

PEOPLE MENTIONED IN WALDEN:

WILLIAM DAVENANT



**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT



WALDEN: Breed's hut was standing only a dozen years ago, though it had long been unoccupied. It was about the size of mine. It was set on fire by mischievous boys, one Election night, if I do not mistake. I lived on the edge of the village then, and had just lost myself over Davenant's Gondibert, that winter that I labored with a lethargy, -which, by the way, I never knew whether to regard as a family complaint, having an uncle who goes to sleep shaving himself, and is obliged to sprout potatoes in a cellar Sundays, in order to keep awake and keep the Sabbath, or as the consequence of my attempt to read Chalmers' collection of English poetry without skipping. It fairly overcame my Nervii. I had just sunk my head on this when the bells rung fire, and in hot haste the engines rolled that way, led by a straggling troop of men and boys, and I among the foremost, for I had leaped the brook. We thought it was far south over the woods, -we who had run to fires before,- barn, shop, or dwelling-house, or all together. "It's Baker's barn," cried one. "It is the Codman Place," affirmed another. And then fresh sparks went up above the wood, as if the roof fell in, and we all shouted "Concord to the rescue!" Wagons shot past with furious speed and crushing loads, bearing, perchance, among the rest, the agent of the Insurance Company, who was bound to go however far; and ever and anon the engine bell tinkled behind, more slow and sure, and rearmost of all, as it was afterward whispered, came they who set the fire and gave the alarm. Thus we kept on like true idealists, rejecting the evidence of our senses, until at a turn in the road we heard crackling and actually felt the heat of the fire from over the wall, and realized, alas! that we were there. The very nearness of the fire but cooled our ardor. At first we thought to throw a frog-pond on to it; but concluded to let it burn, it was so far gone and so worthless. So we stood round our engine, jostled one another, expressed our sentiments through speaking trumpets, or in lower tone referred to the great conflagrations which the world has witness, including Bascom's shop, and, between ourselves we thought that, were we there in season with our "tub", and a full frog-pond by, we could turn that threatened last and universal one into another flood. We finally retreated without doing any mischief, -returned to sleep and Gondibert. But as for Gondibert, I would except that passage in the preface about wit being the soul's powder, -"but most of mankind are strangers to wit, as Indians are to powder."

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

DAVENANT



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1606

March 3, Monday (1605, Old Style): [William Davenant](#) was baptized. He had been born to Jane Shepherd Davenant at the Crown Inn and Tavern of Oxford, an establishment owned by her husband John Davenant, who was wealthy and a vintner.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT





WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1621

The vintner John Davenant became mayor of Oxford in the same year in which he sent his son [William Davenant](#), who had been at the grammar school of All Saints under master Edward Sylvester, to Lincoln College, Oxford. [William](#) would not remain at the university long enough to acquire a degree, but would choose to become a page in the retinue of the duchess of Richmond at court, and from her service would pass into the service of [Sir Fulke Greville](#), [Baron Brooke](#).

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1628

September 30, Tuesday (Old Style): [Sir Fulke Greville](#) was knifed by Ralph Heywood, a servant who believed he was being cheated in Greville's will. After this act, with Greville still alive, Heywood offered himself with the same blade. Since there were no natural progeny, the barony would pass to a cousin whom Sir Fulke had adopted, Robert Greville (1608-1643). The grave with its inscription as specified by the dying man can be seen at St. Mary's Church in Warwick, England:

**Folk Grevill
Servant to Queene Elizabeth
Conceller to King James
Frend to Sir Philip Sidney.
Trophaeum Peccati.**



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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[William Davenant](#), who had been in the service of this noble household, was by this unexpected event suddenly thrust out into the world, not without means — but definitely needing to figure out what he needed to do next.



THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1629

[William Davenant](#) turned to the stage for subsistence, authoring two tragedies: *Albovine, King of the Lombards* and *The Colonel*. At about this point in his life, he contracted the syphilis that eventually would lead to his demise.

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT





WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1630

[William Davenant](#) produced, at Blackfriars, a tragedy, *The Cruel Brother* (which may have been the same as *The Colonel* of the previous year), *Ieffereidos*, and a tragicomedy, *The Just Italian*.

