

Saint Joan Timeline

Compiled by Richard Rossi

*A certain understanding of the historical background to Saint Joan is necessary to fully understand the various intricacies of the play. As an ocean of ink has been spilled by historians on Joan herself, I shall not delve too deeply into her history, keeping closely to what is relevant to the script. My dates, which may not necessarily match those that Shaw used, are the historically accepted dates; where there is discrepancy, I have notated. In some cases, I have also notated which characters refer to certain events in the timeline. There is a great deal of history attached to this script; the Hundred Years War was neither clean nor simple, and Joan was, as *The Inquisitor* says, "...crushed between these mighty forces, the Church and the Law."*

1st Century: Saint Peter founds the Catholic Church of Rome. (Warwick mentions St. Peter)

622: Establishment of Mohammad's political and religious authority in Medina. (Cauchon mentions the prophet)

1215: The Waldensian movement, founded by Peter Waldo around 1170, is declared heretical at the Fourth Lateran Council. The movement had previously been declared heretical in 1184 at the Synod of Verona, and in 1211 80+ Waldensians were burned at the stake at Strausbourg. This was one of the earliest proto-Protestant groups and was very nearly destroyed.

1230's: Establishment of the Papal Inquisition, which would later prosecute the trial against Joan of Arc. (Mentioned by Warwick. This is the same inquisition mentioned throughout the script)

1328: Charles IV of France dies without a male heir, ending the Capetian Dynasty and raising some very serious questions regarding the right of inheritance. The closest male heir was Edward III, who had inherited that right through his mother Isabella, sister of Charles IV. However, women did not possess the right of kingship, and her ability to transfer said right to her son was called into question. The French aristocracy decided that the closest heir of male ancestry was Philip, Count of Valois. This argument of succession became the core issue of the coming war.

1329-1336: Edward III, in his capacity as Duke of Aquitaine, paid homage to the newly-crowned Philip VI in 1329.

Gascony, a historically English area of France, suffered a series of trade problems, border skirmishes, and legal issues all stemming from the interference of Philip VI.

The Auld Alliance, dating from 1295 and renewed in 1326 with the Treaty of Corbeil, was put to the test in 1330 when Edward set out to complete his conquest of Scotland.

1336: Robert of Artois, an exiled French nobleman, was admitted into the English court, giving up information on the French and suggesting that Edward begin a war to reclaim the crown. Incidentally, Edward III's wife, Phillipa of Hainault, was also descended from the House of Valois, giving even more legitimacy to Edward's claim.

The movement of the French fleet from Marseilles into the English Channel did not encourage peaceful thoughts in the English court. Originally destined for a Crusade that Philip and Edward had begun planning in 1332, the collapse of the endeavor marked not only a breaking point between the two kings, but the last organized attempt to recover the Holy Land.

March 16, 1337: Edward of Woodstock, better known as the Black Prince, is made Duke of Cornwall at the tender age of 7. As the Hundred Years War wears on, he will become one of the most brilliant English commanders and instrumental to their successes in the 14th century.

May 24, 1337: The Hundred Years War is begun by the confiscation of Gascony and Aquitaine by Philip VI of France under the grounds that Edward III had failed in his duty as a vassal to Gascony. He responded by challenging Philip VI's right to the French throne. Flanders, an extremely important trade partner which the French had been vying to take over, was chosen as the site of attack. However, the initial invasion was delayed while Edward III gathered funds and allies.

December 1338: France invades Gascony, which would remain isolated from England for much of the first portion of the war. Oliver Ingham, a man of vacillating favor among English royalty, proved to be an able defender, a "remarkable improviser" that managed to hold off the French despite losing several key towns, castles, and much of the county's income.

1338-1339: The previously mentioned French navy, which consisted of 2/3 Genoese mercenaries, raids throughout the English Channel with little opposition. Initially a successful campaign focusing on cities and important financial targets, by 1339 the English towns had fortified and a navy had been built to oppose the raiders. Forced back across the channel, the Genoese demanded higher pay; Philip responded by imprisoning 15 of them, and they responded by returning to Italy with all their ships. Hearing the news, English and Flemish ships quickly outfitted for war and struck back hard. While it did not have the same financial impact as the French raids, it restored flagging morale and repaired stagnant English trade.

