**Chronicles**

Generally a chronicle is a historical account of facts and events ranged in chronological order, as in a time line. Typically, equal weight was given for historically important events and local events, the purpose being the recording of events that occurred, seen from the perspective of the chronicler. This is in contrast to a narrative or history, which sets selected events in a meaningful interpretive context and excludes those the author does not see as important.

In modern times various contemporary newspapers or other periodicals have adopted "chronicle" as part of their name. Various fictional stories have also adopted "chronicle" as part of their title, to give an impression of epic proportion to their stories. A chronicle which traces world history is called a universal chronicle.

Chronicles are the predecessors of modern "time lines" rather than analytical histories. They represent accounts, in prose or verse, of local or distant events over a considerable period of time, both the lifetime of the individual chronicler and often those of several subsequent continuators. If the chronicles deal with events year by year, they are often called annals. Unlike the modern historian, most chroniclers tended to take their information as they found it, and made little attempt to separate fact from legend. The most chroniclers’ viewpoints are highly localised, to the extent that many anonymous chroniclers can be sited in individual abbeys.

The most important English chronicles are the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, started under the patronage of King Alfred in the 9th century and continued until the 12th century, and the *Chronicles of England, Scotland and* *Ireland* (1577 – 87) by Raphael Holinshed and other writers; the latter documents were important sources of materials for Elizabethan drama. Later 16th century Scottish chronicles written after the Reformation shape history according to Catholic or Protestant viewpoints.

It is impossible to say how many chronicles exist, as the many ambiguities in the definition of the genre make it impossible to draw clear distinctions of what should or should not be included. However, the *Encyclopedia of the* *Medieval Chronicle* lists some 2,500 items written between 300 and 1500 AD.

**Notes:**

*Raphael Holinshed – was an English chronicler, whose work, Holinshed's Chronicles, was one of the major sources used by William Shakespeare for some of his plays.*

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