

Elizabethan Beards

POPULAR BEARD STYLES OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE

by Cassidy Cash



**THAT
SHAKESPEARE
LIFE**

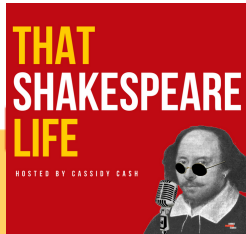
HOSTED BY CASSIDY CASH



Featured in Episodes 27 and 147 of *That Shakespeare Life*

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A sign of sophistication.

WHY WEAR A BEARD?

Facial hair has long been regarded as a path to personal expression and it seems for William Shakespeare, Elizabethan culture was no exception.

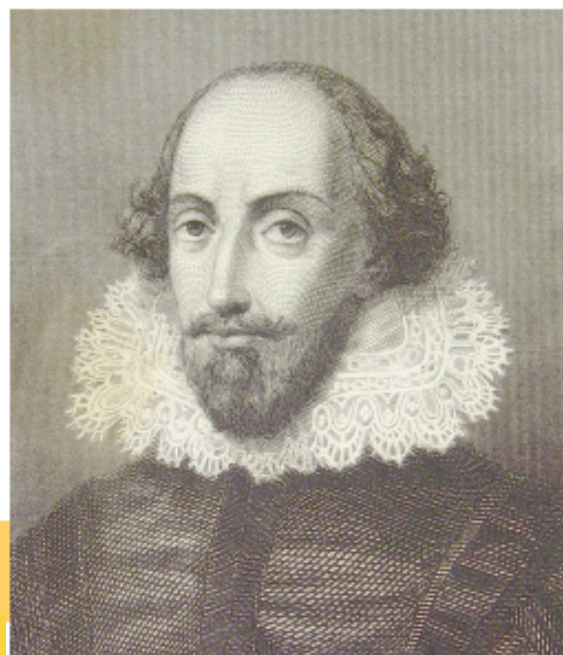
Reasons ranging from separation from catholic traditions, to the embracing of protestant ones, as well as just preferring the reputation of a well groomed appearance would spur men of 16-17th century England to follow in the footsteps of Renaissance artists and adopt a beard.

"Shakespeare's folio beard is similar to the Van Dyke style which was popular in the 17th century."

Christopher Oldstone Moore,
Episode 27 of That Shakespeare Life

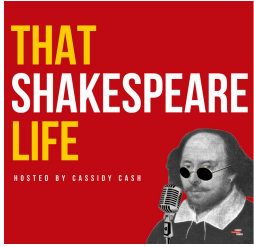
Historical records about beards show that men regularly visited barber shops, often paying for the services of a barber for months in advance. These visits would vary, as you might expect, in price based on the services offered. While a barber was excellent at shaving your beard, offering a trim, or even shaving your head the barber was also a skilled surgeon in Shakespeare's lifetime and offered everything from stitching to bloodletting and in some cases, even organ removal or bone setting if required.

With the notable exception of offering medical surgery as a side gig, William Shakespeare's barber shop was very similar to what you might experience today. Shops had chairs, basins, straight razors, and even balms or creams just like barber shops today.



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Popular Beard Styles

"Let me not play a woman. I have a beard coming" A Midsummer Night's Dream 1.2)



L TO R WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE WEARING A GOATEE, BEN JONSON IN A FULL BEARD, AND SIR WALTER RALEIGH SPORTING A VAN DYKE BEARD, VERY POPULAR IN SHAKESPEARE'S LIFETIME.

PENCIL BEARD

Slight Tuft of hair on the tip of the chin.

"Sir, you with the pencil on your chin" - Ben Jonson, 1599, *Cynthia's Revels*

PISA BEARD (STILETTO BEARD)

When it ends in a point on the chin, and higher on the lip, chin, and cheeks.

"Play with your Pisa beard! Why, where's your brush, pupil?"

1618, Fletcher, *Queen of Corinth*

THE GOAT

Resembles the modern day goatee, often represented as either a large fluffy goatee with much chin hair, or a slender tuft on the chin that still connects to the moustache

SWALLOW TAIL

The most pirate-like of Elizabethan beards, think Jack Sparrow for this one, with the chin hair divided into two braided strands off the face, in the shape of a swallow's tail

CHIN STRAP

Like someone took a dark marker and traced your jaw line with hair.

VAN DYKE

Like a full beard, but emphasizing a goatee look to the chin hair.
Highly popular. Shown on Shakespeare's Chandos portrait.



