Records of Early English Drama

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Prolegomenon to a study of provincial touring and acting styles in seventeenth-century England

An invitation last year to participate in a Shakespeare Association of America Seminar on Professional Performance in the "Provinces" sparked my re-interest in an issue I had visited some time ago, namely the persistence into the twentieth century of certain acting traditions traceable back to the late seventeenth century, or earlier. Prior research into eighteenth through early twentieth century acting had suggested to me that provincial performers preserved traditions that had previously fallen from favor in major urban centers; might this be true for seventeenth century acting as well?

I initially picked up a trail left cold long ago in my dissertation research. Why did cast lists for the Robert B. Mantell Shakespearean Company, which was touring the American provinces as late as 1928, occasionally contain the name 'Abraham Ivory,' an individual
whom Mr. Mantell (himself trained in the English provinces in the 1870s) never em-
ployed? I now know Abraham Ivory was an actor named (and mocked) in the key to
Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* as a notorious drunk. He was also in all likelihood the actor
'Abraham' arrested in a 1649 raid on the Salisbury Court theatre and probably a performer
of women's roles in Caroline times.4 How was it that Mantell kept alive the tradition of
concealing with this stage name a performer who otherwise did not wish to be identified?4
This 'homage' to Ivory was no isolated example: in his portrayal of King Lear, Mantell
preserved bits of stage business traceable back to the early eighteenth century and he
continued to perform Cibber's *Richard III* long after the Shakespearean text had reclaimed
the English-speaking stage. What was going on here?

In what follows I propose to share my curiosity about three intertwined skeins of specu-
ation about the continuity of acting traditions in the hopes that my REEDers will direct
me to additional data relevant to the following questions:
1) How did performing in the provinces impact on restoration acting style?
2) What is the current state of evidence concerning the continuity of acting traditions
from pre-commonwealth to post-restoration?
3) What (if anything) can the evidence of pre-commonwealth provincial performance
tell us about 'Elizabethan' acting style?

Hotson, and after him Milhous/Hume and Dale B. J. Randall, have shown that London
playing was not entirely squelched during the commonwealth. Surrupitious, unrecorded
(because illegal) playing might logically have continued in the provinces, though whatever
records have survived would probably reflect a small portion of actual activity. In
any case, provincial touring resumed immediately after the restoration. Murray repro-
duces an exchange of letters in September-October of 1660 between the Mayor of Maid-
stone and Master of the Revels Sir Henry Herbert, in which the former proposes to pro-
hibit players on his own authority and the latter vigorously demurs.6 It was, of course,
in Herbert's self-interest to reassert his authority and guarantee his income from licens-
ing fees. This is why he resisted the institution of patent monopolies for Davenant and
Killigrew, contributing to the complex political maneuvering around the issue.7 For our
purposes, the result of the politics was to promote provincial performance: George Jolly
is to be found in Cambridge in 1662 with *Philaster* and *The Changeling* in his repertory
and in Norwich in 1663 ('Tis Pity She's a Whore, A New Way To Pay Old Debts), having
in the meanwhile (January 1663) been granted a license to perform 'throughout England
with exception onely to the Cities of London and Westm' (Hotson, 182). The prologue
to Etherege's *Comical Revenge* (1664) warns jokingly that hostile criticism will send the
players off to Norwich or Ireland.8

Until after the turn of the century, and as was the case before the restoration, provin-
cial players performed in fitted-up venues, ranging from pig-sties on up, rather than in
theatres. After 1700, activity was regular, safe and profitable enough to warrant the con-
struction of the first provincial theatres - Bath (1705), Greenwich (1709), Richmond
(1718), Canterbury (1726), Bristol (1729), York (1734), Ipswich (1737) - a development
which the 1737 Licensing Act stalled. According to Rosenfeld (3), provincial companies retained the sharing system, giving way to the salaried system adopted by the London companies only gradually in the course of the eighteenth century. It is likely that not only plays but roles were part of the ‘stock’ in which company members ‘shared.’ Burge finds the first use of the common term for ‘inheritable’ type-casting – ‘lines of business’ – in the mid-eighteenth century, but evidence of the practice (under the terms ‘specialty,’ ‘caste’ or ‘walk’) much earlier. The practice was, in effect, a casting rule governing all performance until well into the nineteenth century – or into the twentieth, in tradition-bound companies like Mantell’s.

As apparently was the case pre-restoration, it is deceptive to speak of ‘provincial companies’ without attempting to draw some distinctions. There is ample evidence that the King’s Company and Duke’s Company toured almost intact in the summer months. There were also companies like Jolly’s which, because of the patent monopolies, could not play London. (When the King’s Company visited Oxford in the summer of 1680, they found an unnamed rival troupe in residence and solicited a letter from the Lord Chamberlain asking him to disallow the other troupe.) There were also pick-up companies of lesser players from London troupes who moved from ‘walking gentleman’ up to Romeo when they toured. And there were, towards the end of the eighteenth century, circuit players fanning out from provincial ‘Theatres Royal’ (Rosenfeld, passim).

If we reconfigure, then, our idea of restoration (and later) theatre to include a vast and extensive touring establishment, we may be able to recognize how provincial practice reinforced an already weightily conservative acting tradition. Both the sharing system and ‘lines of business’ encouraged the codification of traditions associated with a role. Charles Harold Gray’s study, Theatrical Criticism in London to 1795, indicates that the earliest critical discussions of acting focused on whether a role had been played authoritatively. The source of authority in new plays would likely be the author and in older plays the master actor who ‘instructed’ his apprentice. The younger actor then inherited the role upon the retirement of the elder. Though both Betterton and Elizabeth Barry were of the younger generation of restoration actors, both studiously took note of previous interpretations of their various roles, according to the former’s biographer, and Betterton once rewarded a lesser actor in his company for recalling the exactness of ‘Hart’s key’ in delivering a line of Nathaniel Lee’s The Rival Queens with which Betterton was having difficulty. In the early years of the Restoration period and until at least 1682, a ‘Nursery’ company existed (and toured, sometimes under Jolly’s leadership) to train young actors in the traditions (Hotson, 192 ff. and BD, viii, 216–18).

