporary as well as spectacular and classical" (Egan 182).
- It would have been considered a "machine for presenting plays" (Egan 182).

Building The Theatre

- Considered the first successful physical London theatre, but building it wasn't easy.
 - Built in 1576 by Burbage with some financial help from John Brayne.
 - Burbage got additional financial backing from others, sold his stock of groceries, his house, and almost everything he owned.
 - Burbage and his wife even worked as laborers at the end of the construction to avoid hiring more workers (Wallace 4-5).

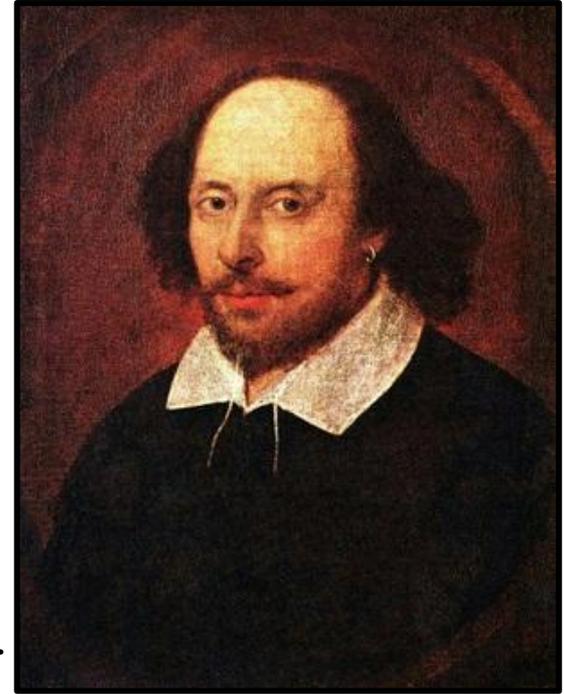


The Blueprint for The Theatre

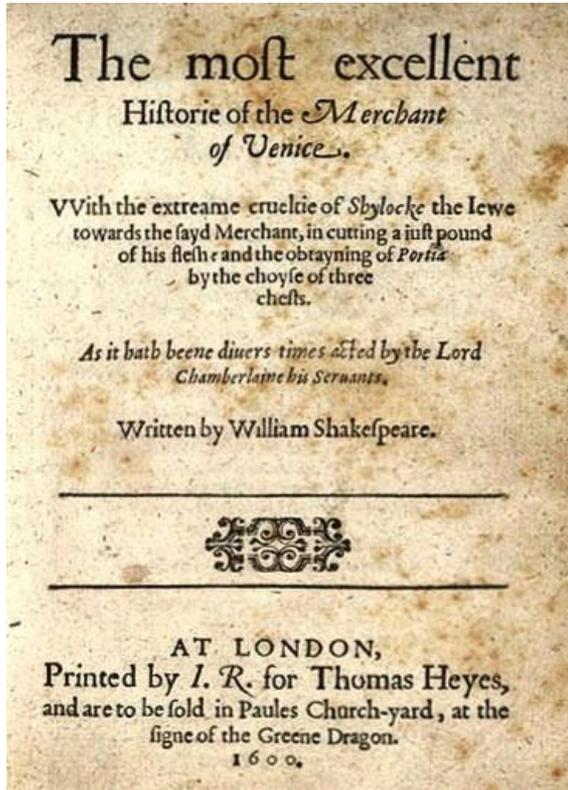
- There was no tried and true recipe at this time for theatres, and we also have no pictorial evidence of its existence.
- The stage area was essentially a wooden structure with a brick foundation--nothing permanent--that could be dismantled in a few days.
- There were galleries for walking and standing, not sitting, and some private rooms.
- There was also a 'theatre yard' and an 'Attyring housse' or room for players to make themselves 'readye' for the play (Egan 176-178).

Entertaining the Masses

- Burbage created an acting troupe that included the promising new writer-performer William Shakespeare.
- Many of Shakespeare's plays were put on here, including *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Merchant of Venice* (Egan 179-180).
- The Theatre was active from about 1591-1600 (Egan 180-181).



Social and Physical Deconstruction



- Burgage died in February of 1597, while the lease on the property expired in March of the same year.
- The Lord Chamberlain's men moved from the Theatre to the Curtain after the summer of 1598.
- An agreement was made that the physical theatre space of the Theatre could be moved, so that the players' property could be moved from the landlord (Egan 184).

Significance of the Theatre

- The first Theatre with permission to exist
- The first kind of open air amphitheatre entertainment playing place built just for that purpose
- Began a tradition of outdoor playhouses
- In a way spawned the blueprint and “genetic ancestry” for later theatres--The Globe is nearly identical in structure (Egan 184).