Do I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1634

Shrove Tuesday: Inigo Jones, the court architect for whom [Ben Jonson](#) has long supplied the words of masques and complimentary pieces, having quarrelled with this colleague (and anyway Jonson had had a stroke that had slowed him down considerably), had applied to [William Davenant](#) for verses. The result was a masque performed on this day (in England we now refer to the Shrove Tuesday celebration as “Pancake Day,” and in America as “Mardi Gras”) by the queen and her ladies at Whitehall.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1635

Publication of Inigo Jones's and [William Davenant](#)'s masque, *The Temple of Love*:

The temple of love: A masque. Presented by the Queenes Majesty, and her ladies, at White-hall on Shrove-Tuesday, 1634. By Inigo Iones, surveyor of his Maties. workes, and William Davenant, her Maties. servant.



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1636

[William Davenant](#)'s masque *The Triumphs of the Prince D'Amour*, his tragicomedy *The Platonic Lovers*, and his comedy *The Witts*.

Publication of [Thomas Heywood](#)'s *LOVES MAISTRESSE OR THE QUEENS MASQUE, and A CHALLENGE FOR BEAUTIE*.¹

1. *LOVES MAISTRESSE OR THE QUEENS MASQUE* had been being performed since 1634 and was quite a hit. Reportedly it had been seen by King [Charles I](#) and his queen three times in eight days.



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1637

August 9, Wednesday (Old Style): [Ben Jonson](#)'s body was interred in Westminster Abbey under a bare slab of stone — but we notice that at some later point an inscription was chiseled into this slab:

O RARE BEN JONSON!

A play he had been unable to finish, *Sad Shepherd's Tale*, would see publication in 1641.

The post of Poet Laureate of England having been left open by this death, the post would be filled in the following year by [William Davenant](#) (chosen over Thomas May, the other candidate, despite that fact that Davenant's masque *Britannica Triumphans*, with its initial performance having been scheduled for a Sunday, had needed for politico-religious reasons to be suppressed).

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1638

Publication of a collection of memorial elegies for the former Poet Laureate of England [Ben Jonson](#), *JONSONUS VIRBIUS*.

[Thomas Heywood](#)'s THE WISE-WOMAN OF HOGSDON.

Named as the next Poet Laureate of England, [William Davenant](#) collected his minor lyrical pieces into a volume entitled MADAGASCAR, WITH OTHER POEMS (also during this year, with Inigo Jones, publication of *BRITANNIA TRIUMPHANS* and *LUMINALIA, or The Festival of Light*).

POETS LAUREATE

The Poets Laureate of England

1591-1599	Edmund Spenser
1599-1619	Samuel Daniel
1619-1637	Ben Jonson
1638-1668	William Davenant
1670-1689	John Dryden
1689-1692	Thomas Shadwell
1692-1715	Nahum Tate
1715-1718	Nicholas Rowe
1718-1730	Laurence Eusden
1730-1757	Colley Cibber
1758-1785	William Whitehead
1785-1790	Thomas Warton
1790-1813	Henry James Pye
1813-1843	Robert Southey
1843-1850	William Wordsworth
1850-1892	Alfred Lord Tennyson
1896-1913	Alfred Austin
1913-1930	Robert Bridges
1930-1967	John Masefield
1967-1972	Cecil Day-Lewis
1972-1984	Sir John Betjeman
1984-1998	Ted Hughes
1999-	Andrew Motion



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1639

[Richard Lovelace](#) joined the regiment of Lord Goring as a senior ensign, serving in the First Scottish Expedition during the Bishops' Wars. He would be made a captain. This would inspire his "Sonnet. To Generall Goring," a poem that was not so much a glorification of military action as a Bacchanalian celebration.

[William Davenant](#) became the manager of a new theatre in Drury Lane of [London](#). His vigorous participation in civil war on the side of the monarchy would, however, interfere with his career prospects.

The imposition of an English prayer-book in Scotland provoked rebellion and led to the 1st Bishops' War between King [Charles I](#) and the [Scottish](#) Church made up of rebellious Presbyterians. Since this king had not since 1629 been able to call a Parliament for fear of what it might do, he was hard put to finance this war and would turn to the system of knighthood fines, fines for the enclosure of forests and common land, excise taxes on domestically produced goods, and "ship money" — levies upon inland towns supposedly to be used to finance the English navy.² Another expedient would be the sale by the government of monopolistic rights of manufacture, trade, and sale. The most despised of these royally chartered monopolies would be a Merchant Adventurers Company which had purchased from the monarch the sole right for any and all trade in textiles.