As Randall has recently shown, the surprisingly large volume of new plays written during the Interregnum and immediately post-restoration tended to be outgrowths from something earlier (375). Early in the restoration, old plays (i.e., pre-commonwealth) made up most of the repertory – another conservative factor. Negotiating the ‘rights’ to these plays was an important aspect of the patent arrangements (Milhous, 1978, 15ff). The future, of course, ultimately lay with new plays and changeable scenery – the weapons Davenant swiftly employed against Killigrew’s more seasoned actors – and there is evidence that the provinces saw new plays not long after London (Rosenfeld, passim). But it stands to reason that until there were theatres to tour to, the old play repertory (with

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its less stringent scenic requirements) must have lasted in the provinces, and that when newer plays were performed they were staged in an older manner, placing more emphasis on the acting. Burner has looked at several promptbooks identified with restoration touring companies and noted that they are bare of the scenic indications found in contemporary London promptbooks.  

It would take us far afield of the immediate subject to follow these provincial practices forward in time, but I note in passing that Otway, Settle, Quin, Macklin, Garrick, Mrs. Siddons and Kean all served in the provinces before 'making it' in London. Though the new-fangled Garrick expressed 'contempt for the affectations bred in youngsters by country companies,' he regularly sent out talent scouts to look for prospects in the sticks.  

The ineradicable fact of the Interregnum and the 'closing of the theatres' (something of a misnomer, as we know from Hotson) has enforced a periodicity in theatre history in which the terminus ad quem of one era is invariably 1642 and the terminus a quo of the next is 1660. This formalization is in need of reconsideration, if not revision. Might we think of the puritanically contentious period from Prynne to Jeremy Collier (1633–98) as from the long view (in light of the expanse of Histriomastix) to the Short View? How about periodizing the tenure of Sir Henry Herbert (1622–73)? Or from the King's Men to the King's Company (1603–60), recognizing the continuity of personnel? It might make sense, in terms of theatre architecture, to think of 1617 (Jones's Cockpit in Drury Lane) to 1747 (the alteration of Wren's Drury Lane) as a period. Or perhaps we should dub the entire seventeenth century the 'Age of Fletcher,' the performance of whose perennially popular plays may have encouraged an acting style requiring rapid transitions of feeling.

Continuous factors affecting acting style are numerous and well-documented within the period (whatever name it may go by). Hotson found players performing at the Fortune and Salisbury Court in 1647; at the Red Bull and Cockpit in 1648; at the Cockpit (William Beeston) sporadically through the 1650s. Jolly toured most of German-speaking Europe in the 1640s and 1650s, probably played before the exiled King in Paris and for the English colony at The Hague in 1648. Most interestingly, Hotson investigated a lawsuit brought by a King's Men company member against Theophilus Bird (who subsequently ends up in Killigrew's company), indicating that Lowen, Robinson, Benfield, Pollard, Clark, Hamerton and Bird (several of whom acted well into the restoration) retained a common shareholder's interest in 'apparel, hangings books and other goods' associated with theatrical production (Hotson, 24–34). Their 'stock' was still worth plenty (and was about to rise precipitously). As Milhous and Hume have shown, similar litigation as late as 1660 only adds evidence to the impression of continuity.

Three troupes – Mohun's (descended from the Caroline era King's Men), Rhodes's, and 'Beeston's Boys' (led by Jolly) — were active immediately before the granting of patents. Killigrew captured the lion's share of senior actors (Mohun, Burt, Hart, Robert and Edward Shatterell, Wintershall, Clun and Cartwright), plus Kynaston and Betterton (the latter soon lured away by Davenant). Many of these veteran performers 'clearly
conceived themselves as part of an ongoing and unbroken "Society of Actors" active in 1648, as Milhous and Hume have recently put it (509). To these facts the researches of the Biographical Dictionary allow us to adduce valuable evidence on the persistence of theatrical families (ever a conservative element). Wintershall was the son of Richard Gunnell, himself a Caroline actor and one of the builders of Salisbury Court (BD, xvi, 191–4). Cartwright was likewise the son of an actor; he is to be found touring in the 1630s and during the Commonwealth, prior to his distinguished membership in Killigrew's company (BD, iii, 89–92). Bird was Christopher Beeston's son-in-law and Michael Mohun's father-in-law, thus forging a theatrical lineage encompassing almost the entire seventeenth century (BD, ii, 133–5).

Langhans has compared pre-restoration and restoration promptbooks and finds that the latter closely conform with the former, with the single, prominent, restoration addition of notes on scenery.20 Langhans also observes the almost complete absence of notation as to what an actor did after entering the stage. Such an absence is compatible with a master/apprentice acting tradition in which the former dictated the traditions to the latter, whose personal responsibility it was to pass them on (xxii–iv).

As is well-known, James Wright (Historia Histrionica, 1699) and Downes (1708) emphasize the homage restoration actors bore to their predecessors: Davenant (after Lowen) instructing Betterton in the traditions of playing Henry vii; Mohun, Burt and Hart (themselves Caroline-restoration actors) closely following 'the manner of action' of the previous generation ('Lowin, Taylor[,] Pollard and some others') (Wright cited in Thomas, 133). It may be that even the London 'revolutions' wrought by Macklin's Shylock and Garrick's Richard iii should rightfully be seen as the exceptions proving the rule of a 'continuous tradition'21 of tragic acting going back to Elizabethan times.

In my earlier example of Betterton seeking aid in remembering how to call forth 'Hart's key' I believe the gestus was designed both to embody and symbolize the presence of the older actor and to lend authority to Betterton. I do not wish it to be construed, however, that such an example and the other evidence of continuity I have introduced here is meant to establish the ever-sameness of some eternal acting tradition. Rather, I suggest the evidence demonstrates perdurance, the sameness and difference at the same time of tradition allowing for change.

The implications of Murray's suggestion (1, xi) that Tudor-Stuart theatre needed to be thought of as a national rather than urban phenomenon have yet to be sufficiently explored. The accumulation of REED data will make such exploration both more possible and more urgent. What are the implications for the vexed question of 'Elizabethan' (the term dictated to us by B. L. Joseph's pioneering study in 1951) acting style?

If there was a 'typical' actor who spent most of his time performing in London there was an equally typical one touring the provinces. During James i's reign, the King's Men played at least 39 provincial engagements of varying length; the company variously known as Lenox's, Albany's, York's and Prince Charles's Men played more than twice as many in the same period, according to Murray's (out-of-date) figures (2, 183–4 and 239–42).
Whether or not the audience of London companies was 'privileged' or heterogeneous, in the provinces audiences collectively ranged from honored guests at country manors to working men threatened with distraction from their tasks to impressionable students. Consequently, the myth of playing to the groundlings – or the elitist counter-myth – finds no necessary support in the provincial experience.

