

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon in 1564, the son of a prominent citizen. His contemporary, Francis Meres, records in 1598 that Shakespeare has circulated his sugared sonnets among his private friends. He presumably attended the Stratford grammar school, but we know nothing certain about his young life, apart from his christening and then his marriage, eighteen years later, to Anne Hathaway. Shakespeare's writing, in his early years, included poetry as well as plays, *Venus and Adonis* was published in 1593 and *The Rape of Lucrece* in 1594. In 1599 this group built and became resident at the Globe, the leading Elizabethan theatre.