The anonymous pamphlet A DISCOURSE FOR FREE TRADE called for the removal of their charter.³ In the proposed [Leveler](#) constitution, commerce was to be free from this sort of government intervention:⁴

That it shall not be in their power to continue or make any Laws to abridge or hinder any person or persons, from trading or merchandizing into any place beyond the Seas, where any of this Nation are free to Trade.

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

2. While King [Charles I](#) was in Scotland, he cured a thousand [scrofula](#) patients — but evidently it was not the custom for a monarch to charge for such miraculous hand-of-God-in-the-King cures.

3. Gregg, Pauline. FREE-BORN JOHN. London: Dent, 1986, page 118

4. "An Agreement of the People," in Aylmer, G.E., ed. THE LEVELERS IN THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION. London: Thames and Hudson, 1975, page 165

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WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1640

[William Davenant](#)'s *Salmacida Spolia*.

In approximately this year the playwright [John Ford](#) died.

Commissioned as a captain in the Second Scottish Expedition; [Richard Lovelace](#) wrote a tragedy, "The Soldier," based on his own experience in the military. Returning to Kent at 21 to take possession of his family's property, he would begin the life of a country gentleman including serving as a local Justice of the Peace. He authored "To Lucasta, Going to the Warres," in which we discover the infamous masculinist put-off,

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Lov'd I not Honour more.

During the following decade of civil war in England [Edward Benlowes](#) would be composing his THEOPHILA, OR LOVES SACRIFICE, a long poem about the progress of the soul toward mystic communion with God.



He would be siding with the Cavalier cause of the monarch [Charles I](#), which would eventually mean that he would forfeit much of his estate.



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1641

In the British Isles during this year and the next, there was a Gaelic and Old English (Norman) rebellion going on that would become known as the “War of the Three Kingdoms.” King [Charles I](#) of England was being refused permission by the Parliament to raise a personal army to combat this rebellion. The King’s policies were creating not only civil war in England but also insurrection in Ulster. This period would eventually be brought to an end, in 1652, when the English colonists of Irish soil would triumph as part of the suppression of [Ireland](#) by the forces of Oliver Cromwell.

According to Bishop [Thomas Percy](#)’s RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY (4th edition, 1794), the words “Lilli-Burlero-Bullen-a-la” were “words of distinction used among the Irish Papists at the time of their massacre of the Protestants in 1641.” Presumably if one was aware of this code phrase, this indicated that one was not lying — that one was truly a fellow Catholic and need not summarily be offed. Later this would become the refrain of a nonsense song satirizing the Earl of Tyrconnel, on the occasion of his going to Ireland during January 1686/1687 as [King James II](#)’s Catholic vicegerent. The ditty would play a major part in rousing anti-Catholic feeling and bringing about the Revolution of 1688. What goes around comes around.

[William Davenant](#), a supporter of the monarchy during this disturbance, was declared guilty of high treason (two years later, after the successful end of the siege at Gloucester, he would be knighted by the king).



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1642

May: [William Davenant](#) stood accused before the Long Parliament of being mainly concerned in a scheme to seduce the army to overthrow the Commons. They would apprehend him at Faversham and for two months would hold him in London, after which he would attempt an escape toward France but would make it only as far as Canterbury. Escaping a 2d time, he would succeed in reaching [Queen Henrietta Maria](#), with whom he would remain in France (until he would volunteer to carry over to England some military stores for the army of his old friend the earl of Newcastle, and be induced by the earl to become a lieutenant-general of ordnance).

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR



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1643

September 6, Wednesday (Old Style): The royalist forces led by the earl of Essex relieved Gloucester from its siege by the forces of the parliament. [William Davenant](#) acquitted himself so well during this military activity that he would be knighted by the king. After the battle of Naseby Sir William would retire to Paris, where he where he would convert to [Roman Catholicism](#) and spent some months in the composition of an epic poem, *Gondibert*.

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

(During this year, also, one of his tragedies was being printed, *The Unfortunate Lovers*.)