Yes, urban playwrights tossed jibes at provincial troupers – as ever they have – to distinguish themselves from the hoi polloi. To Somerset’s catalogue (47–8), we might add Nabbes’s Covent Garden, in which strollers are satirically depicted borrowing a blanket to create a costume (cited by Thaler, 244) or the country beggars’ play in Brome’s A Jovial Crew. We need not discount these and suchlike anecdotes, but should contextualize them in an elaborate provincial system as various as that of the Restoration. Whether or not Murray’s company taxonomy or Somerset’s or Thaler’s estimate of company size are exactly right, there were in all likelihood classes of companies. Dekker’s ‘country’ troupe of nine (Newes from Hell, 1606, cited by Thaler, 123) is to be contrasted with Henry Herbert’s authorization for the King’s Men to tour with as many as twenty-two. As after the restoration, a small or reduced troupe might necessitate extraordinary doubling (with possible humorous consequences; there are eighteenth-century reports of a provincial actor playing both parts in a two-character scene), as well as the natural selection of quick-studying actors. Rosenfeld (12) records the post-Restoration practice of querying a potential company-member on how many ‘lengths’ (42 lines) he could memorize in a night.

Was the acting style enforced by repertory playing and the exigencies of regular touring necessarily formulaic, rigidly patterned, lacking individuality? Lise Lone Marker long ago convinced me otherwise, while at the same time positing a codified, decorum-based system which can be taken as evidence for a lingua franca of gesture and expression by which all actors could readily communicate in all situations (90–4). (In Morality Play, his recent novel about an English acting troupe in the fourteenth century, Barry Unsworth has compellingly imagined such a codified system not at all lacking in emotional power or individualized craft.) This, precisely, is what was transmitted when a master actor ‘instructed’ his apprentice. It was a short step from the theory of decorum to the playwright’s recognition ‘that characters’ traits must be “correspondent to their kind”’ (Lone Marker citing Richard Edwards’ prologue to Damon and Pythias) and thence to the practice of casting according to ‘lines of business’ – thereby converting dramatic conventions and dramatists’ predilections into theatrical traditions. Whether or not the estimable T. W. Baldwin had it exactly right about The Organization and Personnel of the Shakespearean Company, any working playwright knows that writing for specific actors facilitates the process, with the effect that dramatic and theatrical convenience mutually reinforce one another conservatively.

But conservatism and being hide-bound are not the same thing. Extensive provincial touring, with its great variety of venues, only supports the image of an adaptable, resourceful Elizabethan actor. Provincial touring suggests that the regular shuttling of the London-based King’s Men between outdoor and indoor playing places was the national rule, not the exception. Even more relevant to speculations about acting style, if the vast majority of provincial playing places was indoors (Somerset, 59), still another link is forged with
post-restoration acting conditions, forcing us to revise the canonical disjunction from large, outdoor 'Elizabethan' theatres to intimate, indoor restoration houses. The ubiquity of indoor provincial halls and houses makes it clearer why the actors 'surviving' the Commonwealth were the residents of the Cockpit and Salisbury Court, rather than the tear-throat denizens of the Red Bull. And, too, Somerset's census of ordinary and seemly provincial sites - town halls, guild halls, parish houses, court halls, etc. - may invite us to qualify in substantive ways Steven Mullaney's provocative topography of the marginalized Elizabethan player.

Qualify, not reject. The vastness of provincial theatrical activity suggests that the players added a significant contingent to the 'hedge-birds' of every stripe, from disoriented gentry, to shiftless cavaliers to unemployed artisans ('Mechanicks walk[ing] worklesse up and down' - 'an innumerable army of 'em ... lately disbanded without pay,' as Brome put it in 1641. Brome's subtle and complex allegory, A Jovial Crew, arranges vagabond and strolling player to reflect off each other multivalently (and in a manner worthy of deeper analysis than it has, to my knowledge, received). Here I wish only to mention that among the country beggar colony are a playwright and enough 'beggar-players' to stage an (interrupted, as it happens) allegory-within-an-allegory described by the Poet who would write it: 'I would have the country, the city and the court, be at great variance for superiority. Then would I have Divinity and Law stretch their wide throats to appease and reconcile them; then would I have the soldier cudgel them all together ...' (108). Brome's play, the last performed before the closing of the London theatres, was all too vivid and prescient an emblem of the threat to public order and hierarchy represented by an itinerant populace. I am reminded that the actor on-the-road combines two of Camus' examples of 'l'homme absurde,' defiantly, endlessly, subversively refashioning himself. It was probably no accident Shakespeare named the strolling players 'the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.'

Notes

2 Mantell was the subject of Attilio Favorini, 'The Last Tragedian: Robert B. Mantell and the American Theatre,' Diss., Yale University, 1969.
4 'Abraham Ivory' is less well-known as a stage name than 'George Spelvin,' which was familiar enough in the 1970s to be punned upon by the porn star identifying herself as 'Georgina Spelvin.' Traditions survive in curious ways.


10 See Rosenfeld, *passim*.


12 Mantell played Romeo until the age of 66; when he could no longer physically play it, *Romeo and Juliet* was dropped from his company’s repertory. Betterton played Valentine in *Love for Love* until he was 74; etc.


15 This is Downes’s key word in *Roscius Anglicanus* (1708), ed. Judith Milhous (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1987), 55.


19 Randall (1) urges similarly, though his work was not available to me as I formulated my thesis.


21 Lise Lone Marker, among others, supports the idea of such a continuous tradition in ‘Nature and Decorum in the Theory of Elizabethan Acting,’ in *The Elizabethan Theatre*, ed. David Galloway (Toronto: Archon Books, 1970), 90. On the role of the provinces in the post-Restoration transmission of the tradition, see my 1972 article. Also note that the Macklin and Garrick revolutions were conducted against the backdrop of Quin’s high mannerism, itself a departure from the more natural Betterton. Reasonably, Boaden placed Macklin in the ‘old school’ of Betterton and Booth because ‘that school taught what was truth and nature’ (cited *BD*, X, 23).


