

Game One

Sir Christopher Abdy. Brother-in-law to Humphrey Mildmay, recorded as accompanying him to a play. His family were merchants in the Cloth-workers' Guild.

This would have meant that they produced woollen cloth, buying it roughly woven and preparing it to make into garments. Wool was big business in Tudor England (as the majority of clothes were woollen) and the family may have been quite wealthy.

Game One

Edward Alleyn. Actor and impresario. After he left acting in 1602 and went fully into theatre management at the Fortune and the Hope Theatres, he still attended other playhouses. On 1 October 1617, he made a note: 'I came to London in ye coach and went to ye red bull. 0.0.2' (i.e. for two pence).

The Red Bull was a public theatre like the Globe Theatre. You can tell where Alleyn choose to watch the play from by how much he paid.

Game One

Sarah Archdall. Wooed by Simon Forman as a possible bride, they met twice at the Curtain Playhouse on 19 and 22 April 1599, the second time in the company of her uncle. At this time Shakespeare's company was using the Curtain Theatre while they waited for the completion of the Globe Theatre.

It is funny that the theatre was called the Curtain because in Tudor England the stage was not behind a curtain as it was in Restoration or Victorian theatre. The Curtain Theatre was actually just named after the street it was near called 'Curtain Close'.

Game One

Gilbert Borne. A butcher charged with making an affray at the Fortune Theatre in 1611 with Ralph Brewyn and others.

Small skirmishes often broke out after theatre performances. This is why many people protested against the number of theatres in London.

Elizabeth Boyle. Sister-in-law of Mary Rich, with whom she frequently went to plays in about 1640.

Elizabeth must have loved theatre and the literary world as she visited the theatre a lot – she later married the poet Edmund Spenser.

Game One

Thomas Browne. A 'serving man in a blew coat' accused of stirring trouble amongst some 'handicraft prentises' at the door of the Theatre in 1584.

Thomas was a servant who got into a fight with some apprentices [prentises]. Young men spent up to 7 years as apprentices learning a trade. These young and typically unmarried men were often accused of making trouble.

Game One

Duke of Brunswick. A visitor to London in December 1624, when he went to a play at the Blackfriars.

The Blackfriars was more expensive than the Globe Theatre – by quite a lot. It was an indoor theatre and was considered more exclusive than the outdoor theatre.

Game One

Luke Bryan. A sixty-year old member of the King's guard. At a play at the Red Bull in 1607, he quarrelled with the gatherer, Joan Hewes. According to the lawsuit, 'Well quoth Joan Hewes . . . if you will pai me for your admittance, paie quoth the said Luce Bryan repleyenge said unto . . . Joan Hewes, thou art an arrant whore and a theefe'

Luke didn't think he should have to pay for his visit to the Red Bull Theatre – perhaps he thought he might get in free being a member of the King's guard. But Joan who was taking the money clearly thought he should! Even for the sake of a few pennies, this case ended up in court. Tudor folk often took each other to court over what seem to us very small issues.

Game One

The Duke of Buckingham. In August 1628, shortly before he was assassinated, he went to the Globe to see a performance of *Henry VIII*. The next day he saw Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece* at the Cockpit Theatre.

The Cockpit was another public theatre named because it has been and perhaps still was used for public cock-fights. People would bet on which cockerel would win the fight.

Game One

Mary Caldwell, of Essex attended a play with George Evelyn, her brother, and some ladies, in November 1639.

Some women did visit the theatre by themselves, but if they were not with a man they risked being accused of being immoral and being heckled (jeered at) by other men at the theatre.

Game One

Elizabeth Cary. Author of *Mariam*, her daughter's biography states that she was a frequent play-goer in her earlier years.

Women did write during this period of history, but it was considered a rather disreputable thing to do for a lady. Women like Elizabeth who went to the theatre a lot were probably joked about by others as it was a bit unusual for women to frequent the theatre especially alone or with just their female friends.

Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland. He was mentioned in the publisher's note in an edition of Henry Killigrew's *The Conspiracy* as attending the first performance of the play at the Blackfriars, probably in 1630 or 1631. Writing to Thomas Carew, returning a playbook, he asked for a copy of the play on the grounds that 'if I valued it so high at the single hearing, when myne eares could not catch half the words, what must I do now, in the reading when I may pause upon it'

This is one of the bits of evidence that suggest the theatre audience was restless and noisy rather than silent and still (as we are today). Lucius only expected to hear half the words the first time he saw the play performed. Many plays were never printed as books so if you wanted to hear the whole play you had to visit the theatre several times until you understood the whole plot.