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1645

The young Prince of Wales, Charles, sent [Sir William Davenant](#) as his emissary to France.

CHARLES II

King [Charles I](#) himself was obliged to surrender to the Scottish army, and in the following year would be brought from Newark and until 1647 retained in Newcastle-on-Tyne, until his transfer by the Parliamentary commissioners to London.



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1646

In the [English Civil War](#), King [Charles I](#) surrendered to the [Scots](#) and the WESTMINSTER CONFSSION defined the basic Calvinist beliefs of the Puritans.

[Sir William Davenant](#) was sent by [Queen Henrietta Maria](#) on a mission to King [Charles I](#), then at Newcastle, to advise him to “part with the church for his peace and security.” The king, however, dismissed him with some sharpness, and Davenant returned to Paris where he would become the guest of Lord Jermyn.

The “Witch-finder-General” Matthew Hopkins, under the sanction of the courts, had been “pricking,” “waking,” “watching,” and “testing” persons suspected or accused of [witchcraft](#), and as a result of confession under extended torture, there had been many burnings in Lancashire, Suffolk, Essex, and Huntingdonshire. James Howell commented in his FAMILIAR LETTERS:

We have multitudes of witches among us; for in Essex and Suffolk there were above two hundred indicted within these two years, and above the half of them executed.

Within the compass of two years (1645-1647), near upon three hundred witches were arraigned, and the major part of them executed in Essex and Suffolk only. Scotland swarms with them more and more, and persons of good quality are executed daily.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1648

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s *London, King Charles his Augusta, or, City Royal, of the founders, the names, and oldest honours of that City.*

[King Charles I](#) escaped from being held hostage by his own nation's army, but was defeated in the 2d outbreak of the [English Civil War](#).



Congregationalists assumed control in Parliament and [Samuel Pepys](#) would watch as they chopped off the



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

head of his monarch.



HEADCHOPPING





WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1649

Upon the execution of the monarch [Charles I](#), [Charles II](#) was recognized as King on the Isle of [Jersey](#). At Elizabeth Castle there, he repaid George Carteret's loyalty by granting him an island off the coast of Virginia—designating this as the colony of “New Jersey”—and appointed [Sir William Davenant](#) as treasurer of the colony of Virginia.

Publication of Davenant's *Love and Honour*—although it seems that this play had been enacted years earlier under the title *The Courage of Love*. Also during this year, Davenant's *The Nonpareilles, or The Matchless Maids*.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1650

Edward Martin, Dean of Ely, who had been taken to the [Tower of London](#) in 1642 and had since escaped and been recaptured, was in this year released.

LONDON

[Sir William Davenant](#) was appointed lieutenant governor of [Maryland](#) and took command of a colonizing expedition that set sail from France to Virginia, but then was captured in the English Channel by a Parliamentary man-of-war which dropped him off as a prisoner on the Isle of Wight. He would find himself confined in the [Tower of London](#) and sentenced to death at the point of publication of an unfinished version of his *A Discourse upon Gondibert, an heroick poem*. (This would be published in its final form in 1651 along with a dedicatory “Preface to his most honour’d friend Mr. Hobs” and Thomas Hobbes’s “The Answer of Mr. Hobbes to Sr Will. D’Avenant’s Preface before Gondibert.” The official 2d edition of 1653 would also include “Certain Verses, written by severall of the author’s friends.”)

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

WILLIAM DAVENANT



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1651

Bishop [Henry King](#), D.D.'s THE PSALMES OF DAVID FROM THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE, TURNED INTO METER. The Bishop retired to the residence of Lady Anne Salter at Richings Park, just to the west of [London](#).

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

The prisoners of war Sir John Middleton, a 1st Earl, and Sir Edward Massey, who were Lieutenant Generals, were taken to the [Tower of London](#) (they would escape). The prisoner of war Thomas Dalyell was also taken



to the Tower (he would escape in 1652). The prisoner of war Robert Montgomerie, a Major General, was also taken there (he would escape in 1654). George Cooke escaped from the Tower. For all of this year [Sir William Davenant](#), who had been transferred from Cowes Castle on the Isle of Wight to the Tower, was awaiting there a trial for high treason, while meanwhile his *Gondibert, an heroick poem* was being published.