1339-1341: With a diminished English presence, Scotland was able to push south, retaking much of their old territory.

June 24, 1340: The Battle of Sluys, one of the opening naval conflicts of the war. The French fleet, mostly galleys with some captured English cogs, had chained itself together in the usual medieval method of defensive fleet action. The English, who did not have a purpose-built navy, relied on retrofitted cogs, rather large trading vessels. The height advantage the cogs gave to the English longbowmen, in addition to the large numbers of men-at-arms that could be carried by such vessels, meant that a naval battle quickly turned into a land battle at sea. The result was disastrous for the French, resulting in the almost complete destruction of French naval ability; Philip's court jester gave him the news thusly: "Cowardly English! They dare not leap out of their ships as our men did when they fought at Sluys." The jester's fate remains unknown.

September 25, 1340: The Truce of Espléchin was signed under duress from both sides. Edward was caught without funds and with bickering allies, Philip was nearly out of food at Tournai (the city under siege following Sluys). While the truce was to prevent either side from fighting for five years, the Breton War of Succession drew them back into conflict, as each king backed a different Breton claimant.

1343-1345: The Truce of Malestroit was foisted upon Philip and Edward by the Pope. While England and France were ostensibly at peace, the Breton War of Succession continued with support from both rulers.

August 26, 1346: The date of the first great English victory in the Hundred Years War, the Battle of Crecy. The English, having learned a lot about fighting on difficult terrain from their war with the Scots, dismounted their knights to fight with the rest of the foot soldiers. Reinforcing a location of his choosing, Edward forced the exhausted French to come to him. This combination of preparation, tactics, and terrain brought an unquestionable English victory. It was also in this battle that the Black Prince proved his mettle.

1348: The Black Plague reaches Europe, brought by Genoese merchants fleeing back to Italy from the Siege of Caffa (1347) by Khan Jani Beg.

1350: Philip VI dies and is succeeded by John II.

1353: Giovanni Boccaccio compiles *Il Decamerone*, a collection of short stories widely regarded as a masterpiece of early Italian prose. (This is the book Charles is reading in the Epilogue)

September 19, 1356: The second great English victory, the Battle of Poitiers. Unable to press his chevauchée (a method of quick raiding, basically burning and pillaging), the Black Prince was caught by the French army. Tricking the knights into attacking early, longbowmen devastated the charge, forcing John to press forward with infantry instead. Unable to penetrate the English defense, they were encircled and caught by a reserve battalion. The result was that John II was captured and France was without a king.

1358: The Jacquerie exploded north of Paris, a result of the ineffectual and disjointed rule of the Estates-General, Charles II of Navarre, and the Dauphin (later Charles V). The peasant revolt lasted a few weeks, followed by many more weeks of retributive killings.

1359: John II signed the Treaty of London, returning to France in exchange for much of western France and an enormous ransom. Repudiated by the Estates-General later in the year, which led to the invasion of Calais and the Treaty of Brétigny on May 25, 1360, which set John's ransom at 3 million gold crowns, around \$25 billion. This new treaty also leads to nine years of relative peace, and is considered the end of the first part of the Hundred Years War.

1360: The first *franc* is created. A gold coin made to pay the ransom of John II, it was conveniently equivalent to the *livre tournois*, the most stable currency in France at the time.

1364: John II dies and is succeeded by Charles V.

April 12, 1365: The Breton War of Succession finally ends with an English victory. The Treaty of Guérande establishes John of Montfort as the ruler of Brittany, which also stipulated that, should the Montfort family fail to produce a male heir, the succession would switch to the Penthièvre family (their opponent claimant) males. This would become important around 1420 and 1488, but is not directly related to the Hundred Years War.

December 4, 1370: The Battle of Pontvallain. while relatively minor, results in an English route, shattering their 30 years of invincibility.

June 22-23, 1372: A naval skirmish between the English and Castilian navies, the Battle of La Rochelle, results in the complete destruction of the English navy. The first significant English naval defeat of the war, it resulted in the loss of English sea control (for a year, at least) and the loss of significant territorial gains in western France.

1376: Edward of Woodstock, the Black Prince, dies.

1377: Edward III of England dies and is succeeded by Richard II.