Women and Carnival Masking

Medieval Carnival is one version of an enduring European tradition of winter popular festivity, stretching from at least the Roman Kalends to the present day. For an extensive period around the Middle Ages the wearing of masks seems to have been a significant aspect of this festive play. It is in the later fourth century AD that we first hear about masking in the winter games; by the fifteenth century it had become so popular a part of the celebrations that masking often dominated Carnival activity, with not only street masquerading, but also dancing, dicing, gift-giving and good luck visits, all in masks. This medieval Carnival masking was largely, but by no means exclusively, a men’s game.

This paper aims to explore the roles played by women in the maskings of Carnival, and to attempt to determine how far attitudes to women’s and men’s masking differed.

Carnival activity seems to have varied across Europe, both in particular customs and in prominence, from the flamboyantly developed celebrations of Italy, Tasso’s ‘thousand forms and thousand appearances,’ to the virtual non-existence of Carnival as such in Britain. In Southern Europe, where the festival was more celebrated and masking and masks themselves more elaborate, sophisticated and spectacular, contemporary evidence certainly confirms that both men and women participated. Sixteenth and early seventeenth century pictures show women among street masqueraders, and eyewitness accounts from travellers in Italy, Spain and Southern France refer to both men and women maskers.

As the prologue to an Italian Carnival comedy observed, ‘Most men, and perhaps women too, either are going or want to go around in masks.’

However, as this perhaps hints, women seemed rather more likely to take a secondary role. Descriptions of Carnival festivity tend to imply that it was the young men who dominated masking; a recurrent image of bands of young masked men roaming the streets,
throwing eggs and perfumes at women watching at the windows, seems to confirm a commoner pattern of women as spectators, though necessary and participating spectators, of at least the street masking. Whatever it was that masking conferred - licence, communality, freedom from social or personal constraints of whatever kind - women seem to have been more often the objects, than the subjects of the experience.

In Northern Europe Carnival masking seems much more impromptu: there are fewer organised events and popular street masking is more likely to involve home-made disguises of soot-blackened or flour-whitened faces, or the sort of makeshift grotesque costumes many of us still associate with Hallowe'en. Again it is clear that women did sometimes join the disguising: Kirchmeyer's reference to girls dressed in men's clothes in Germany is typical: 'wanton wenches drest like men do travell by the way.' A later Scottish record catches the informal flavour of such a carnivalesque guising, finding that the two couples involved in a street incident 'wer disgysed, namly andrew jhonestowns wyf hawing hir hair hinging downe and ane blak hat wpon hir head.' But equally, accounts generally imply that the commonly perceived danger to women was as victims of, rather than as participants in, the riotous behaviour of the maskers. Respectable women either suffered, or were seduced by, the licence of male maskers.

Medieval attitudes towards Carnival masking are hard to determine fully, in part because, predictably, most surviving evidence comes from those attacking the practice and their particular antagonistic viewpoint selects and colours what we can learn. Although it was so widely and enthusiastically practised there is relatively little existing defence or celebration of Carnival masking. Equally, when considering issues of masking and gender we must recognise not only the obvious selectivity of expressed opinion, but the fact that recorded attitudes are themselves dominated by men's perceptions. Nonetheless the antagonistic evidence can throw interesting, if clearly partial, light on masquerading.

Objections were advanced on theological, social and personal grounds. Theoretical condemnation of Carnival masking appears to be largely directed at men, and frequently to centre on the sacrilege of corrupting the image of God located in the human form. Since the identity of the human individual is therefore inextricable from the identity of God himself, any altering of one's face by a mask is 'a kinde of violence to Gods owne Image.' This argument was applied to the grotesque and fantastic masks of street reveling from very early on: Peter Chrysologus, for example, tells winter revellers in the fifth century that the man who puts on a mask rejects the image of God in himself, making himself a tool of the devil.

This kind of argument rarely, if ever, seems to assume female maskers. But fascinatingly most of the commentators who address this issue, in ascribing their ideas to the authority of the early Fathers, turn out to be drawing on treatises concerned originally not with masks at all but with women's cosmetics. In the second century Tertullian, in a discussion developed in the third century by Cyprian, wrote eloquently against the practice of female face-painting, presenting a theological analysis that was widely influential on medieval and sixteenth century thinking about masking. 'What is born' claims Tertullian 'is the work of God; so what is produced artificially is the devil's business.' To paint the face is to alter what God has made, accuse God of poor workmanship; it becomes, according to Cyprian, 'an assault ... on the divine work, a defrauding ... of
the truth.” Masking, then, interferes with the soul’s truthful relationship with God. Widely offered in medieval Europe as a critique of male masking behaviour, these arguments about moral identity and spiritual integrity were first formulated as applying specifically to women.

When it comes to more social issues there seem to be sharper differences between attitudes to men and to women. The commonest objection to men’s Carnival masking was that it both encouraged, and became a cloak for, violence. The excitement of night-time masking by bands of partying young men, together with the release from moral and social inhibition that the anonymity of the masks conferred, led to inflammatory opportunities for violence and theft. ‘Beneath this long-standing licence to run wild they commit six hundred outrages each day, and that with impunity,’ claimed Polydore Vergil in the early sixteenth century. Anthony Munday, observing the Roman Carnival in 1578, claimed that:

During this time, euery one weareth a disguised visor on his face, so that no one knowes what or whiche they be: and if any one beare a secrete mallice to an other, he may then kill him, & no body will lay hands on him, for all this time they will obey no lawe.

The excitement of communal masking not only encourages violence itself but by removing inhibitions allows the maskers to set themselves outside the normal rule of law.

For women, perhaps predictably, fears centre not on violence but on sex. Carnival masking is a threat to female chastity, whether women are participants or merely observers. Attitudes to this illicit sexuality themselves vary. An interesting account by a Swiss observer of Carnival in Barcelona suggests that the sexual freedom allowed to women maskers was tolerated, almost as an acceptable safety-valve in a highly controlled society:

Women too take their part. Throughout the year they are so severely restricted that they are not allowed to talk to strangers … But at Carnival time there are no such shackles and hindrances. They put on masks and run the streets in complete freedom … So for more than one husband, the cuckoo sings before Spring comes. No matter, at such times they are no longer the masters and must conform to common usage.