7 BEARDS OF SHAKESPEARE

His beard was grizzled- no? - Hamlet I.2

01 Classic Full Beard. Artist rendering of the Chandos portrait.

02 The Pencil Mustache
Droeshout Portrait of Shakespeare
Possibly a **Goat Beard**

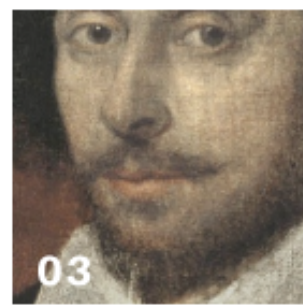
03 The VanDyke
Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare

04 Cobbe Portrait that, at the time, claimed to be a portrait from life of William Shakespeare (Since discredited) features a **full beard**.

05 This painting of Hugh Hamersley, (1565-1636), in 1611, was altered to pass as a contemporary portrait of Shakespeare. Oxfordians contend that it is a portrait of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. **I'm going to call this one a VanDyke** similar to the Chandos portrait.

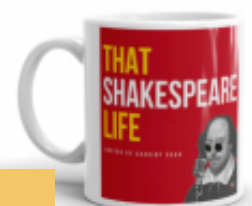
06 Handlebar mustache and chin puff featured on Shakespeare's monument above his grave at Holy Trinity Church

07 Ducktail beard featured on the Imaginary portrait of Shakespeare done by by Angelica Kauffman in the 1770s



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Iconographic look at 9 Elizabethan Beard Styles for Men



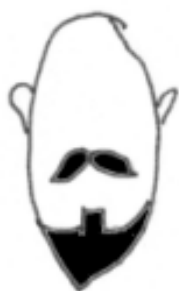
FULL BEARD



CHIN CURTAIN



THE BOAT



VAN DYKE



HANDLE BAR
+ CHIN PUFF



DUCKTAIL



PENCIL



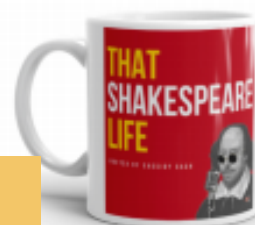
SWALLOW TAIL



HANDLE BAR

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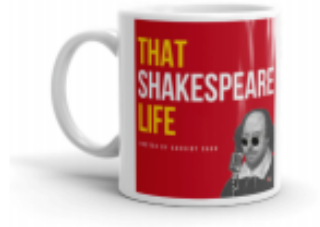
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FUN BEARD FACT:

For 16th Century England, it was not uncommon to dye your beard or to wear a fake beard, and the presentation of a beard on stage was as essential of a prop as any costume or weapon.



”

I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow...

- Bottom, considering his costume for Pyramus
in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 1.2