1380: Charles V of France dies and is succeeded by Charles VI.

1385: Intent on invading England, Jean de Vienne lands troops in Scotland, but is forced to withdraw.

1399: Richard II dies and is succeeded by Henry IV.

January 6, 1412: Jeanne la Pucelle is born to Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Romée.

1413: Henry IV dies and is succeeded by Henry V.

May 4, 1415: John Wycliffe, one of the earliest opponents of papal authority, founder of the Lollard movement, and a precursor to the Protestant movement, is declared a heretic. Dead since 1384, his body is exhumed and destroyed along with his writings.

July 6, 1415: Jan Hus, considered the first church reformer and a forerunner to the Protestant movement, is burned at the stake for heresy in Konstanz. This sparks the Hussite Wars, which last from 1419-1434. Joan dictates a letter threatening a crusade against the Hussites in 1430.

October 25, 1415: The subject of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the Battle of Agincourt is the final great victory of the English. Exhausted, sick, outnumbered, and outgunned, the army of Henry V manages to defeat the French army, once again showcasing the power of the longbow. In addition to killing a large number of French nobility, the victory was seen as God blessing the legitimacy of the English claim to the French crown. The lack of unity in France following the victory allowed Henry a year and a half to prepare a new campaign.

1420: Treaty of Troyes

1421/1422: Charles VI dies, nominally succeeded by Charles VII. Not officially crowned until 1430. Henry V also dies, succeeded by Henry VI.

1424: Joan experiences her first vision. In it, Saint Michael, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret tell her to drive the English out of France and crown the Dauphin. (Stated by Joan)

July 15, 1427: Richard de Beauchamp is defeated by Jean de Dunois and La Hire at the Siege of Montargis, the first important victory by Charles' army. (Stated by Warwick)

June 1428: Joan presents herself to Robert de Baudricourt with the assistance of her cousin's husband, Durant Lassois. Robert tells him to take her home and administer a beating to restore some sense. (Incorrectly dated by Robert as "two days ago" rather than the correct 6 months)

July 1428: Joan is sued by an unknown young man over marriage breach-of-promise. The most likely scenario is that her parents tried to arrange a marriage for her after her stunt with Baudricourt, but she did not promise to wed. The court believes her and dismisses the case. (Stated by Joan)

Thus begins the play...

1429:

- **February:** Joan reaches Vaucouleurs and has another audience with Robert, to no avail. Quickly becoming tired of waiting for him to send her to the Dauphin, she purchases a horse for sixteen francs (Mentioned by Joan) and leaves the city. At Saint-Nicholas-de-Septfonds, a small hermitage outside Vaucouleurs, she stops to pray and instead of pressing forward turns back to the city. She meets Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengy after this, the former quickly giving her allegiance. (Incorrect order, as she would not have known John and Bertrand before meeting Robert)
 - There are only records of two meetings with Robert; June 1428 and February 1429. As Shaw provides no date other than "a fine spring morning", and Joan leaves the city on the 23rd, it is completely possible that Scene I occurred sometime between the second meeting in early February and the date of her departure.