WILLIAM DAVENANT

(Although the play would in fact get published, the trial would in fact not happen.) In its finished form the play bore a dedicatory “Preface to his most honour’d friend Mr. Hobs” and Thomas Hobbes’s “The Answer of Mr. Hobbes to Sr Will. D’Avenant’s Preface before Gondibert.” (The official 2d edition of 1653 would also include “Certain Verses, written by severall of the author’s friends.”)



[Henry Thoreau](#) would be reading this play, as part of “my attempt to read Chalmers’ collection of English



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

poetry without skipping,” on Election Day night in 1841, when [Concord](#)’s pranksters provided him relief by setting fire to the old Breed place on the Walden Road.

WALDEN: Nearer yet to town, you come to Breed’s location, on the other side of the way, just on the edge of the wood; ground famous for the pranks of a demon not distinctly named in old mythology, who has acted a prominent and astounding part in our New England life, and deserves, as much as any mythological character, to have his biography written one day; who first comes in the guise of a friend or hired man, and then robs and murders the whole family, -New England Rum. But history must not yet tell the tragedies enacted here; let time intervene in some measure to assuage and lend an azure tint to them. Here the most indistinct and dubious tradition says that once a tavern stood; the well the same, which tempered the traveller’s beverage and refreshed his steed. Here then men saluted one another, and heard and told the news, and went their ways again.

Breed’s hut was standing only a dozen years ago, though it had long been unoccupied. It was about the size of mine. It was set on fire by mischievous boys, one Election night, if I do not mistake. I lived on the edge of the village then, and had just lost myself over Davenant’s Gondibert, that winter that I labored with a lethargy, -which, by the way, I never knew whether to regard as a family complaint, having an uncle who goes to sleep shaving himself, and is obliged to sprout potatoes in a cellar Sundays, in order to keep awake and keep the Sabbath, or as the consequence of my attempt to read Chalmers’ collection of English poetry without skipping. It fairly overcame my Nervii. I had just sunk my head on this when the bells rung fire, and in hot haste the engines rolled that way, led by a stragglng troop of men and boys, and I among the foremost, for I had leaped the brook. We thought it was far south over the woods, - we who had run to fires before,- barn, shop, or dwelling-house, or all together. “It’s Baker’s barn,” cried one. “It is the Codman Place,” affirmed another. And then fresh sparks went up above the wood, as if the roof fell in, and we all shouted “Concord to the rescue!” Wagons shot past with furious speed and crushing loads, bearing, perchance, among the rest, the agent of the Insurance Company, who was bound to go however far; and ever and anon the engine bell tinkled behind, more slow and sure, and rearmost of all, as it was afterward whispered, came they who set the fire and gave the alarm. Thus we kept on like true idealists, rejecting the evidence of our senses, until at a turn in the road we heard crackling and actually felt the heat of the fire from over the wall, and realized, alas! that we were there. The very nearness of the fire but cooled our ardor. At first we thought to throw a frog-pond on to it; but concluded to let it burn, it was so far gone and so worthless.

PEOPLE OF
WALDEN

JOHN C. BREED
JOHN CODMAN

[next screen]



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

WALDEN: So we stood round our engine, jostled one another, expressed our sentiments through speaking trumpets, or in lower tone referred to the great conflagrations which the world has witness, including Bascom's shop, and, between ourselves we thought that, were we there in season with our "tub", and a full frog-pond by, we could turn that threatened last and universal one into another flood. We finally retreated without doing any mischief, -returned to sleep and Gondibert. But as for Gondibert, I would except that passage in the preface about wit being the soul's powder, - "but most of mankind are strangers to wit, as Indians are to powder."