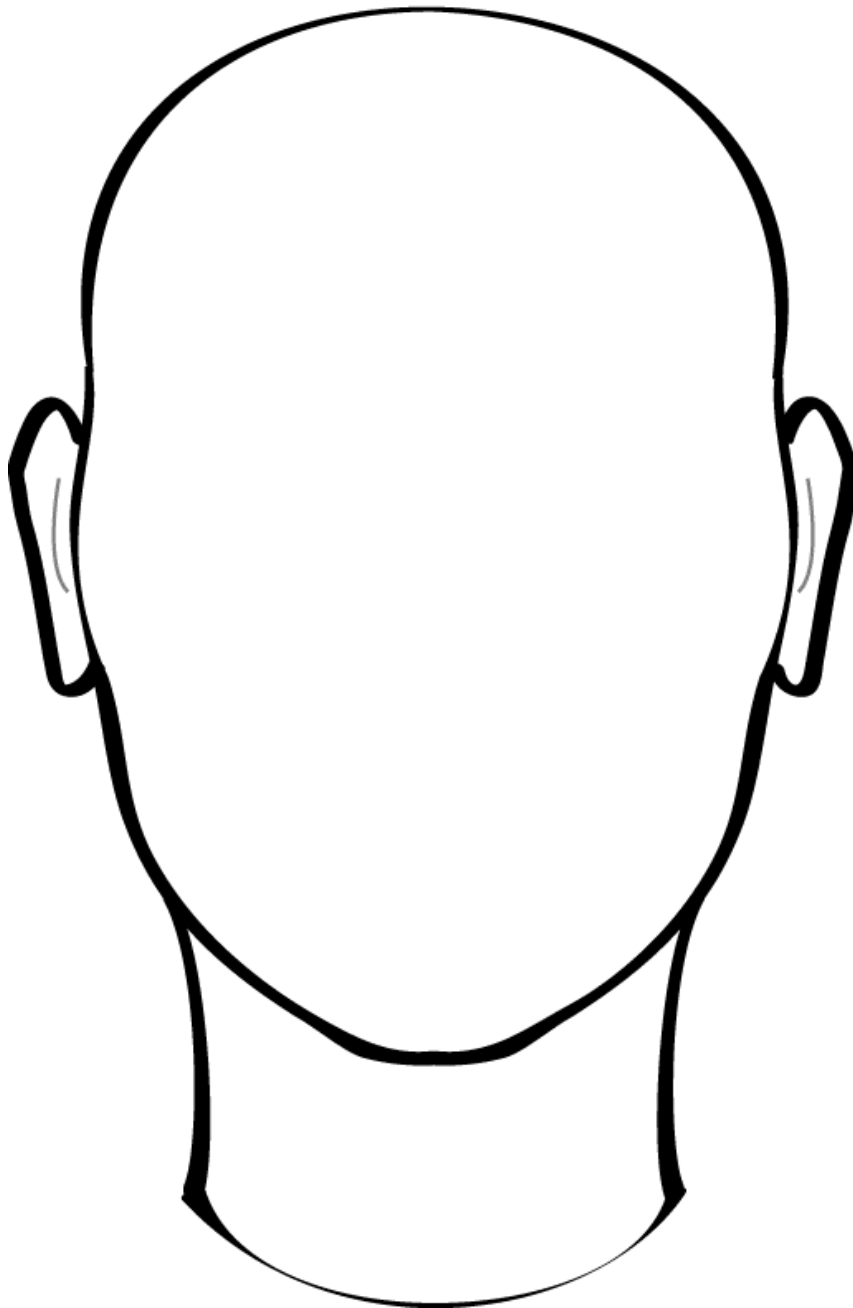


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Draw Your own Elizabethan Beard

Use this blank face to draw your own Elizabethan Beard.
Print this page and make copies to try out several styles.



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Watch a production of one of Shakespeare's plays that mentions beards. Use these prompts to practice writing a review.

Title _____

Name _____

Grade _____

A PLAY REVIEW

Summary

Who are the characters
in the story?

What is your favorite
part of the play?

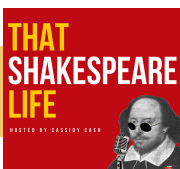
What was the most
exciting part of the
story for you? (or what
did you like least?)

I rate this play out
of 5

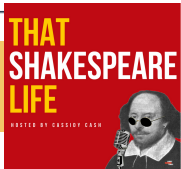


Writing Prompt

Using the quotes from Shakespeare's plays provided in this book, along with your own research (and the podcast!) write a short essay on beard styles for men in the 16-17th century. What beard styles were popular and what do the quotes from Shakespeare's plays reveal to us about the perspective on beards for men (& women!) during Shakespeare's lifetime?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Lined area for notes or transcription.





Does a beard make a difference?

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, we see Bottom searching for just the right costume and one major hurdle for him is what kind of beard the character should wear. Let's see if a beard makes a difference. Use the characters, beards, and lines provided to take turns with your friends or fellow classmates acting out the lines of the character, changing only the beard styles. Does the beard make a difference?

Hint: Remember that some beard styles, like a long white beard, indicated great age. So if you pick the white beard you'll need to make your character an old person for the scene you act out. There are similar connections for the other beard styles as well. Use the beard explanations in this guide to help you.

How to do this activity:

1. Write the character and the line on a white board or chalkboard.
2. Print (or write) the character names and beard styles on paper & cut into strips, folded in half.
3. Create a photo-booth style prop for each beard style (Use fake beards from a costume box if you have it!)
Color/print/cut/paste works fine.
4. On your turn, draw a character and a beard style. Read the line provided in character based on the beard style you drew from the bucket. Reuse the characters but discard the beard style after it had been performed.

Optional add-on: Let the students create a list of famous Shakespeare characters and give them bizarre beard. Like *King Lear* with a green pencil mustache or *Macbeth* with a yellow beard (played like a coward). Invite students to discuss how the impression they get from the line changes as the beard style is altered by each performance.

CHARACTER

BEARD STYLE

LINE TO SPEAK

Richard III

Long white beard

And thus I clothe my naked villany With old odd ends
stolen out of holy writ; And seem a saint, when most I
play the devil.
(Richard, *Richard III*, I.3)

Prospero

Orange Pencil Beard

Our revels now are ended. These our actors, As I
foretold you, were all spirits and Are melted into air, into
thin air. And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, The
cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn
temples, the great globe itself—Yea, all which it inherit—
shall dissolve And, like this insubstantial pageant
faded, Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff As
dreams are made on, and our little lifels rounded with a
sleep.
(Prospero, *The Tempest*, IV.1)

Romeo

Black Van Dyke

King Lear

Purple Chin Curtain

Yellow Handle Bar Mustache

Brown Full Beard

Red Goat

Green handle bar and chin puff

But soft, what light through yonder window breaks? It is
the east, and Juliet is the sun.
(Romeo, *Romeo and Juliet* II.2)

Yellow Swallow Tail

Blue Chinstrap

I am a man More sinned against than sinning.
(Lear, *King Lear*, III.2)



Word Search

Find the famous 16-17th century beard styles in this word search. Words are hidden forwards, backwards, and diagonally.