Carnival was certainly considered as a time of semi-official licence: but that licence when accorded to women appears to focus specifically on their sexuality.

By definition, though, sexual licence was not confined to women. One effect of the anonymity conferred by the Carnival mask seems paradoxically to have been to strengthen the sense of community and intimacy between maskers. For individuals this manifested in the sexual licence for which Carnival was famous: ‘Il est au Carnaval où chacun fait l’amour.” Many of the disguises and games of Carnival were erotic, and there are various riotous, if mythical, tales of masked husbands and wives unknowingly committing passionate ‘adultery’ with each other. One pertinent German example tells of a married couple who, both masked, met unwittingly at Carnival time and ‘indulged their sudden
fancy on their way in the penumbra of a cloth worker's shop ... and never did the hal-
loved joys of matrimony taste like the forbidden fruit of infidelity; at any rate so each
imagined." Next morning all came out and 'denial was impossible, but the one hap-
penned to be as guilty as the other.' This tale, fact or fiction, demonstrates what was clearly
agreed to be an effect of Carnival masking for women as well as for men: by heighten-
ing excitement and suspending identity, sexual desire could be more freely and intensely
fulfilled without the trammels of familiarity, responsibility and consequence.

Most comment, however, is less tolerant. In Northern Europe various moralists warn
that it is not only women who mask themselves who are open to illicit sexual experiences.
German critics in particular assert that the chief purpose of the male Carnival maskers
is to gain entrance to houses and seduce chaste wives and daughters. Women are seen
as having little defence against the combination of traditional licence, anonymity, and
excitement that masking involves. The threat is almost exclusively one to their chastity:
participating or not, that is what is in question. So an Aberdeen record of 1605 which
condemns a band of male guisers for sacrilege (an 'abhominatioun be the law of God'),
blames the accompanying 'young wemen for daunsing opinlie throw the streittis, with
maskis on thair faces, thairby passing the bounds of modestie and schamefastness quhilk
aucht to be in young wemen' (emphasis mine). A sixteenth century treatise on dancing
neatly sums up this general distinction between men's and women's masking: 'he schall
perceive men with wane of theyr goodnes, and women with eclyppes of theyr chastitie
returne home.'

The fullest and most interesting discussion of women's street masking comes from
the early sixteenth century work of the humanist Vives. In the 1555 edition of his com-
plete works the treatise De Institutione Feminae Christianae contains a criticism of young
women's masking that analyses its significance in terms specifically reflecting moral per-
ceptions of women. Interestingly this passage does not appear in early published versions
of the treatise: it is not clear when, how or why it came to be included. Discussing the
dangers of dancing, Vives refers to a sport in which 'men and women in masks would
run around the whole city, dancing through well-known houses such as those of leading
citizens, of rich men, or those in which people are having a party, or rather drinking.'
Although not directly ascribed to Carnival, this is clearly a Carnival-type activity, com-
bining festive street masking and house-visits. At first Vives presents a lively version of
the general arguments about the moral dangers of the sense of liberation and irrespon-
sibility conferred on maskers by the anonymity of masks:

They see and know everyone, but no-one recognises them; like little children
who enjoy thinking that when they cover their faces in their hands they can't be
seen by others, and hearing other people ask for them. But under this kind of
mask lurk many outrages.21

The particular sins he goes on to enumerate, though, are those traditionally specifically
associated with women:
first the unruly inquisitiveness of women, who are very eager to know what's
going on everywhere, who's feasting, what are the arrangements, how they're
dressed, what lavish preparations; whence springs envy (and) gossiping, back-biting (and) slander.22

The faults here attributed to masking are precisely those traditionally held against the unruly descendants of Eve: curiosity, garrulousness, envy and scandal.

Vives also explores in more detail the moral implications of anonymity for women:

Then the reins of female shamelessness are loosed; for a woman who would blush to go out and dance if she was known, doesn't fear to do it masked ... Not only do they hear things that are obscene, and unbecoming to them, but they boldly say things they wouldn't dare to think if they were known. ... So they gradually grow accustomed to shameless behaviour so that the harm modesty suffers beneath the mask is openly displayed without it.23

By releasing them from both social and personal constraints, Vives suggests, masking encourages women to behave in uncharacteristically uninhibited ways. Modesty is thus harmed both externally and internally, both by the improper actions of others to which the masked women are exposed, and by the erosion of personal responsibility and shamefastness. In Vives' analysis the women are both objects and subjects of the moral dangers of the masking experience, though still particularly in relation to their modesty. This rarely full and revealing discussion may obliquely reflect the changing notions of the spiritual and social self manifested in sixteenth century Humanism.

An area with particularly interesting implications for the relation between male and female Carnival disguising is the long-standing custom of cross-dressing. The earliest allusions to festive masking from the fifth century already refer to cross-dressing as one of the common disguises. Initially objections refer specifically to men, but by the end of the seventh century women are occasionally included: `no man ... should put on women's clothes, or a woman the clothes proper to men.'24 Evidence suggests, however, that male cross-dressing remained more widespread, and then as now more unsettling. This seems to remain the pattern throughout the middle ages. Cross-dressing remains a central part of men's medieval Carnival disguising that at various times and places might stretch to include women.

The functions of this cross-dressing and its gender implications are obviously very complex. At one extreme we should not underestimate a forceful practical reason for its commonness: the lack of easily available means of disguise in communities where few had many changes of clothes, or access to disposable costume. In societies where gender dress is more codified than is now the case, cross-dressing is a readily accessible means to a decisive transformation of normal appearance. On the other hand, these maskers' playful escape into another gender also clearly raises potentially profound issues of social, communal and personal identity.

Modern commentators on early male cross-dressing often stress the element of caricature involved, of macho larking about.25 Certainly some early comments confirm a grotesque discrepancy between burly, bearded male body and female dress (`squeezing soldiers' muscles into women's dresses, showing bearded faces'). Yet there is also an anxiety
about the non-comic threat to male identity, revealed in such claims as 'a man, by softening the vigour of his manly strength, totally crushes himself into a woman, uses such art and wiles as if he repented of being a man.'

Where later medieval Carnival most flourishes, in Southern Europe, there is relatively little comment on the cross-dressing of either sex: it seems to be accepted as just another version of playful liberation and variety. But where objection to male cross-dressing re-emerges it generally claims serious scriptural authority. Commentators invoked the prohibition from Deuteronomy, 'neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord thy God' (Ch 22, 50). This injunction turned the alteration of male gender identity into a sacrilege, an offence against God more than society, an 'abominatioun be the law of God.'

