Shakespeare 3 Essay, Research Paper

William Shakespeare was born in the year of 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. His exact birth date is unknown but it is traditionally celebrated on April 23. In England this day is known as the feast of St. George. He was the third of eight children born to John and Mary Arden Shakespeare. John Shakespeare was a tanner, and a glove maker. He served a term as the mayor of Stratford, a town council man, a justice of peace, and an ale-taster. Unfortunately John could not write. John Shakespeare died in 1601. Since William was his eldest son he received what little land his father owned. Little is known about his mother s life. It is known that she came from a wealthy family. Her family also paid her husband a handsome dowry.

William Shakespeare went to a very good grammar school in Stratford-upon- Avon. Two of his instructors were Oxford graduates, Simon Hunt and Thomas Jenkins. William s studies were in Greek and Latin. He developed the ability of keen observation of both nature and mankind. It is said that his education ended here.

On November 27, 1582, when William was 18 years old, he married Anne Hathaway. She was ten years older than him. Their first daughter, named Susanna, was born the next year on May 26, 1583. The couple also had twins, Hamnet and Judith, in 1585. Hamnet died at the age of eleven, but it is unknown how.

Between the years of 1585 and 1592 no evidence of what happened in Shakespeare s life is known. These years are called “The Hidden Years”. It is said that during this stretch of time, he ran away from the law or was the apprentice of a butcher, although a man named John Aubry was told by Christopher Beston that Shakespeare was a school teacher up until 1592 somewhere in London.

Beginning in 1592, in London, he became known as an established playwright. In 1593 he found a patron, Henry Wriothsley, to sponsor him. William Shakespeare was also an actor, writer, director, and stockholder in “The King s Men” company.

He acted for a company called “The King s Men”. This company became the largest and most famous acting company simply because William was performing and working for them.

Shakespeare wrote two long poems. His first, “Venus and Adonius”, was written in the year 1593. Then a year later he wrote, “Rape of Lucrece”. These were written at a time when theatres were closed because of the contagious epidemic known as the plague.

In the late 1590 s he wrote many plays. Most of them being comedies, the major ones are: “The Taming of the Shrew”, “The Comedy of Errors”, “As You Like It”, “Much Ado About Nothing”, and “The Two Gentlemen of Verona”. “Romeo and Juliet” was his only tragedy written during this time. In 1599 a theatre called the Globe was built by Shakespeare s company. Some of his most prominent tragedies written and performed were “Hamlet”, “Othello”, “King Lear”, and “Macbeth”.

Since Shakespeare was established playwright, he was wealthy because of multiple income sources. In 1597 he bought his family a huge house called New Place, located in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Shakespeare retired from theatre in 1610 and returned to Stratford. On the 25th of March, 1616, he wrote his will. On April 23, 1616, the same date as his birthday, William Shakespeare died. He was buried at the chancel of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Stratford. The cause of his death is unknown. Many people believe that he knew that his death was near, but did not want anybody to know.

Seven years after he died, in 1623 William Shakespeare s first folio was published including 154 sonnets, 36 plays, and his two long poems. The folio was put together by his friends so that nobody could take his work as theirs.

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