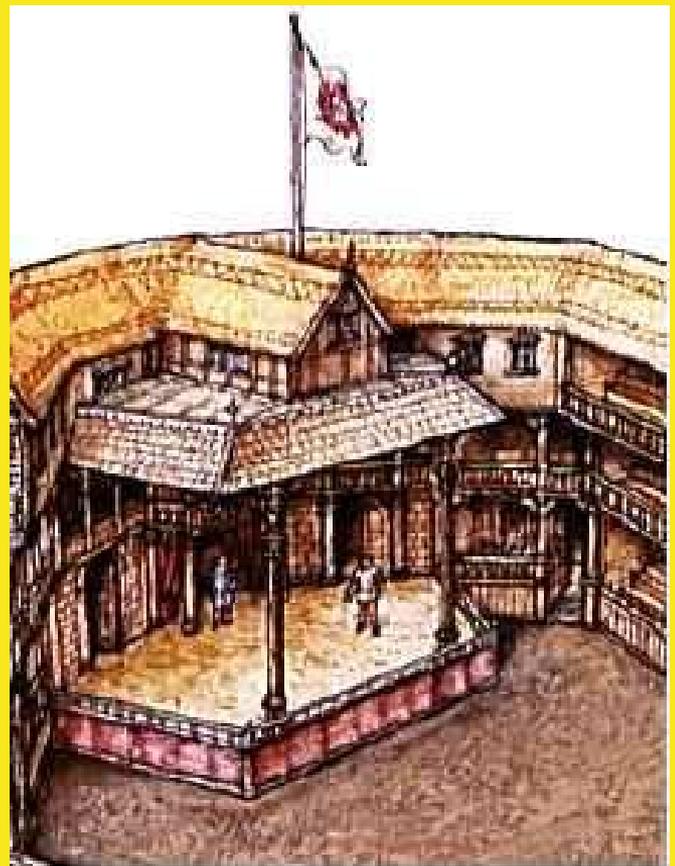


The Rose & The Globe Crash Course

Overview

- The Rose and The Globe Mnemonics
- Significant Historical Points & Figures
- Playhouse Design & Structure
- Excavations
- Similarities & Differences

The Rose



The Rose Theatre. C. Walter Hodges.

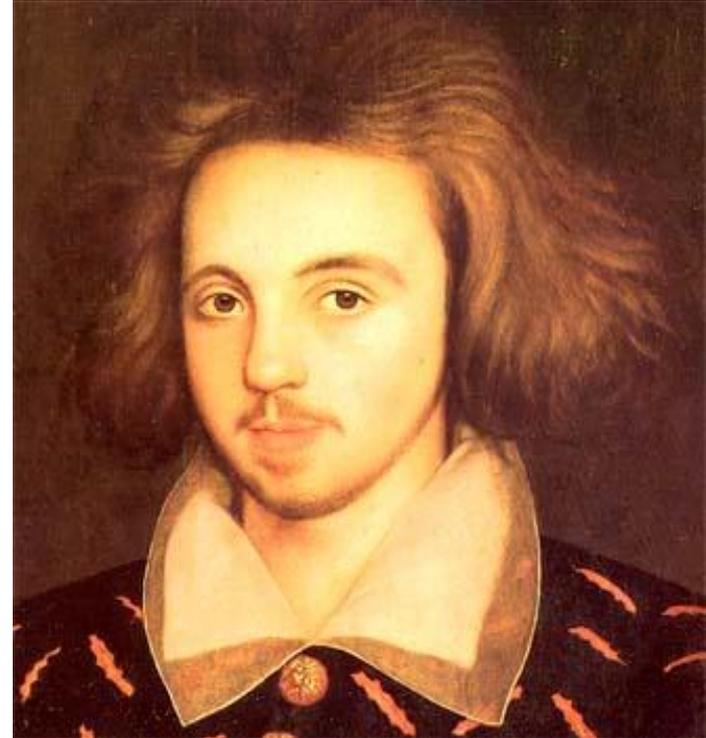
The Rose - History & Leading Figures

- The Rose & The “Lowes” Mnemonic
 - Philip Henslowe
 - 1550-1616 (Died the same year as Shakespeare)
 - English Architect & Businessman
 - Built The Rose in 1587
 - Went on to build the Hope and the Fortune
 - Henslowe’s Diary