- **February 23:** Joan leaves Vaucouleurs with de Metz, Poulengy, Julian and Jean Honnecourt, Richard the Archer, and the royal messenger Colet de Vienne. She is also provided with another horse worth sixteen francs. (in the play Richard is mentioned, but there is no other mention of the horse or her less illustrious travelling companions)
- **March 6:** Joan arrives in Chinon and is questioned by Charles' counselors for two days.
- **March 9:** Joan is allowed to see Charles (Incorrectly attributed to March 8 in the play) and on the way to the castle is accosted by an unknown soldier: "Jarnidieu! Is that not the Pucelle? If I could have her for one night, I would not return her in like condition." She in response: "Ha! In God's name, you deny Him, and you so near to your death!" Later in the day he falls into the moat and drowns. (in the play Bluebeard discusses the incident with different details) Charles attempts to fool her, but she approaches him directly and, after giving up the ruse, takes her aside for a private conversation that is never revealed. (this is the ruse in the play, with much more comedy)
 - While Shaw mis-dates the encounter and includes quite a bit more levity than the historical records suggest, that is when Scene II occurs.
- **Mid-March:** Joan is taken to be examined at Poitiers, returning March 22. (Alluded to by the Archbishop in the play) Frere Sequin reports "We decided that, in view of the imminent necessity and of the danger of Orleans, the King might allow the girl to help him and might send her to Orleans."
- **April 2:** Joan reveals that angelic voices have told her the location of of a holy sword at Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois, which is dug up and returned to her. (Stated by Joan in the play)
- **April 5:** Joan leaves Chinon for Tours, where she examined again and found to be a virgin. Her armor, standard, and pennon are started.
- **April 21:** Joan leaves Tours for Blois to join the royal army.
- **April 27:** The army leaves for Orleans.
- **April 28:** Joan reaches Orleans and is extremely upset to find the English on the opposite bank (A fairly accurate reproduction of the exchange is present in the play, albeit a day later than historically accurate) While The Bastard has a plan to cross the river, the wind is working against him; Joan councils him to wait, and the wind does change.
 - Shaw seems to have merged the 28th and the 29th together. Otherwise, the date is correct for Scene III.
- **April 29-May 8:** Joan fights in the Siege of Orleans and is wounded by an arrow around noon of the 7th, pushing the assault forward again around 8pm despite her wound. (Described by The Chaplain in the play) Shortly after the French take the Tourelles, William Glassdale and his troops are blown up along with the bridge. (The topic of discussion between Cochoun and Warwick in Scene IV) The English withdraw on the 8th.
- **June 11-12:** The Battle of Jargeau, in which the French retook the districts neighboring Orleans. (Mentioned by the Chaplain)
- **June 15:** The Battle of Meung-sur-Loire, in which the French recaptured a strategic bridge across the Loire. (Mentioned by the Chaplain)

- **June 16-17:** The Battle of Beaugency, in which the French captured another strategic bridge. (Mentioned by the Chaplain)
- **June 18:** The Battle of Patay, the culmination of the Loire Campaign. The French equivalent to Agincourt, Joan crushed the English and decimated their longbowmen. (Mentioned by the Chaplain)
- **June 29:** Charles and Joan leave Gien (formerly the eastern edge of French territory) and head northeast to Reims.
- **July 10:** On the way to Reims, Troyes puts up brief resistance to Joan before capitulating without a fight.
- **July 16:** The army reaches Sept-Saulx, a mere 15 miles from Reims. Some English collaborators leave the city, among them Pierre Cauchon. (Cauchon being turned out of his diocese is mentioned by the Nobleman, though Beauvais is extremely far from Reims)
 - Scene IV occurs at some point between the 16th and 17th; Richard de Beauchamp was the captain of Meaux before 1430, so it is possible (but unlikely) that he met with Cauchon between there and Reims. There is no official record detailing either Beauchamp's or Cauchon's movement at this time, so Scene IV is most likely a fantasy scenario.
- **July 17:** Charles the Dauphin is crowned Charles VII of France in Notre Dame de Reims. (Scene V occurs shortly after the coronation ceremony)
- **July 31:** Charles issues a proclamation exempting Domremy and Greux from taxation in perpetuity, cancelled by the words "Neant, la Pucelle". (Joan mentions this in Scene III)
- **September:** Joan and the army spend the first third of the month probing the defenses of Paris, but on the 9th Charles calls off the assault due to another treaty with the Duke of Burgundy.
- **October:** Joan spends the time in Bourges as the guest of Marguerite La Touroulde, who would later attest to Joan's purity, charity, and virginity.
- **November 6:** Henry VI crowned King of England. Richard de Beauchamp, as the one responsible for the young kings education, would have been present.
- **December 29:** Joan's family is ennobled with the surname du Lys.