Game One

Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle. With her sisters she was used 'in winter time to go sometimes to plays or to ride in their coaches about the streets to see the concourse and recourse of people'

Margaret visited the theatre with her sisters. It looks like they went as a group of women (perhaps with a trusted male servant for company), but because they were wealthy they kept some distance from those who would have made fun of them for visiting the theatre without a man to accompany them.

Game One

Charles, Prince of the Palatinate. Accompanied the Queen of Palatine to a performance at the Blackfriars on 5 May 1636. This may have been a special evening performance rather than a normal commercial afternoon. Charles's mother had been patron of the Lady Elizabeth's Men.

Special performances were often put on just for very high status people. This was easy to do at the Blackfriars indoor playhouse which was quite exclusive anyway.

Game One

Sir John Davies. Gallant and Inns of Court man. His epigrams indicate that he was a frequent play-goer in the 1590's.

The Inns of Court is where young lawyers were trained. Sometimes special performances were given at the Inns of Court just for the trainee lawyers. They needed lots of lawyers in Tudor England as there were lots and lots of small claims being made even for what seem to us to be very small/petty issues.

Game One

Johannes De Witt. A Dutch visitor to London in 1596. He described the playhouses and sketched the Swan Theatre, then the most newly built of the amphitheatres.

Johannes's little sketch has become famous now because it is the only drawing we have from the time period of the inside of the theatre space. The Swan Theatre was old-fashioned by the time the Globe Theatre was most famous – theatre fashions moved on pretty quickly.

Game One

Isaac Doricla. A Dutch historian resident in England from 1628, friend of Kenelm Digby and Selden, an anti-monarchist. He accompanied Mildmay to playhouses in November 1634, November 1635, February 1638, February 1639 and February 1640.

It is clear than many people visiting England from other countries made a point of visiting the theatre.

Game One

George Evelyn. Brother of the diarist. He attended with his beloved, Mary Caldwell, and other ladies whom he took to the playhouses in November 1639.

The Theatre was certainly a place where a young man could take a lady on what we would now call a date. There are lots of examples of men and women attending the theatre together when they were dating or 'wooing' as Shakespeare would have called it.

Game One

Simon Forman. Physician and necromancer. He went to the Curtain Theatre on 19 and 22 April 1599 and to see the same company at the Globe Theatre in the summer of 1611, where he saw four plays, including *Macbeth*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*.

Simon Forman wrote accounts of seeing these plays and today these are some of the very few accounts we have of performances of Shakespeare's plays during his lifetime. A necromancer was a person who claimed to communicate with the spirits of the dead sometimes apparently raising their physical body.

Game One

Alexander Fulsis. Stole a purse containing £3 from Alexander Sweet at the Red Bull in 1614.

The Red Bull was one of the theatres in Shakespeare's London. It was very well known that pick-pockets or as they were then called, cut purses, would frequent the playhouse and it was very common for people to complain of having been robbed in the busy bustle of the theatre. Tudor men and women wore leather purses attached to their belts. Cut purse thieves operated by cutting the ties or slitting a hole in the purse itself.

Game One

Sarmiento de Acuna Gondomar. Ambassador of Spain. He went with his followers to the Fortune Theatre in 1621, and subsequently banqueted with the players (Chamberlain, *Letters* II.391).

This is a good example of an important figure visiting the public playhouse. The Fortune Theatre was similar to the Globe Theatre. The Ambassador was given an audience with the actors after the play. A banquet in Jacobean England was not a large meal but a table of sweet treats sometimes rather beautifully displayed.

Game One

Hallam, - Servant to Sir William Cavendish. He accompanied his master to Paul's in October 1601, paying three pence.

Hallam seems to have enjoyed the performance from the best seats because he accompanied his master to the theatre.

Game One

Elizabeth Hattrell. A serving-woman aged nineteen or twenty in 1611, she went to the Curtain Playhouse for a play by Prince Charles's company.

It is not certain whether Elizabeth went to the theatre alone – which was unusual but not unheard of – or whether she accompanied the lady she worked for to the theatre.