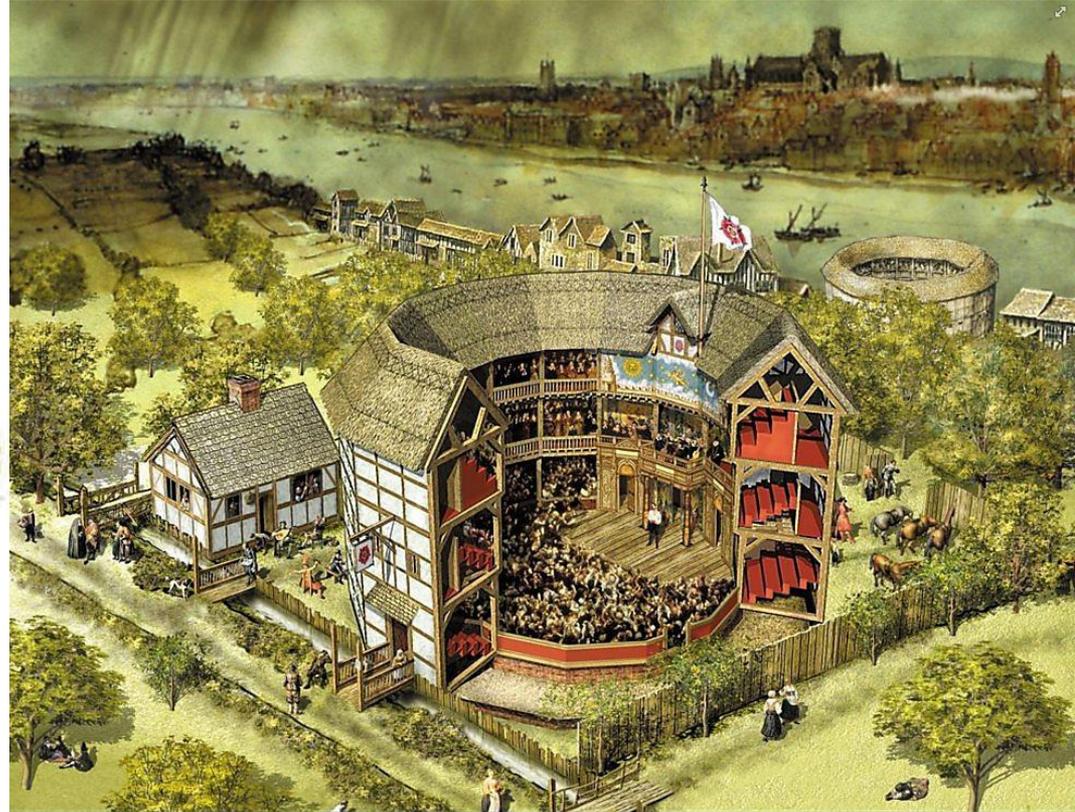
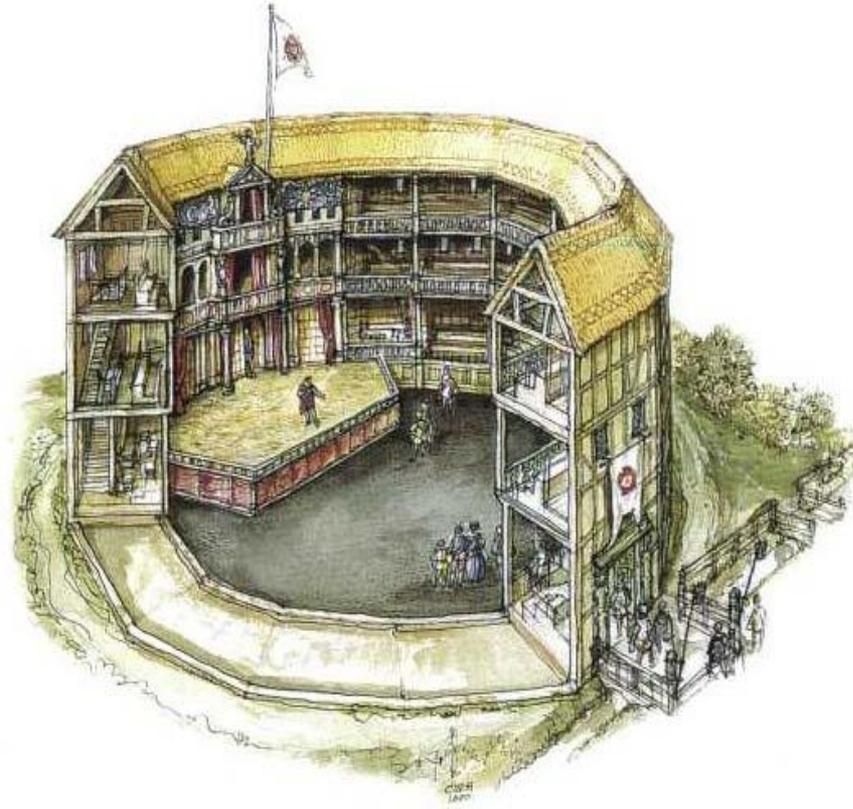


History & Leading Figures Cont'd...

- Christopher Marlowe
 - Playwright & Contemporary of Shakespeare
 - Known for writing: *Doctor Faustus*, *Tamburlaine*, & *The Jew of Malta*
 - Considered “in-house” playwright of The Rose after the Arrival of The Admiral’s Men in 1591, even though The Rose was the first playhouse to stage any of Shakespeare’s plays – *Henry VI, Part One* (Approx. 1590)



