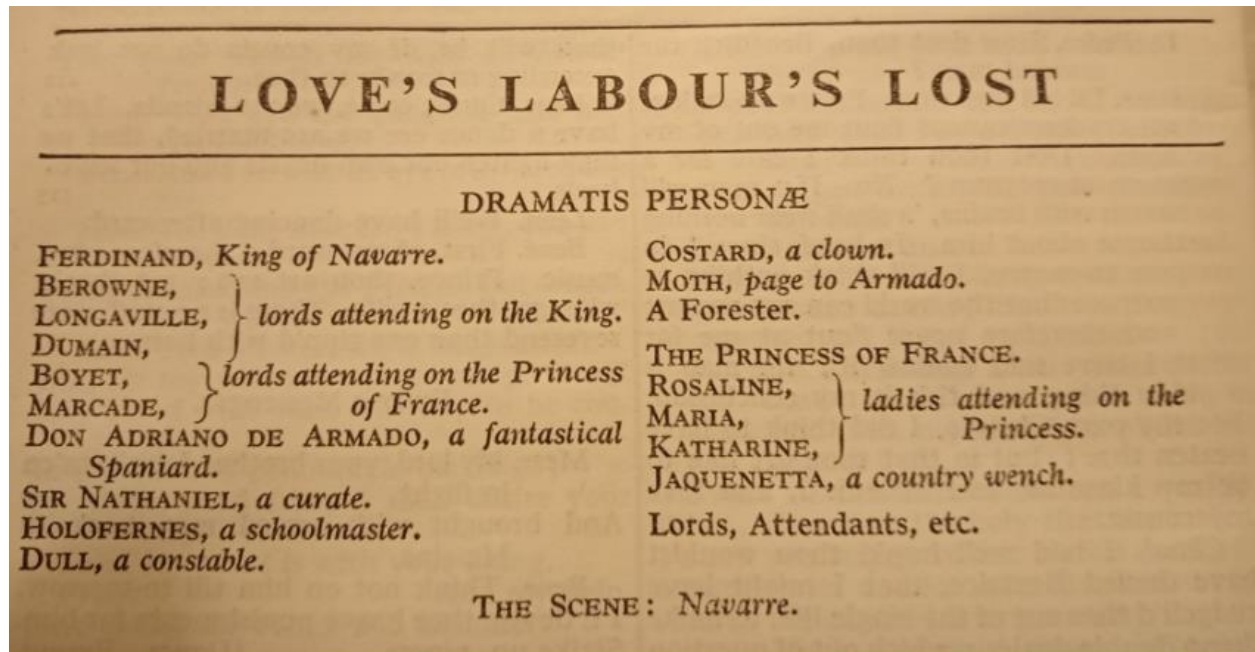


# Love's Labour's Lost 1597



Source:

THE TUDOR EDITION OF  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
THE COMPLETE WORKS  
COLLINS  
LONDON AND GLASGOW  
APRIL 1959

A new edition, edited with an  
Introduction and glossary by  
PETER ALEXANDER  
*Regius Professor of English Language and  
Literature, University of Glasgow 1959*

David Akenhead, CEO Akenhead crosswords currently enjoying a circulation of 508,315 at his Visits page on his website at [crosswordsakenhead.com](http://crosswordsakenhead.com) where there is a link to his crossword challenges:

A joint copyrighted 27 x 27 digital Times Jumbo has to be a First in On-line crossword competitions thanks to AI, two individuals and Microsoft.

David Akenhead (1946- ) Bracketed items may include his comments.

If ever there was a play which epitomises the world into which humanity finds itself, this has to be the bible of the beats! And in this play of intrigues and masterminds, can the pen yet remain mightier than the sword? While the fundraisers admit the need for the public purse to be replenished, with what? Shakespeare and Marlowe, and the Virgin Queen (beautifully interpreted by Cate Blanchett) and Mary Stuart and even Walsingham, reluctantly admitted the same with their own clandestine craft in their day, in this beautiful, fragile world where little birds still sing, just!

So, let's all turn our own Love's Labour's Lost into the almost forgotten Loves' Labors Wonne with All's Well That Ends Well! Once again, each man and woman of whatever persuasion playing their part with equal reverence to our own magical creation! Peace and love to all and all living things this Christmastide, even as it was in the days of Good Queen Bess. May they all be fruitful and thankful for the sacrifice of our predecessors and our very fragile existence today. Incidentally, Queen Elizabeth loved this play when it was presented to her and her Court, in December 1597, by the Bard of Stratford-upon-Avon, in short how NOT to win the heart of a loved one with fine words, because fine words butter no parsnips, as probably his longsuffering wife was wont to remind him!

David Akenhead CEO Akenhead crosswords.

Howard Staunton (1810-1874)

“A PLEASANT Conceited Comedie called Loves labor's lost as it was presented before her Highnes this last Christmas. Newly corrected and augmented. By W. Shakespeare.” Like The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Love's Labour's Lost bears unmistakable traces of Shakespeare's earliest style. We find in both, though in different degree, the same fluency and sweetness of measure, the same frequency of rhymes, the same laborious addiction to quibbling, repartees, and doggerel verse, and in both it is observable that depth of characterization is altogether subordinate to elegance and sprightliness of dialogue. In the former, however, the wit and fancy of the poet are infinitely more subdued; the events are within the range of probability; and the humour, for the most part, is confined to the inferior personages of the story. But Love's Labour's Lost is an extravaganza for *Le bon Roi, René*, and the Court of Provence; “a humoursome display of frolic,” as Schlegel (1767-1845) calls it, “in which every one is a jester; and the sparkles of wit fly about in such profusion that they resemble a blaze of fireworks; while the dialogue is in the same hurried style in which the masks at a carnival attempt to banter each other.”

From John Goodwin RSC highlights from his Short Guide to Shakespeare's Plays 1990:

**'Love's Labour's Lost** shows a group of adolescent, high spirited men and girls, playing at love and playing with words.

It is a study in artifice, expressed with wit and elegance. But the fact that it contains a fair amount of Elizabethan quibbling, obscure references, and in-jokes, makes its verbal subtleties not easily accessible to modern audiences, though some productions have brought it ravishingly to life. Nearly every character is involved in a kind of inspired word-game.

The story itself is about the youthful King of Navarre and three of his courtiers who swear to fast, pray and study for three years, completely giving up the company of women. Almost at once they find they are forced to break their vow. For when the Princess of France and her Court arrive to discuss state matters, the King falls in love with the Princess, and his three courtiers with her ladies. This leads to much deception and mockery.

Near the end, however, there is a jarring interjection of mortality. The Lord Mercade arrives to tell the Princess that the King her father is dead, and finally comes one of Shakespeare's best-known poems: one concerned with life as it is really lived. He describes the 'daisies pied and violets blue' of spring, and, in winter, the icicles that hang by the wall, the milk frozen in the pail, and greasy Joan keeling the pot'

**Love's Labour's Lost, Christmas 1597 before Queen Elizabeth and her court.**

Above part of my legacy to Shakespeare, courtesy of my former wife, Celia Ruth Staunton and her celebrated ancestor Howard Staunton (1810-1874), supreme Shakespearean authority from his Globe Illustrated Shakespeare, and a former English Chess Grand Master to boot! Enjoy my digital Jumbo crossword evolved from two chess supremos: Howard Staunton and Edmund Akenhead former Times crossword editor 1965-1983 via his mother, Myrtle Akenhead nee Nicholson Grant MacGregor, former Ladies Chess Champion of Somerset who I had the audacity to beat aged 10 with hitherto unconventional moves using the Queen's pawn!

David Akenhead, February 2026