It chanced that I walked that way across the fields the following night, about the same hour, and hearing a low moaning at this spot, I drew near in the dark, and discovered the only survivor of the family that I know, the heir of both its virtues and its vices, who alone was interested in this burning, lying on his stomach and looking over the cellar wall at the still smouldering cinders beneath, muttering to himself, as is his wont. He had been working far off in the river meadows all day, and had improved the first moments that he could call his own to visit the home of his fathers and his youth. He gazed into the cellar from all sides and points of view by turns, always lying down to it, as if there was some treasure, which he remembered, concealed between the stones, where there was absolutely nothing but a heap of bricks and ashes. The house being gone, he looked at what there was left. He was soothed by the sympathy which my mere presence implied, and showed me, as well as the darkness permitted, where the well was covered up; which, thank Heaven, could never be burned; and he groped long about the wall to find the well-sweep which his father had cut and mounted, feeling for the iron hook or staple by which a burden had been fastened to the heavy end, -all that he could now cling to,- to convince me that it was no common "rider." I felt it, and still remark it almost daily in my walks, for by it hangs the history of a family.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1652

The prisoner of war Thomas Dalyell, held at the [Tower of London](#) since 1651, escaped.

[Sir William Davenant](#) was released from the [Tower of London](#), although he would not be pardoned until 1654.

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR





WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1654

[Sir William Davenant](#) was pardoned. Go thou and commit high treason no more.

The prisoner of war Major General Robert Montgomerie, held since 1651 in the [Tower of London](#), escaped.

George Cooke was taken to the [Tower of London](#) (he would escape).

Thomas Tudor was taken to the [Tower of London](#) (he would escape and be recaptured — but eventually would be released).

LONDON

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1656

May 21: The initial “opera” performance in [Sir William Davenant](#)’s new playhouse at Rutland House in Charterhouse Yard, London. This was the initial use of such a word in the English language. Soon he would be offering his *The Siege of Rhodes* (Part I), with unprecedented elaborate stage settings and machinery. An innovation was the appearance on stage of an actress, an actual human female rather than an actor dressed up as a woman (the actress’s name was Mrs. Coleman). Also during this year his WIT AND DROLLERY: JOVIAL POEMS would appear in the bookstalls.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1657

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s POEMS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1658

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s "The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru."

[Abraham Cowley](#) prepared his play "The Guardian" for the press, but at the time under another name.



[Cowley](#)'s essay "Of Greatness."

"OF GREATNESS"



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1659

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s *The History of Sir Francis Drake*. The playwright was imprisoned for a short period for complicity in an uprising led by Sir George Booth at Cheshire and, upon his release, fled to France (e would return to England sometime before the initial production of his adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, written with John Dryden).



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1660

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s *A Panegyric to his Excellency the Lord General Monck*, to George Monck, and his *Poem upon his sacred Majesties most happy return to his dominions*, on the restoration of [Charles II](#). He opened a theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which he named "Duke's."

At the Restoration, Bishop [Henry King](#), D.D., who had been personally acquainted with King [Charles I](#), engaged in negotiations toward filling the vacant bishoprics and was reinstated to his privileges, returning to the episcopal palace in Chichester.

BRITISH CHRONOLOGY

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[Sir William Davenant](#)'s *Poem, to the King's most sacred Majesty, to [Charles II](#)*, and his *The Siege of Rhodes, Part II*.



Elder [John Clarke](#) presented two addresses to King [Charles II](#) of England regarding the colony of [Rhode Island](#), informing the monarch that it desires “to be permitted to hold forth in a lively experiment that a flourishing civil state may stand, yea, and best be maintained, and that among English spirits, with a full liberty of religious concernments.” The colony was granted a new charter declaring that “no person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question for any differences of opinion or matters of religion.” (Commonly, in superficial accounts of Rhode Island history, this charter is credited to the efforts of [Roger Williams](#). Evidently this is done in order to simplify the cast of characters.)

READ EDWARD FIELD TEXT

[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**WILLIAM DAVENANT****WILLIAM DAVENANT****1668**

April 7, night: [Sir William Davenant](#) had for most of his adult life been suffering the ravages of syphilis. On this night



he died at his home in Lincoln's Inn Fields, near his theatre "Duke's."

His theatre had this year brought out *The Rivals* (an adaptation of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*), comedies translated from Scarron, and the tragicomedies *News from Plymouth*, *The Distresses*, *The Siege*, *The Fair Favourite*, and *The Man's the Master*.

The remains would two days later be interred in the Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey and his tablet would be inscribed:

O RARE SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1669

[Sir William Davenant](#)'s *The Man's the Master*.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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1670

[John Dryden](#)'s heroic tragedy *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards*. (George Villiers's satire of the "heroic tragedy" form of play *The Rehearsal* would be so vicious and so effective that it that it would bring this style of writing abruptly to an end.)