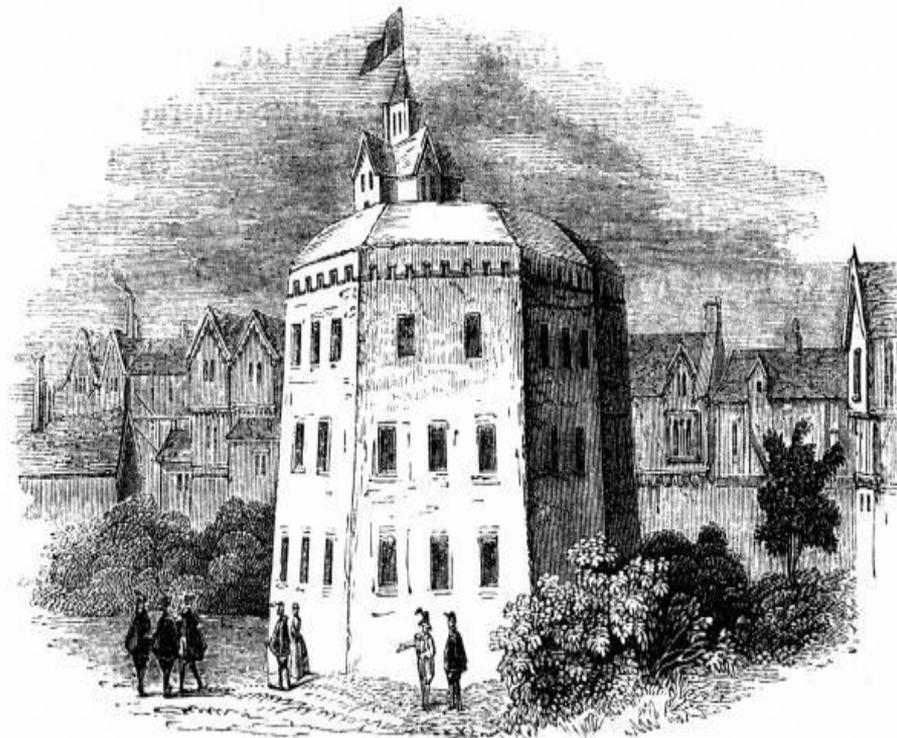
The Rose - Structure & Purpose



The Rose - Excavations & Discoveries



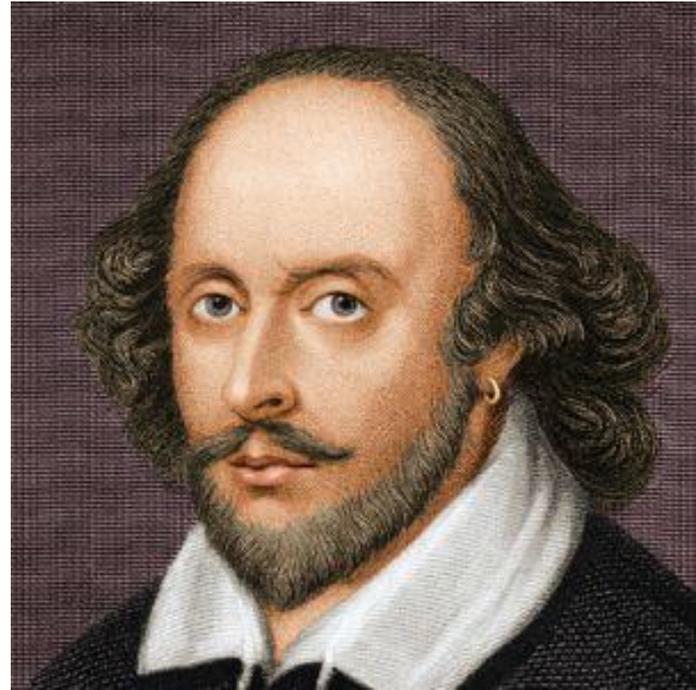
The Globe



[The Globe Theatre, Bankside.]

