

Thrum: The tufted end of a thread.

Thrummed: (said of cloth) Coarsely woven, with many ends or tufts showing.

Tinct: Dye or stain.

Tire: Clothing (this is the origin of the word *attire*; as well as the modern *tire*, which “attires” a wheel).

Tiring-house: A dressing-room.

Train: The part of an upper-class woman’s gown that dragged on the floor behind her.

Velure: Velvet.

Expletives and Exclamations:

Elizabethan English was richly supplied with expletives, oaths, and insults. Here is a selection of some suitable for use at a “family show.”

A very common form of speech was to begin with a mild oath (in the sense of a vow, not an obscenity!), asserting that, by [insert something here], he or she speaks truth. Some invoked one’s faith, God, or parts of God’s body(!); others might refer to one’s honor, manhood, or, in the case of a woman, her maidenhead. (The Latin root of the word “testify” is *testificare*, in which a man would swear by his testicles, i.e., manhood -- an oath to be taken quite seriously!) Some members of the wealthier classes would show off their expensive classical education by swearing by Greek or Roman deities, which still survives in England with expressions like, “By Jove!” (This happened despite the fact that everyone nominally worshipped at the Church of England.)

Things changed, onstage at least, after Elizabeth’s death. In 1606 her successor, King James I (of King James Bible fame) signed the act “to Restrain Abuses of Players,” which prohibits actors from using the names of God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Ghost irreverently or jokingly. Such references, almost overnight, became references to classical Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, furthering that trend. But all this happened after Elizabeth’s death in 1603 -- so at Elizabethan faires it’s still allowable.

By --

-- **God’s bodikin:** Meaning, “God’s little body,” this often became, “**Od’s bodikin.**”

-- **God’s eyes**

-- **God’s beard**

-- **God’s teeth** (I recommend this one -- I really like the sound of it.)

-- **God’s wounds:** Referring to the wounds Jesus had on the Cross, the short form of this common expression was generally spelled as “**zounds,**” but seems to have been pronounced more like “zwoonds” rather than “zownds.” Christopher Marlowe preferred the more phonetic spelling “**swouns.**”

-- **God’s suffering** or **God’s death.**

-- **my faith:** by one’s faith in God; often shortened to **in faith, i’faith, i’fecks,** or simply **faith.**

-- **my troth:** my pledge, faith, or truth; an assertion that the speaker speaks truth.