Game One

Edward Heath. A student of the Middle Temple. His accounts show that he attended forty-nine plays in eighteen months through 1628-9, and bought ten playbooks.

Edward the student, must have really enjoyed the theatre. Middle Temple was one of the Inns of Court – a law school so it is likely that Edward was studying to be a lawyer.

Game One

Philip Herbert, Fourth Earl of Pembroke. The Lord Chamberlain quarrelled with the Duke of Lennox over a box at Blackfriars for a new play, January 1636.

Clearly these two wealthy men both wanted to sit in the best seats at the indoor theatre at the Blackfriars.

Game One

Sir Arthur Ingram. A self-made gentleman, one of the wealthiest in England, he rebuilt Temple Newsam House near Leeds. He stayed in London in 1633-4, when he went to see seven plays. He paid for links to light his group from the play, and a coachman.

This gentleman clearly liked to make an entrance because although he went to the cheap public playhouse he paid for men to light is way back from the play in the dark evening.

Game One

Mrs James. She accompanied Humphrey Mildmay to a playhouse in February 1639, and with 'her goodman' to *The Alchemist* in May 1639.

Mrs James went to plays with Mr Mildmay and also sometimes it appears with her servant. It is not known what relationship existed between Mrs Jones and Mr Mildmay. They may have been relatives but they may have been more than that...

Thomas Killigrew. Playwright. Pepys reports Sir John Mennis as telling him in 1662 that while a boy he used to get free access to the Red Bull's plays by accepting invitations 'to be a devil upon the stage' (*The diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols, London 1971-83, III. 243-4).

This is a lovely insight into the world of the theatre. It seems the young Thomas loved the theatre so much that he offered to play small parts (here the part of the devil) at the Red Bull Theatre just so he could see the plays. As acting companies were usually quite small they would probably have been glad of one extra actor. Thomas grew up to be a playwright himself.

Game One

Antoine Le Fevre. Sieur de la Boderie, French Ambassador. He and his wife took the Venetian Ambassador and the Secretary of the Florentine Embassy to the Globe Theatre in 1607-8 to see *Pericles*.

This group of ambassadors from France and Venice went to see one of the Shakespeare's plays at the Globe.

Game One

Joseph Mulis. Servant to Dudley Norton, at the Globe in August 1612.

We don't know whether Dudley made his servant wait outside, watch from the yard, or accompany him to the better seats.

Mrs Overall. Wife of John Overall, Professor of Theology at Cambridge 1596-1607, Dean of St Paul's 1602-18. Aubrey writes, 'She had (they told me) the loviest Eies that were ever seen, but wondrous wanton. When she came to Court or to the Play-house, the Gallants would so flock about her'. (*Brief Lives*, ed. O.L. Dicks, p.226).

Mrs Overall seems to have attracted the attention of lots of young men when she visited the playhouse. Simply because she had a very flirtatious look in her eye! Young men and women would often meet and flirt at the theatre.

Game One

Henry Peacham. Saw *Titus Andronicus* in about 1595, and drew a scene together with an extended quotation from the play.

Titus Andronicus is Shakespeare's most violent plays and it was one of his most popular plays too. Henry's drawing is now very famous because it is the only drawing of a play in performance. Because of his drawing of the play, which is set in ancient Rome but shows actors mostly in Tudor style costumes, we think Shakespeare's plays were performed mostly in 'modern dress'.

This is the picture Henry drew.



Game One

Thomas Platter. Swiss scholar who visited England in 1599. His travels included a visit to the Globe to see *Julius Caesar* on 21 September.

Another theatre-goer visiting from the continent and making a trip to the English theatre. Julius Caesar was a very popular play as the Tudors were really interested in Ancient Rome. They liked to think that Julius Caesar built the Tower of London.

Game One

Henry Staple. A cordwainer, accused along with Harrison and Holdaye of stealing William George's purse at the Curtain Theatre in August 1613.

The Curtain was one of the theatres in Shakespeare's London. It was very well known that pick-pockets or as they were then called, cut purses, would frequent the playhouse and it was very common for people to complain of having been robbed in the busy bustle of the theatre. Tudor men and women wore leather purses attached to their belts. Cut Purse thieves operated by cutting the ties or slitting a hole in the purse itself.