Women's cross-dressing tended to attract a different kind of response. In Italy the Carnival motif of girl-dressed-as-boy became so popular an element of comedy that it is hard now to judge how far it operated as a factual or a purely fictional release. The literal truth of the claim of the cross-dressed Lelia in The Deceived (1538) cannot be certain:

I have seen hundreds in Rome dressed like this; and in Modena there must be many every night who go about their private affairs in this disguise.

But fact or fiction, the attitude conveyed is that female cross-dressing not only contributes to the delightful instability of Carnival, but allows women a quasi-legitimate freedom to act independently. When female cross-dressing is attacked it is usually on the grounds simply of wantonness and immodesty. Young women who cross-dress are impudent, and put themselves in dangerous situations. This is rather different from the sense of taboo that is expressed about the men: Deuteronomy is rarely cited in relation to women even though its prohibition in fact refers to both sexes. The assumption of male dress, though improper, is not generally presented as a threat to women's spiritual and moral identity. But men who put on women's clothes are, it seems, endangering their whole sense of self in relation to God.

This perhaps confirms a sense of what constitutes the central difference between recorded attitudes to male and female medieval Carnival marking. For both sexes masking is recognised as a release that may be interpreted as having either positive or negative consequences. But for women these consequences are most often presented as objective and external, for men subjective and spiritual: while women gain socio-sexual independence, or lose their chastity, men are released from the trammels of self, or endanger their souls.

Notes

2 See Giacomo Franco, Habiti d’Huomeni et Donne Venetiane (1609); W. Thomas, The Historie of Italie (London, 1549), 39v; Felix Platter, Beloved Son Felix: the journal of

3 'la / Maggior parte degli uomini, e fors'anco
Delle donne, o c'anno, o c'è desiderano
... di andone attorno in maschera.'
GM Cecchi (1518–87), 'Le Maschere e le Samaritano,' in *Commedie* (Firenze: Pagani, 1818), 5.


7 See comments by Locher and Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg quoted in Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff*, ed. Friedrich Zarncke (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1961), notes to cap 110b, 'von fasnacht narren.'


9 Peter Chrysologus, *PL 52*, 611A.

10 'Quod nascitur opus Dei est; ergo quod fingitur, diaboli negotium est.' Tertullian, *De Cultu Feminarum II*, Cap 5, 4, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol 1, pars 1 (Turnhout, Brepols, 1954), 358.

11 'Impugnatio ... divini operis, praevaria ... veritatis.' Cyprian *De Habitu Virginum* Cap 15, *PL 3*, 455B.

12 'inveterata iam lascivendi licentia, sexcenta flagitia quotidie factiunt, et illud impune.' Polydore Vergil, *De Rerum Inventionibus* (Basle: J Bebelius, 1532), Bk 5, 314.

13 Munday, p 96.

14 T Platter, p 224.


17 See note 7.

18 Mill, p 163.

19 *A briefe Tracte concerning Daunting* (London, ?1580), c7f.

20 'viri et feminae personati urbem totam circumcursitent, saltanted per celebros domos, quale sunt procurerum, divitium, aut in quibus aliqui convivantur, seu potant verius.' JL Vives, *De Institutione Feminarum Christianarum*, Lib 1, cap 12, in *Opera* (Basle, 1555) Vol 2, 684.

21 'vident ipsi et noscunt omnes, a nemine cogniti, ut infantes pueruli, qui magnam capiunt voluptatem, cum admotis ori manibus putant se ab aliis non cerni, et audient se ab aliis requiri; sed sub larva eiusmodi multa delitescunt flagitia.' *Ibid*.

22 'primum curiositas immodica mulierum, quaœ scire quid ubique agatur vehementer avent, qui conviventur, quo ordine, quomodo ornat, quam splendido apparatu; unde nascitur invidentia, loquacitas, detractio, infamatio.' *Ibid*.

23 'tum habenae laxantur impudentiae muliebri; quaœ enim aliquo proficisci et saltare
erubescere [sic] cognita, non veretur id facere larvata ... nec solum audiunt obscoena, et se indigna, sed dicunt intrepidé quae ne cogitare quidem auderent si noscerentur ... ita assuescunt paulatim impudentiae, ut detrimentum, quod sub persona accepit verundia, citra personam proferat, et ostendat.' Ibid.

25 See eg Michel Meslin, La fête des kalendes de janvier dans l'empire Romain (Brussels: Latomus, 1970), 82–3.
26 'tunicis muliebris insere militares lacertos: barbatas facies praeferunt.' Caesarius of Arles?, de Cal Ian CCL 104 (1963), 780 (see Chambers, 297).
27 'vir, virium suarum vigore mollito, totum se frangit in feminam, tantoque illud ambitu atque arte agit, quasi poenitat illum esse quod vir est.' Maximus of Turin, de Cal Ian PL 57, 255 (see Chambers, 295).
28 Mill, p 163.
29 Act 1, quoted in Leo Salingar, Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy (London: CUP, 1974), 216.

CAMERON LOUIS

Two Fools from Sussex

While researching for the Records of Early English Drama: Sussex volume, I have come across two references to fools which, because they do not directly refer to performance, will probably not make it into the final reed volume. However, both texts are nevertheless of interest to reed researchers, because they indirectly point to, in one case, the existence of a fool in the household of a nobleman in Sussex, and in the other, the recognition of fools as familiar figures on the performance stage.