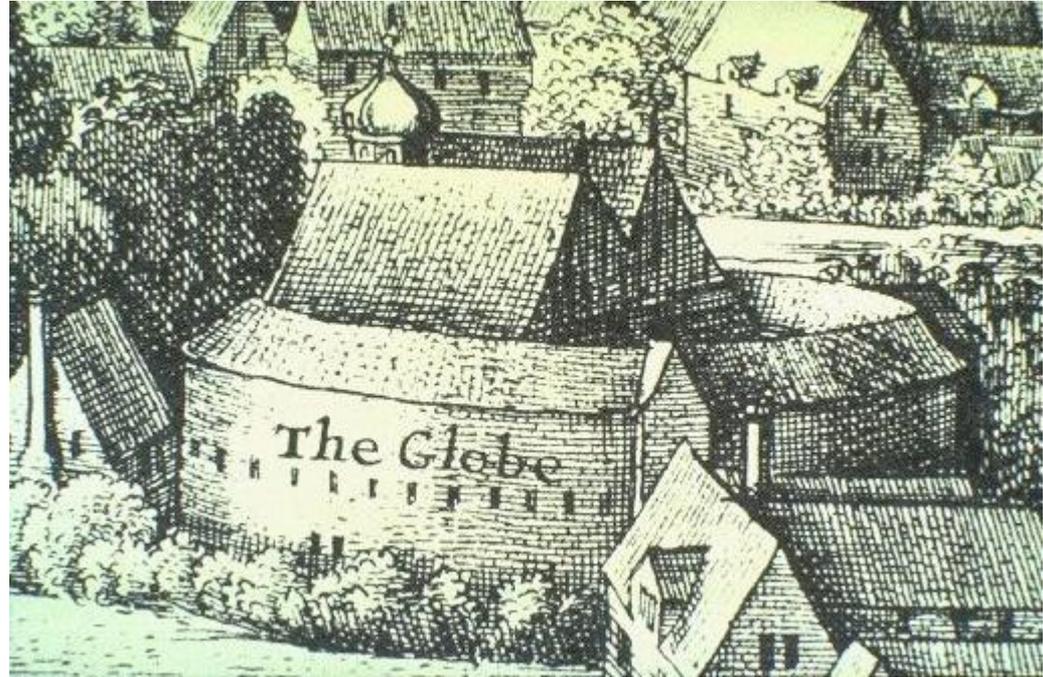
The Globe - History & Leading Figures

- Shakespeare -- “Sphere” -- *The Globe*
Mnemonic
- Built by Burbage’s sons & Shakespeare’s acting troupe, Lord Chamberlain’s Men, in 1599 after the Theatre was dismantled in 1598 (Gurr 14).
- Located on Bankside 50 yards from The Rose
- *Julius Caesar* believed to be the first of the Bard’s plays performed there - 1599



Shakespeare's Globe - Structure & Purpose

- “Wooden O”
- Open Air Theatre
- Mostly round with slightly rectangular interior space
- 3 stories high to allow for classic balcony scenes (*Romeo & Juliet*)
- Unique Spectator Admission System



The Globe - Destruction & Multiple Versions

- 1st Globe - 1599
- Rebuilt in 1614 after fire destroyed the entire structure during a performance of *Henry VIII*
- Eventually closed by the Puritans in 1642
- Torn Down in 1644

The Globe Excavations & Restoration

- Ruins of The Globe uncovered in 1989
- Location: Anchor Terrace on Southwark Bridge Road
- Less than 10% actually excavated
- Park Street Demarcation



The Globe Theatre Today

- The Globe was rebuilt in 1997 as a tourist attraction approximately 750 feet from the original site.



The Rose vs. The Globe

- Audience Capacity
- Structure
- Popularity/Success



- Spectator Capacity:
 - Rose = 2,000-2,400
 - Globe = approx. 3,000
- Structure:
 - Rose = 14 sides, cramped viewing space
 - Globe = 20 sides, organized entrance
- Popularity/Success:
 - The Rose abandoned in 1606; Globe forcibly closed

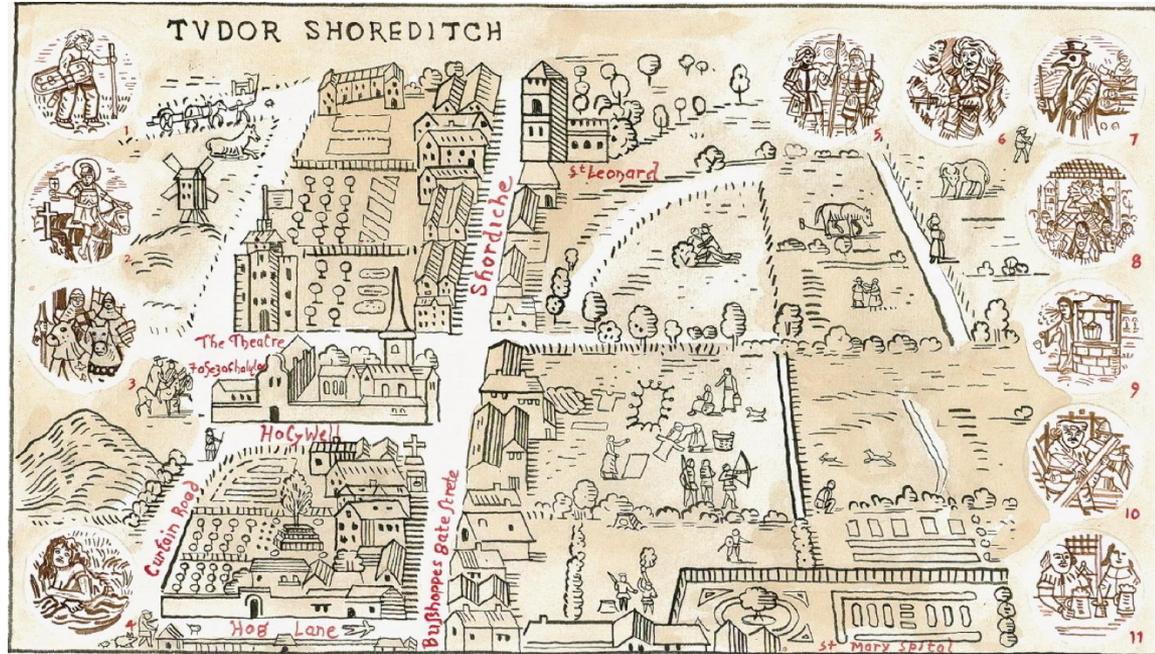
**The Curtain,
Newington Butts,
The Swan,
and The Red Bull**