V R R H O X E P A D S U Y Z P H K Z H O
S Q K A N V I G H T T V A N D Y K E M Q
F E N N T J X G E J I U O E Z B F R N P
Z W T D P O A Q E G L G Y O X L B E C E
L K Y L C T H Q M X E G C U H J Z D Y N
F Z K E X D F S C Q T Z S V E J A W E C
U A B B G X Q C O R T M W Q K O Y L T I
L A Q A G Z Z F O M O C A V I U T V P L
L P D R L O U D K K B H L T M W E I R B
B S X M M U D P S G E I L Y J D O C D E
E K U U O I P U S Q A N O U L D K X E A
A J Q S G I C N Q M R S W K Z Q X F O R
R I F T M V H O Z K D T T L S K X S G D
D Z H A I Q I Y N R X R A C W I T F O F
V U D C J U N E S S L A I Y M W X V A H
Y X T H O B P N M H B P L B U E G B T N
H J V E E F U M N G F D Z X C F K N E X
D I W J S N F F M A K X U E R N N I E K
R W D P V F F G V U J V N P S M R Z A X
C A D I Z B E A R D P B A R S V Z G G W

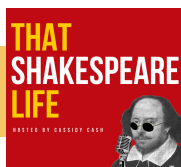
Word Bank

Handle Bar Mustache
Chinstrap
Goatee

Swallow Tail
Pencil Beard
Full Beard

Stiletto Beard
Chin Puff

Cadiz Beard
Van Dyke



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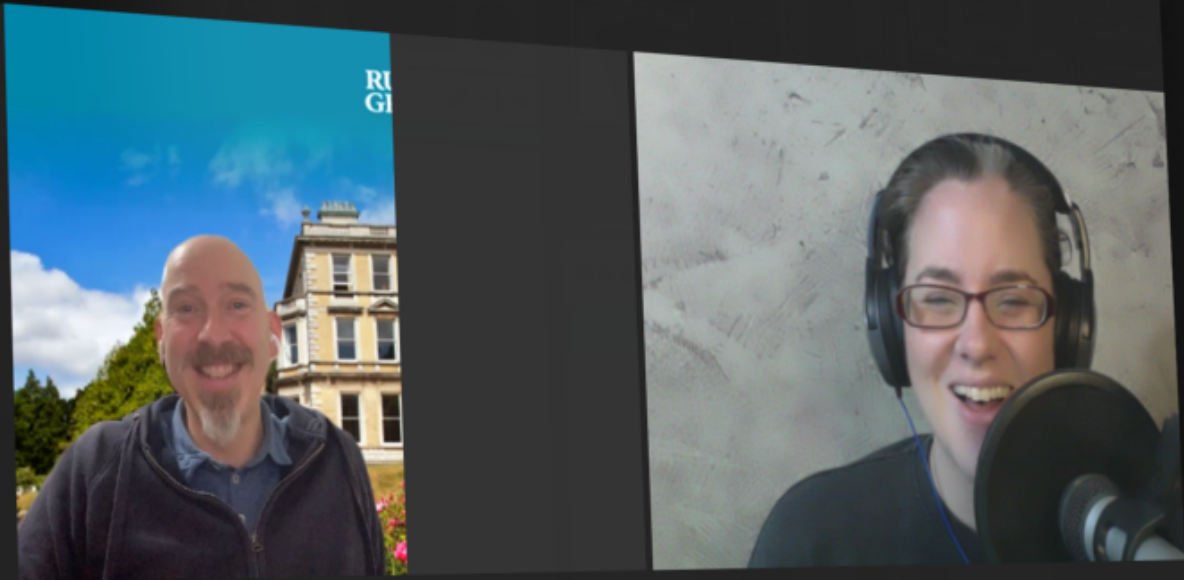
Cadiz Beard
Van Dyke



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Watch the video version inside the app!

The app includes animated plays, documentaries, archaeological dig site footage, & virtual tours!



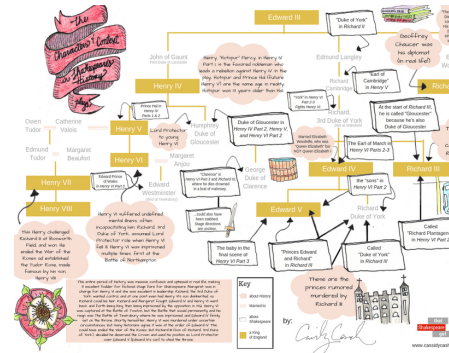
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