[Dryden](#) was appointed as royal historiographer at an annual salary of £200.

[Sir William Davenant](#) having deceased, [Dryden](#) was appointed as [Poet Laureate](#) of England.

The Poets Laureate of England

1591-1599	Edmund Spenser
1599-1619	Samuel Daniel
1619-1637	Ben Jonson
1638-1668	William Davenant
1670-1689	John Dryden
1689-1692	Thomas Shadwell
1692-1715	Nahum Tate
1715-1718	Nicholas Rowe
1718-1730	Laurence Eusden
1730-1757	Colley Cibber
1758-1785	William Whitehead
1785-1790	Thomas Warton
1790-1813	Henry James Pye
1813-1843	Robert Southey
1843-1850	William Wordsworth
1850-1892	Alfred Lord Tennyson
1896-1913	Alfred Austin
1913-1930	Robert Bridges
1930-1967	John Masefield
1967-1972	Cecil Day-Lewis
1972-1984	Sir John Betjeman
1984-1998	Ted Hughes
1999-	Andrew Motion

JOHN DRYDEN'S POEMS



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1672

[Sir William Davenant](#) writings were collected in folio. His final effort had been to travesty [William Shakespeare](#)'s *Tempest* in company with [John Dryden](#).



[Dryden](#)'s comedy *Marriage A-la-Mode*.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1673

Nine of [Sir William Davenant](#) works, such as *News from Plymouth*, *The Law Against Lovers*, *The Fair Favourite*, *The Distresses* (originally performed as *The Spanish Lovers*), and *The Play-House to Be Let*, though they had like all his plays been licensed or otherwise produced in London during his lifetime, appeared for the 1st time in print, in an authoritative edition by Henry Herringman, THE WORKS OF SR WILLIAM D'AVENANT KT.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

1844

January 17, Wednesday: [Waldo Emerson](#) checked out from [Harvard Library](#), for [Henry Thoreau](#), the 6th volume of [Alexander Chalmers](#)'s 1810 anthology, THE WORKS OF THE ENGLISH POETS, FROM CHAUCER TO COWPER,⁵ the volume that contains [William Browne](#)'s "Britannia's Pastorals" (1613) and "The Shepherd's Pipe" (1614), [Francis Beaumont](#)'s THE HONEST MAN'S FORTUNE, [Richard Crashaw](#)'s "Sospetto d'Herode," [Charles Cotton](#)'s "The World," "The Morning Quatrains," "Evening Quatrains," "The Tempest," "On the Death of the Most Noble Thomas Earl of Ossory," and "Contentment," the poetry of [Sir John Beaumont](#), [Sir William Davenant](#)'s preface to "Gondibert," the poetry of [Giles Fletcher](#) and [Phineas Fletcher](#), [William Habington](#)'s "To Roses in the Bosome of Castara," and [Sir John Birkenhead](#)'s "On the Happy Collection of Mr. FLETCHER'S Works, never before printed."

PERUSE VOLUME VI

JOHN BIRKENHEAD

WILLIAM BROWNE

CHARLES COTTON

RICHARD CRASHAW

WILLIAM DAVENANT

GILES FLETCHER

PHINEAS FLETCHER

WILLIAM HABINGTON

[Thoreau](#) would make notes on this reading in his Literary Notebook and Miscellaneous Extracts.⁶

5. THE WORKS OF THE ENGLISH POETS, FROM [CHAUCER](#) TO [COWPER](#); INCLUDING THE SERIES EDITED WITH PREFACES, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL, BY [DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON](#): AND THE MOST APPROVED TRANSLATIONS. THE ADDITIONAL LIVES BY [ALEXANDER CHALMERS](#) IN TWENTY-ONE VOLUMES. London, 1810.