The first reference is from the King's Bench Ancient Indictments (London, Public Record Office, KB 9/442, mb 92). This document is a coroner's report dated 31 May 1506:

Inquisicio indentata Capta apud westden in Comitatu Sussexie Coron humfrido Sydeney vno Coronatorum domini regis in Comitatu predicto xxxj die mensis Maij anno regni regis henrici septimi xxvmo primo super visum Corporis Iacobi Cuitsdam stulti sub nomine Commorantis tunc apud dow,[n]ley Cum domino Thoma Comite Arundell per Sacramentum Roberti Copeden willelmi smythe Iohanni ayllewyn Ricardi ayllewyn willelmi peynter Iohanni Colpas Roberti Colpas Thomi horsham Iohanni Cort wylloni kempe Roberti helden Thomi Crocher Ricardi Cort willelmi tille willelmi Colloke et Iohanni Bodi Qui dicunt per Sacramentum suum quod [pre

5, 6, 8/ Iohanni: for Johannis 6, 7/ Thomi: for Thomae

16
An inquest, drawn up in an indenture, held at West Dean in the county of Sussex before Humphrey Sydeney, one of the coroners of our lord the King in the aforesaid county on the thirty-first day of the month of May in the twenty-first year of the reign of King Henry vii, on the view of the body of James, a fool, under the name of one dwelling then at Downley with Lord Thomas, the earl of Arundel, upon the oath of Robert Copeden, William Smythe, John Ayllewyn, Richard Ayllewyn, William Peynter, John Colpas, Robert Colpas, Thomas Hosham, John Cort, William Kempe, Robert Helden, Thomas Crocher, Richard Cort, William Tille, William Colloke, and John Bodi, who say upon their oath that on the thirty-first day of the month of May, in the twenty-first year of the reign of King Henry vii, between the ninth hour and the tenth hour before noon of the said day, the aforesaid James went out of the house of the said Earl into his park of Downley, and there, with an instrument called a leash (lash?), voluntarily hanged himself upon a tree called a blackthorn, and died; and thus the said James was the cause of his own death. And they do not know of anything else to say on this matter.

It appears from this account that Thomas Fitzalan, the twenty-second Earl of Arundel, kept a fool named James at his estate in Downley Park, near Singleton. It is not clear whether this 'stultus' (the usual Latin name for what is called a fool in English) was a 'natural' or 'artificial' fool, however. Members of the nobility kept 'foolish' individuals for diversion, either because of their wit, or because of physical or mental deficiencies, or for a combination of both of these qualities. Significantly, the vogue of the court-fool is said to have culminated in the early sixteenth century, when this document is dated. The fact that James committed suicide may argue for mental instability, but one should remember that western culture also makes much of the melancholic professional clown, for instance Pagliacci and Rigoletto. I have not found any other record of James the fool, but as more documents relating to the Fitzalan family become available, more information about him may emerge.

The second text is an entry dated 14 February 1607 in the Archdeaconry of Chichester Detection Book (West Sussex Record Office Ep. 1/17/12), folio 45. It concerns an offence against the ecclesiastical court allegedly committed in the village of Westbourne, about six miles West of Chichester:

Proceedings of the court held in the consistory of Chichester cathedral before Francis Cox, deputy judge, and in the presence of Richard Juxon

... Iohanna Pay vxor Henrici Pay for vsinge irreuerent wordes against our vicar mr William Mattock videlicet she did except against asermon which he made the 23th
of November & affirmeth that he preached like a fool in a play, & that he is fitter to make a fidler or a tinker than a minister etc, as appears in the bill; she has to undergo compurgation by five of her neighbours; she appeared on that day, but she produced no compurgators. Therefore the lord (judge) declared that she had failed in her compurgation and was to be regarded as guilty and ordered her to acknowledge her fault in the aforesaid parish church on the next Sunday in time of divine service, as will be provided for her in writing, and to certify on the next court day following.

The only subsequent reference to the case in the manuscript is a note on folio 49, dated 21 February (the following Sunday), to the effect that the matter was to be continued until the next court day.

The interest for scholars of drama is, of course the offensive simile that allegedly was used against the vicar's preaching style. One point of interest is that the figure of the fool in plays was well-known enough at this time, even in rural areas, to be used in a generally recognizable and possibly even proverbial expression. Another concerns the possibility that the cause of the dispute lay in puritan tendencies on the part of the defendants. If such were their religious leanings, they would have cause for objecting both to plays in general and to preaching styles that smacked of too much entertainment and too little high seriousness.

These references to fools also coincidentally trace the development of the fool from a feature of the court and noble households used for private entertainment to a figure of the drama presented for public performances. Interestingly, there are very few references to actual performing fools in Sussex. This may only prove that the documentary evidence of performances conceals much more below the surface.

Notes

2 Welsford, pp 115–16.
4 I would like to thank Dr Abigail Ann Young for her help with this paper.
Letter from the Editor

Changes to the REED Newsletter will be taking place over the next couple of years. We are in the process of acquiring an editorial board, and moving the newsletter up to the status of peer-reviewed journal. The change may involve alteration to the name of the journal, and I invite you to send me your opinion on what that name should be, either by letter (to the REED address) or by e-mail (ostovich@mcmaster.ca).

Since costs of printing and postage are rising and funding is decreasing, we are also increasing the subscription rate. As of 1998, the annual subscription will rise to $12 (Canadian) for individual subscribers, and $15 (Canadian) for institutions; Americans will pay $12/$15 US. The British/European rate will rise to £6.50 individual, and £8 institutional. We would prefer that subscribers pay for subscriptions every two years in advance. Certainly, pre-paid subscriptions will be vital to the REED economy, and we will be unable to extend subscriptions over one year in arrears. We would also appreciate having subscribers send us e-mail addresses as well as postal addresses, so that further announcements about change can be transmitted electronically at a much reduced cost. Please look for occasional further announcements on the REED-L discussion list.

Helen Ostovich

News from the REED Office

The latest addition to our library shelf is the two-volume set of *Somerset, including Bath*, edited by James Stokes, with Robert J. Alexander, and just published in November. The 1150-page collection brings the total number of REED volumes to 16, with two more volumes for the south-west scheduled for production during the next 18 months. When *Bristol*, edited by Mark C. Pilkinton and *Cornwall*, edited by Evelyn Newlyn and Sally Joyce and paired with *Dorset*, edited by C.E. McGee and Rosalind Hays, are published, we will have finished our survey of the dramatic records for the region.

The Third International Medieval Congress at Leeds in July provided an opportunity for four interdisciplinary sessions on Culture and Politics in the South-West, followed by an ale-drinking to toast 20 years of REED’s existence and the completion of their research by the editors involved. There will be a continuation of the regional analysis of culture and politics next July at Leeds where Barbara Palmer will organize two sessions on the North to feature REED editors and other drama scholars working on Cheshire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Lincolnshire, with historians as respondents.