The Curtain



The Curtain is built- 1576

- 2nd Elizabethan Playhouse chronologically
- Location: Moore Fields, Shoreditch
- Planner/Builder/
Manager: Henry Lanman
- Set-Up: probably
Polygonal or circular,
unroofed



The Curtain's Relationship with The Theatre

- Often connected & mentioned together
- 1585~1592: Contract for same management
 - Boosted the Curtain's success
 - Hurt the Curtain after contract's end



Some Troupes of The Curtain

- 1597-1599: Chamberlain's Men
(Globe)
- 1604~ 1609: Queen Anne's
Company (Red Bull)
- 1609~1623: Prince Charles's Men
(Red Bull)



Newington Butts



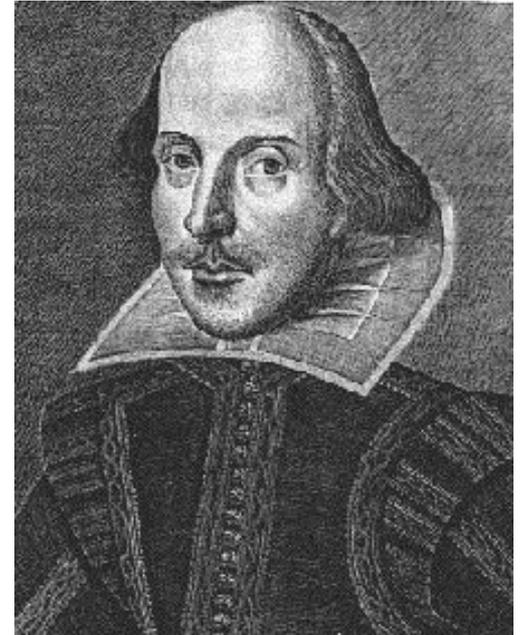
Newington Butts is built- 1586

- 4th Elizabethan Playhouse after the Curtain and St. Paul's
- Location: Newington (1 Mile from London Bridge)
- Unroofed, open space



Newington Butts and the Gift of The Plague

- Only real fame came the first season after the plague
- Combined companies of Admiral's Men
and Chamberlain's men
- June 5–June 15, 1594



The Isle of Dogs Controversy

- Feb. 21, 1597: Pembroke's Company contracted to perform at The Swan
- July, 1597: Pembroke's performs *The Isle of Dogs*
 - Attacked some persons of high authority
- 28 July, 1597: Privy Council (the Queen) declares the end of plays in London and destruction of all playhouses
 - Also arrest *The Isle...* playwrights and actors
- Season destroyed and Pembroke's men disbanded (Admiral's)

The Red Bull



The Red Bull is built- c. 1600

- Builder/Planner: Aaron Holland
- Set-Up: Large, open house
- 1609: The Queen's Men move in from The Curtain

Turf War?



- Only playhouses “allowed” (1604):
 - The Curtain, The Globe, and The Fortune
- Only troupes “allowed”:
 - The Queen’s Men, The King’s Men, The Prince’s Men

