



William Shakespeare

Information about the life of William Shakespeare is often open to doubt. Some even doubt whether he wrote all plays ascribed to him. From the best available sources it seems William Shakespeare was born in Stratford on about April 23rd 1564. His father William was a successful local businessman and his mother Mary was the daughter of a landowner. Relatively prosperous, it is likely the family paid for William's education, although there is no evidence he attended university.

In 1582 William, aged only 18, married an older woman (26) named Anne Hathaway. Soon after they had their first daughter, Susanna. They had another 2 children but William's only son Hamnet died aged only 11.

After his marriage, information about the life of Shakespeare is sketchy but it seems he spent most of his time in London writing and performing in his plays. It seemed he didn't mind being absent from his family. Only returning home during Lent when all theatres were closed. It is generally thought that during the 1590s he wrote the majority of his sonnets. William Shakespeare wrote 154 Sonnets. These were fairly short poems they deal with issues such as lost love. His sonnets have an enduring appeal with his characteristic skill with language and words.

The plays of Shakespeare have been studied more than any other writing in the English language and have been translated into numerous languages. He was rare as a playwright for excelling in tragedies, comedies and histories.

During his lifetime Shakespeare was not without controversy, but he also received lavish praise for his plays, which were very popular and commercially successful.

Shakespeare died in 1616. It is not clear how he died although his vicar suggested it was from heavy drinking.