6. See page 320 of the William Browne text.



WILLIAM DAVENANT

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WALDEN: Breed's hut was standing only a dozen years ago, though it had long been unoccupied. It was about the size of mine. It was set on fire by mischievous boys, one Election night, if I do not mistake. I lived on the edge of the village then, and had just lost myself over Davenant's Gondibert, that winter that I labored with a lethargy, -which, by the way, I never knew whether to regard as a family complaint, having an uncle who goes to sleep shaving himself, and is obliged to sprout potatoes in a cellar Sundays, in order to keep awake and keep the Sabbath, or as the consequence of my attempt to read Chalmers' collection of English poetry without skipping. It fairly overcame my Nervii. I had just sunk my head on this when the bells rung fire, and in hot haste the engines rolled that way, led by a straggling troop of men and boys, and I among the foremost, for I had leaped the brook. We thought it was far south over the woods, -we who had run to fires before,- barn, shop, or dwelling-house, or all together. "It's Baker's barn," cried one. "It is the Codman Place," affirmed another. And then fresh sparks went up above the wood, as if the roof fell in, and we all shouted "Concord to the rescue!" Wagons shot past with furious speed and crushing loads, bearing, perchance, among the rest, the agent of the Insurance Company, who was bound to go however far; and ever and anon the engine bell tinkled behind, more slow and sure, and rearmost of all, as it was afterward whispered, came they who set the fire and gave the alarm. Thus we kept on like true idealists, rejecting the evidence of our senses, until at a turn in the road we heard crackling and actually felt the heat of the fire from over the wall, and realized, alas! that we were there. The very nearness of the fire but cooled our ardor. At first we thought to throw a frog-pond on to it; but concluded to let it burn, it was so far gone and so worthless. So we stood round our engine, jostled one another, expressed our sentiments through speaking trumpets, or in lower tone referred to the great conflagrations which the world has witness, including Bascom's shop, and, between ourselves we thought that, were we there in season with our "tub", and a full frog-pond by, we could turn that threatened last and universal one into another flood. We finally retreated without doing any mischief, -returned to sleep and Gondibert. But as for Gondibert, I would except that passage in the preface about wit being the soul's powder, -"but most of mankind are strangers to wit, as Indians are to powder."

**PEOPLE OF
WALDEN**

DAVENANT



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

A WEEK :

Gazed on the Heavens for what he missed on Earth.
— Britain's Pastorals.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

WILLIAM BROWNE

A WEEK :

Man is man's foe and destiny.
— COTTON.

PEOPLE OF
A WEEK

CHARLES COTTON

The World.

ODE.

I

Fy! What a wretched World is this?
Nothing but anguish, griefs, and fears,
Where, who does best, must do amiss,
Frailty the Ruling Power bears
In this our dismal Vale of Tears.

II

Oh! who would live, that could but dye,
Dye honestly, and as he shou'd,
Since to contend with misery
Will do the wisest Man no good,
Misfortune will not be withstood.

III

The most that helpless man can do
Towards the bett'ring his Estate
Is but to barter woe for woe,
And he ev'n there attempts too late,
So absolute a Prince is Fate.

IV

But why do I of Fate complain;
Man might live happy, if not free,
And Fortunes shocks with ease sustain,
If Man would let him happy be:
Man is Man's Foe, and Destiny.

V

And that Rib Woman, though she be
But such a little little part;
Is yet a greater Fate than he,



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And has the Power, or the Art
To break his Peace; nay break his Heart.

VI

Ah, glorious Flower, lovely piece
Of superfine refined Clay,
Thou poyson'st only with a Kiss,
And dartest an auspicious Ray
On him thou meanest to betray.

VII

These are the World, and these are they
That Life does so unpleasant make,
Whom to avoid there is no way
But the wild Desart straight to take,
And there to husband the last stake.

VIII

Fly to the empty Desarts then,
For so you leave the World behind,
There's no World where there are no Men,
And Brutes more civil are, and kind,
Than Man whose Reason Passions blind.

IX

For should you take an Hermitage,
Tho' you might scape from other wrongs,
Yet even there you bear the rage
Of venomous, and slanderous tongues,
Which to the Innocent belongs.

X

Grant me then, Heav'n, a wilderness,
And there an endless Solitude,
Where though Wolves howl, and Serpents hiss,
Though dang'rous, 'tis not half so rude
As the ungovern'd Multitude.

XI

And Solitude in a dark Cave,
Where all things husht, and silent be,
Resembleth so the quiet Grave,
That there I would prepare to flee,
With Death, that hourly waits for me.

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING: HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: September 28, 2014



WILLIAM DAVENANT

WILLIAM DAVENANT

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.



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