The Red Bull Company

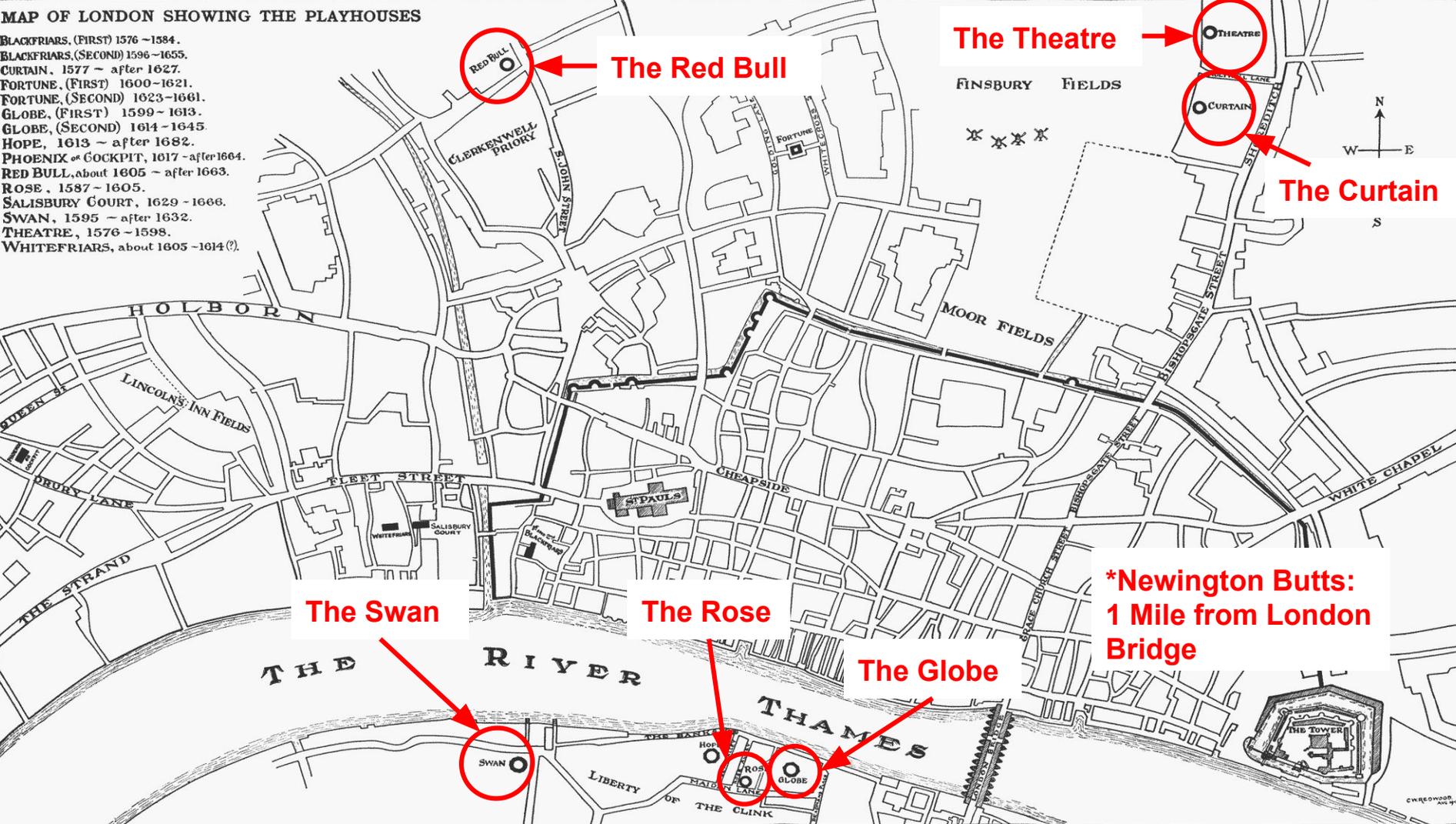


- Queen's death (1619) dissolves Queen's Men
- Some join the Prince's Men
- Most stay on at The Red Bull as The Red Bull Company
 - More join after Prince Charles becomes King and his troupe is dissolved into the King's troupe

Conclusion

MAP OF LONDON SHOWING THE PLAYHOUSES

- BLACKFRIARS, (FIRST) 1576 - 1584.
- BLACKFRIARS, (SECOND) 1596 - 1655.
- CURTAIN, 1577 ~ after 1627.
- FORTUNE, (FIRST) 1600 - 1621.
- FORTUNE, (SECOND) 1623 - 1661.
- GLOBE, (FIRST) 1599 - 1613.
- GLOBE, (SECOND) 1614 - 1645.
- HOPE, 1613 ~ after 1682.
- PHOENIX or COCKPIT, 1617 - after 1664.
- RED BULL, about 1605 ~ after 1663.
- ROSE, 1587 - 1605.
- SALISBURY COURT, 1629 - 1666.
- SWAN, 1595 ~ after 1632.
- THEATRE, 1576 - 1598.
- WHITEFRIARS, about 1605 - 1614 (?)



