

HENSLOWE OPENS THE ROSE

"Tamburlaine" is a Great Hit

Said to be the first play by a previously unknown writer, Christopher Marlowe, "Tamburlaine" has proved to be an astonishing success for the Admiral's Men at the newly opened Rose Theatre. It is written in flamboyant blank verse of great beauty and is an exciting epic of such theatrical flair that it has swept everything along before it. The English stage has not seen anything like this before. The author is the 24 year old son of a Canterbury shoemaker. From his very early years he showed a great talent, and because of this he won a scholarship to study at Cambridge University.

Mystery surrounds his University career. Originally he was refused his Degree because he had been absent on too many occasions, but intervention from the highest authority - the Privy Council itself - assured the college authorities that Marlowe had been absent on "the Queen's business". The University immediately changed its mind and awarded him his M.A.

This has led to speculation that Marlowe may have been employed as a secret service agent, spying on the Catholic conspirators in Rheims, France.

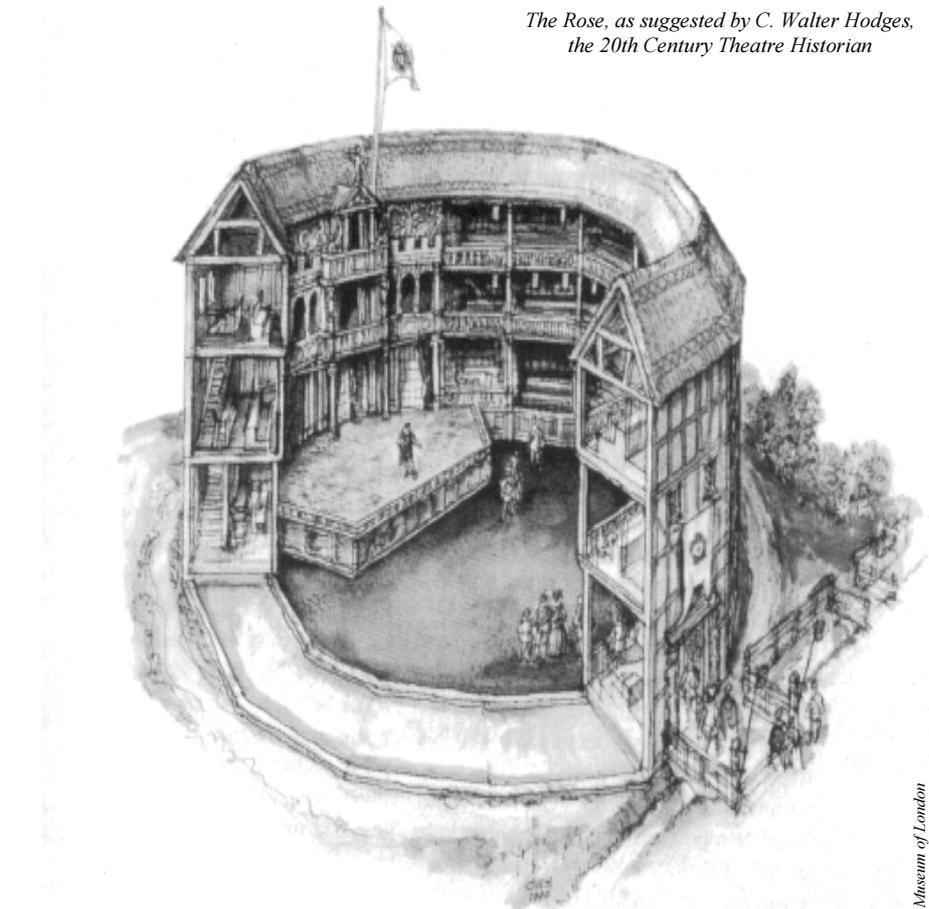
Whatever the true story may be, there is no doubt that Christopher Marlowe has single-handedly and overnight changed the face of British theatre. His "Tamburlaine" is a benchmark by which all future tragedies will be measured.

Two Playgoers die in accident

Law student, Philip Gawdy, has lodged a complaint following a disastrous accident during a public performance of a play. . A "devyse" for shooting an actor as part of the play went wrong, swerved into the audience and killed a child and a pregnant woman. Gawdy has not named the theatre in his petition, but it is generally believed to be the newly-opened Rose.

Five Companies in Stratford

Stratford-on-Avon remains one of the most popular venues for touring theatre companies. This year no fewer than five companies have played seasons at the Warwickshire town. Richard Burbage's company had a particularly successful season there.



The Rose, as suggested by C. Walter Hodges, the 20th Century Theatre Historian

Philip Henslowe, in association with John Cholmley, a grocer, has built a new theatre. It is called "The Rose" because it has been built on a the site of a former rose garden in an area of Southwark known as the Liberty of the Clink. The theatre is a 13 or 14 sided polygon, and is 72 feet wide. It is constructed out of wood and plaster on a brick foundation, and is partly thatched. The stage itself is 18 feet deep, and varies from 28 feet to 38 feet in length. The stage faces south-east, in order to catch the maximum daylight. The main area for the standing patrons slopes towards the stage, so that those standing at the back can still get a good view.

Touring Actor Killed in Fight

The Queen's Men have had an incident-packed touring season this year. The touring schedule included Stratford-upon-Avon, Abingdon -, where the excited crowd clamouring for tickets broke the windows of Abingdon Great Hall, and Thames in Oxfordshire.

The most serious incident happened at Thames, where a fight broke out between two actors in the company, John Towne and William Knell. During the course of this dispute, William Knell was killed. His opponent was jailed, but later acquitted for acting in self defence.

Sunday Opening Criticised Leicester's Men on Tour

The Privy Council has passed on complaints from Bankside residents to the Justices of Surrey. The residents object to the performances of plays on Sundays, claiming they are ungodly and lead to corruption. Sunday performances are illegal in the City of London itself, though there have been frequent breaches of this rule.

Leicester's Men, now rejoined by those members of the company who toured the Low Countries last year, have included Stratford, Coventry and Bath on their summer tour. Their most glamorous engagement however was at the magnificent Lathom Castle, seat of the 4th Earl of Derby.