1430:

- **April 17-22(?):** Joan's voices tell her that she will be captured before St. John's Day, June 24. (Alluded to by Joan in the play although nearly 9 months in advance of the historical account)
- **May 23:** The Siege of Compiègne, though minor both politically and militarily, results in the capture of Joan by Burgundian troops. Caught outside the town gate, she was pulled off her horse by the cloth-of-gold surcoat. (Brought up by Joan) She finally surrenders to the Bastard of Wandomme.
- **June:** Philip the Good and Isabelle of Portugal meet with Joan. Although there is no record of their meeting, some scholars believe Isabelle was sympathetic to Joan, arranging for her to be transferred from Noyon Castle to Beaufort Castle. Joan also attempts her first escape sometime this month. (Joan mentions this to d'Estivet)

- **July-November:** Joan remains in Beurevoir; in October Joan attempts to escape Beurevoir by jumping from a 70 foot tall tower. Astoundingly, she only suffers a concussion and some bruises. (Part of the Chaplain's interrogation of Joan)
- **Mid-November:** Joan is sold to the English, to the tune of 10,000 livre tournois. She leaves Beurevoir and arrived in Rouen on Christmas Eve. (Warwick mentions the purchase, although there is no record of who actually purchased her)
- **December 25:** Joan is placed in a tower cell chained by the feet. Her guards were John Baroust, Nicholas Bertin, Julian Flosquet, William Mouton, and William Talbot; all English soldiers. (Joan only speaks of four guards rather than five, page 71) She is kept as a prisoner-of-war would be, rather than the church prisoner she supposedly is. (The Inquisitor alludes to this) In order to maintain the sham, the keys to her cell are given to Cardinal Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, Jean d'Estivet, and Cauchon maintains the third.

1431:

- **January:** Joan is delivered to the Inquisition. The trial begins on the 9th, though she will not face any of her accusers until February 21. She is once again examined for virginity, and she reports attempted rape several times.
- **February 21:** Joan makes her first public appearance since her imprisonment. Her request that French ecclesiastical members be represented in equal numbers and English ecclesiastics is denied. She takes an oath, but under duress, and will not swear to not escape.
- **February 22:** Joan is required to take a new oath, agreeing to speak the truth of matters of faith. (Joan talks about the frequency of her oaths to the Inquisitor, Scene VI)
- **February 23:** The trial is in recess. Joan hears her voices three times, "Once in the morning, once at vespers, and when the bells were ringing for "Hail Mary" in the evening."
- **February 24:** The day begins with an argument concerning the oath; Joan is threatened by being declared summarily guilty, so she takes the oath. She is asked if she is in God's grace (Quoted by Joan) and about her childhood, especially the fairy tree. (Mentioned by the Inquisitor and the Chaplain)
- **February 27:** Joan is questioned regarding her use of male clothes, the sacred sword, her banner, and her armor.
- **March 1:** Joan is questioned about angels and her rings.
- **March 3:** Angels are brought up again, she is questioned about her escapes, and other topics from previous days.
- **March 10:** The trial resumes in Joan's cell to counteract the positive opinion she was beginning to garner from a public trial. (Cauchon mentions the people pitying her)
- **March 13:** Joan apparently perjured herself, weaving an elaborate and false story of an angel bringing a crown to Charles.
- **March 14:** Joan is once again questioned on previous days topics in addition to the Bishop of Senlis' horse, worth 200 crowns. (Mentioned by the Chaplain)

- **March 27-28:** Joan is read the 70 articles of accusation and the trial revolves around them. (The Chaplain incorrectly numbers them at 64)
- **April 2:** The judges and assessors reduce the articles of accusation to 12. (The Inquisitor tells the Chaplain of the reduction)
- **April 5:** The 12 articles are agreed upon. Joan contracts food poisoning and is bled; she won't return to the trial until May 2. (Joan talks about being poisoned and being bled)
- **May 9:** Joan is led to the torture chamber and shown the instruments. She is unmoved. (The executioner tells the Inquisitor that Joan has seen them)
- **May 12:** The judges vote 11 to 3 not to torture Joan. Aubert Morel, Thomas de Courcelles, and Nicolas Loiseleur were the dissenting votes. (Not put to a vote, but Joan is not tortured)
- **May 13:** Warwick holds a large banquet, at which he tells Cauchon that the trial has gone on too long. (Warwick tells Cauchon and the Inquisitor this, a full 17 days after the historical date)
- **May 24:** Joan is led to the abbey of Saint-Ouen and displayed while Guillaume Erard delivers a sermon based on John 15:6. As Cauchon reads the sentence to the gathered crowd, Joan agrees to sign a paper of abjuration, conveniently prepared beforehand. She signs with a cross, a sign during the war to do the opposite of what was written in the letter. She is sentenced to bread and water for insulting the church and is given women's clothes. (She signs a recantation in Scene VI, and is sentenced to bread and water. The historical context is lost, however)
- **May 27:** Joan is wearing men's clothes again thanks to the English guards. After some questioning, Cauchon tells the English, "Farewell, make good cheer. It is done."
- **May 29:** The judges vote 39 to 3 to have the abjuration read to Joan; this poses an issue as the official abjuration was different than the one signed by Joan on the 24th. In an extravagant display of flaunting the rules, Cauchon fails to obtain the sentence of a secular court (Cauchon calls this point into question) and sentences Joan as a relapsed heretic. (She is declared a relapsed heretic)
- **May 30:** Joan is given confession and led out of her cell around 9am. Nicholas Midi preaches a sermon based on I Corinthians 12:26, after which Joan prays for half an hour. An English soldier hands her a cross made of sticks, and Cauchon declares her abandoned to secular justice, although no secular sentence was read. Once chained to the stake, Joan asks for a cross, which Brother Pierre retrieves from the church of Saint Sauveur (Ladvenu mentions the act). Some English laugh (Mentioned by Ladvenu) as she calls to her saints and, once the fire is lit, cannot be reached by the executioner so that he may shorten her suffering. (The Executioner mentions the height issue).