The Red Bull

The Theatre

The Curtain

The Swan

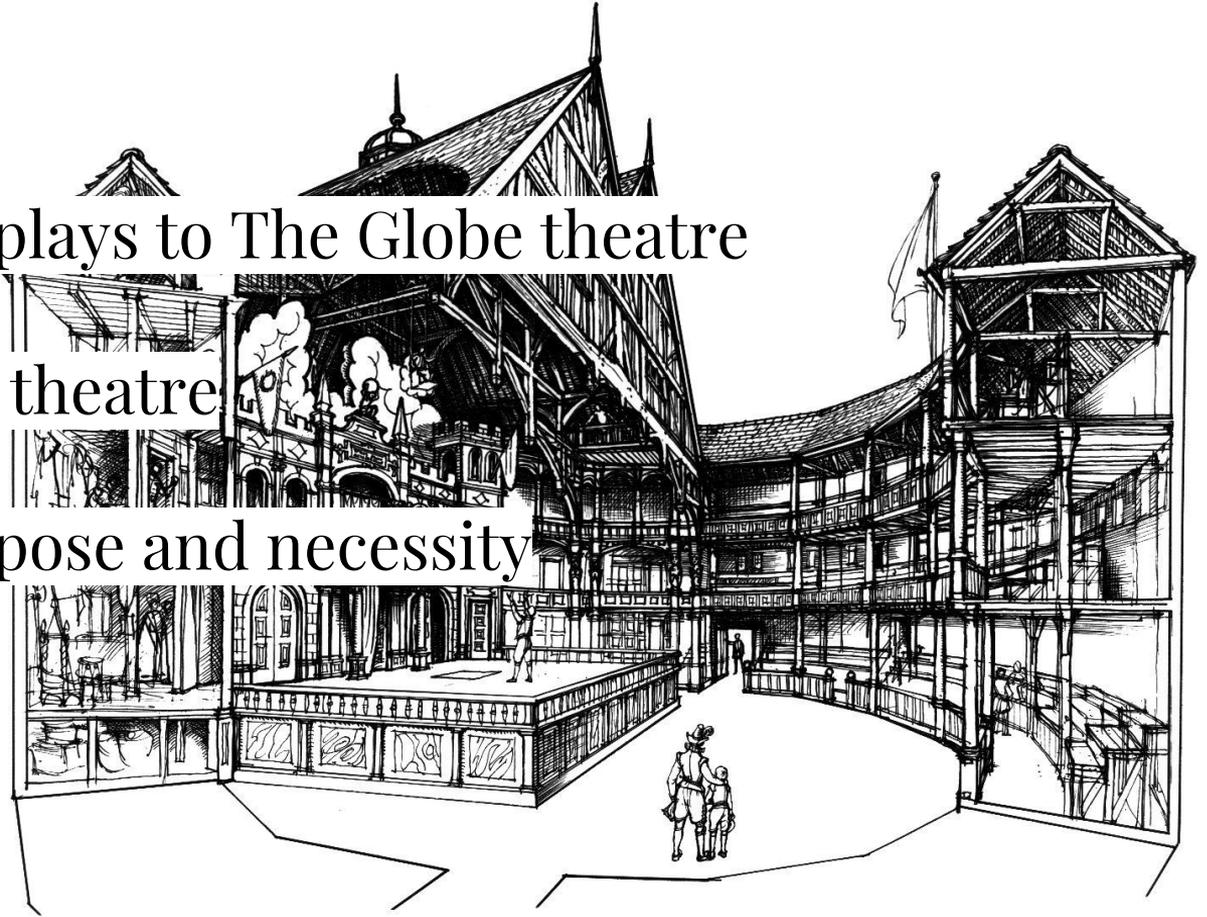
The Rose

The Globe

***Newington Butts:
1 Mile from London
Bridge**

Conclusion

- From Inn-Yard plays to The Globe theatre
- Perseverance of theatre
- Playhouses: purpose and necessity
- Application



Works Cited

Works Cited

- Abagond, Julian. “Money in Shakespeare’s time.” *Blog Post*, 2 May 2007, <https://abagond.wordpress.com/2007/05/02/money-in-shakespeares-time>. 15 Sep. 2017.
- Adams, Joseph Q. *Shakespearean Playhouses: A History of English Theatres from the Beginnings to the Restoration*. Houghton Mufflin Co., 1917. Print.
- Berry, Herbert. “The First Public Playhouses, Especially the Red Lion.” *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 2, 1989, pp. 133–148. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2870815.
- Cerasano, S.P. “Theatre Entrepreneurs and Theatrical Economics.” *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, edited by Richard Dutton, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp 381-395.
- Chambers, E.K. *The Elizabethan Stage: Vol. 2*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2009. Print.
- Egan, Gabriel. “The Theatre in Shoreditch, 1576-1599.” *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, edited by Richard Dutton, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 168-185.

Works Cited Cont'd...

- Greenfield, Jon, and Andrew Gurr. "The Rose Theatre, London: The State of Knowledge and what we Still Need to Know." *Antiquity* 78.300 (2004): 330-40. *ProQuest*. Web. 7 Sep. 2017.
- Gurr, Andrew. *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Gurr, Andrew. *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Jokinen, Anniina. "Timeline of Playhouses and Acting Companies." *Luminarium*, 2 Aug 2006, <http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/dramatimeline.htm>. Accessed 16 Sep 2017.
- Kathman, David. "Inn-Yard Playhouses." *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, edited by Richard Dutton, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 153-167.
- Lawrence, William John. *The Elizabethan Playhouse and Other Studies*. Stratford-upon-Avon: Shakespeare Head Pr., 1913. Print.

Works Cited Cont'd...

- Ford, David Nash. “The History of the Rose Theatre.” *Britannia*, 8 Sep 2017.
<http://www.britannia.com/history/londonhistory/histrose.html>
- Morris, James. “The Rose and the property developer: a cautionary tale on the perils of hasty urban planning.” *The Conversation*, 25 May 2016, Accessed 10 Sep 2017,
<https://theconversation.com/the-rose-and-the-property-developer-a-cautionary-tale-on-the-perils-of-hasty-urban-planning-59765>
- “Philip Henslowe.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 3 Mar 2014,
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Philip-Henslowe>.
- “The History.” *The Rose Playhouse Bankside’s first Tudor theatre*. Accessed 8 Sep 2017.
<http://www.roseplayhouse.org.uk/discover/the-history/>