After her death, John Tressart, secretary to the King of England, was heard to exclaim, "We are all lost; for it is a good and holy person that was burned."

The executioner confesses that he has burned a saint and will be damned, and that he could not burn her heart or entrails. He is commanded to throw her remains into the Seine. (The Executioner was following Warwick's orders, a radical departure from the terrified and penitent man confessing to the church)

- Scene VI is a lot of merging from Joan's trial. Do not fault him for it though, as the trial records are exceedingly dull. Then again, what law accounts are not?

Events following Joan's death...

September 21, 1435: The Treaty of Arras is signed, allying Burgundy and France.

October 20, 1438: Jean d'Estivet is found dead in a sewer outside Rouen. It is seen as retribution for his conduct during Joan's trial. (Mistakenly attributed to Cauchon with some embellishment)

December 14, 1442: Pierre Cauchon dies suddenly and without last rites at his home in Rouen. His family disassociates themselves with his work and refuse to comment at the Nullification trial.

1444: Agnes Sorel becomes the acknowledged mistress of Charles VII. Retiring to the Château de Loches in 1445, she dies mysteriously in 1450 after bearing four children. (Charles talks of her)

July 17, 1453: The Battle of Castillon, a decisive French victory, is considered the final battle of the Hundred Years War. As a result, the English lost all landholdings in France except Calais and the Channel Islands. Sir John Talbot was also killed during the battle.

November 7, 1455: Isabelle Romée makes a formal request for the rehabilitation of Joan at the Cathedral de Notre Dame, Paris. The papal commission approved the trial. (Charles tells Joan of this)

June 1456: The Epilogue, which is surely a fantasy. Still, one never knows what passes through mens minds away from the pen of the chronicler...

November 7, 1455-July 7, 1456: The nullification trial takes place, in which Joan is absolved of all charges against her

August 29, 1475: The Treaty of Picquigny was signed, formally ending the Hundred Years War.

The modern era...

July 26, 1856: George Bernard Shaw is born on Synge Street, Dublin. Father George Carr Shaw, mother Lucinda Elizabeth Shaw, and two sisters: Lucinda Francis and Elinor Agnes.

May 18, 1869: Félix Dupanloup, bishop of Orleans, and 12 other bishops address a formal petition for the canonization of Joan of Arc to Pope Pius IX.

January 27, 1894: Pope Leo XIII declares Joan of Arc Venerable.

April 18, 1909: Joan is beatified by Pope Pius X.

1914-1918: Joan of Arc becomes hugely popular during The Great War as a symbol of patriotism. Ironically, she is most popular in England.

May 16, 1920: Joan is canonized by Pope Benedict XV. (The Gentleman tells Joan)

December 28, 1923: *Saint Joan* premieres at the Garrick Theatre on Broadway.

March 26, 1924: *Saint Joan* premieres at the New Theatre in London.

May 1924: Shaw writes the preface for *Saint Joan*, presenting a more objective view of Joan as a person.