We have also had another, more extensive addition to the REED library, which friends and admirers of the late David Parry will share our pleasure in receiving. As many Newsletter readers will know, David was the talented artistic director of the *Poculi Ludique Societas* for many years, when the PLS produced the York, Chester, and Towneley Cycles as well as *The Castle of Perseverance*. Caroline Parry has generously donated David’s library, videotapes, slides and working papers to REED where others will be able to use his collection to further research in the drama he studied and performed with rare imagination and
energy. We are presently engaged in the task of cataloguing the books with the help of our two librarian volunteers, Lorna Hassell and Katherine Hebblethwaite, but our shelves will soon hold a range of essential drama texts and works on theatre, music and dance history which we have not had funds to purchase. As always, scholars and students will be welcome to use the Parry collection in the Toronto office.

On the funding front we have been following debates in Congress on the future of the National Endowment for the Humanities with concerned interest. The NEH has been one of our most generous and committed benefactors since 1979, an association which we hope may continue for years to come. We received the good news last spring that Barbara Palmer's application to NEH on our behalf had succeeded with a grant of $73,300 (US) awarded for the period 1996–7. Barbara was invited to reapply this past September for the following two-year period, 1997–9. As this entailed writing two extensive grant applications with little more than a year between, we owe Barbara very special thanks for her commitment and endurance.

As the year comes to an end, it will be time for us to say farewell to more than one member of the REED Toronto team. One of our associate editors, William Cooke, left the staff in June to pursue freelance editing and to complete his work for the History of St James Cathedral, Toronto. Lorna Hassell, one of our volunteers, is also leaving this month after several years of contributing to the bibliographic research. December will also be Sheena Levitt's last month as administrative assistant at REED. After 17 challenging years of inspired cost-cutting and budget-balancing, Sheena is taking early retirement to allow her more time to be a reiki practitioner. We wish Sheena, Lorna, and Bill the very best in their future endeavours.

Fortunately, it is also time to welcome some talented new members to REED. Arleane Ralph, who has worked as a graduate student assistant here for the past three years, is now a full-time member of staff. Just graduated with her PhD, specializing in renaissance drama, she is our new Editorial Associate, learning the editorial and paleographical ways of REED while she continues work on the patrons database and manages the REED Newsletter accounts. Three new graduate student assistants have been appointed for this year: Philip Collington, working as a paleographer on the London collections; Tanya Hagen, doing bibliographical research for the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire collections; and Roger Starling, expanding and updating the patrons database. We owe the smooth transition from the rigorous dBASE IV version of the database to the user-friendly ACCESS version to Alan Somerset and his database consultant colleague, Bob Michels at the University of Western Ontario.

Sally-Beth MacLean
Executive Editor

REED has expanded its presence on the Internet with four WWW sites. Our main page is now listed by two of the most popular search engines on the Web, YAHOO! and Altavista, and we have just set up, through Reference.Com, a searchable index to the REED-L discussion group. 'Hits' on our page have increased since we began to advertise these resources more widely. Addresses and descriptions of our four Web pages, which are regularly re-
viewed and updated, are given in the following list. REED-L, our first venture onto the
Internet, continues to grow and expand, with 231 subscribers on five continents as of
4 December 1996.

List of REED web sites

HTTP://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~reed/reed.html
Contains information about the project and its staff, with links to other Victoria projects,
the U of T English Department, University of Toronto Press, the REED Newsletter and our
publications list; also a gateway to the following pages:

‘All The World’s A Stage’ — REED’s Early Entertainment Page

HTTP://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~reed/stage.html
Contains descriptions of, and links to, sites all over the world for students (and perform-
ers) of early drama, music, and dance; Shakespeare; and more recent theatre and film

The REED Archives Page

HTTP://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~reed/archive.html
Contains links to British local record offices and other British and North American manu-
script repositories with important collections for drama or British History, including The
Public Record Office, the British Library, the Bodleian, and the Folger Shakespeare
Library.

Five Renaissance Neo-Latin Plays in English Translation

HTTP://www.chass.utoronto.ca/epc/mlp/mlp.html
In partnership with the Electronic Publishing Centre at the new Centre for Computing
in the Humanities and Social Sciences, REED is making available to teachers and students
world-wide English translations of important texts in Renaissance Drama such as Susanna
and the Elders and Pammachius (on-line later in 1996). These translations, by Victoria
Professor Emeritus Christopher Love, combine readability with accuracy and could be
adapted for performance.

Announcements

CONFERENCE

A two-day conference on ‘Music and Musicians in Urban Societies: Culture, Community
and Change, 1400–1600’ will be held at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College,
University of London on Friday and Saturday, 25–6 April 1997. This interdisciplinary conference will discuss all aspects of urban musical culture, both in Continental Europe and Great Britain. Speakers will include Jane Cowling (Southampton), John Kmetz (New York), Beat Kumin (Cambridge), John Milsom (Oxford), Kirin Nielsen (Illinois), Keith Polk (New Haven), James Saunders (Cambridge), Andrew Wathey (London), Annelies Wouters (Leuven). For more details and an application form, please contact Dr Fiona Kisby, Music Department, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, England. Fax: 01784 439441. Sixty places will be available on each day.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

The 1997 meeting of the Northeast Conference on British Studies will be held at Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, on 26–7 September 1997. Proposals for papers or whole panels should be sent to Dr Susan Amussen, 14 Giles Street, Hamden, Conn., USA 06517; or fax to 203–624–4345, or e-mail to Amussen@Minerva.CIS.Yale.EDU'. Deadline for submissions is 1 April. Papers in any field of British History or related disciplines are welcome. Information about local arrangements may be had from Dr Carl Estabrook, Dept of History, Dartmouth College, at 'Carl B. Estabrook@Dartmouth.EDU', information about NECBS may be from Dr Robert Tittler, Dept of History, Concordia U., Montreal H4B2K9 or 'Tittler@vax2.Concordia.CA.

16th Waterloo International Conference on Elizabethan Theatre
Special Topic: Theatre and Nation
21–5 July 1997
The 16th Waterloo International Conference on Elizabethan Theatre will be held at the University of Waterloo, July 21–5, 1997. The conference topic will be 'Theatre and Nation.' Short papers with a clearly articulated connection to the topic are solicited to supplement a programme of invited addresses. Please be aware that the spaces reserved for short papers are limited. Submissions, not exceeding 10 pages, should be sent by February 1, 1997 to Lynne Magnusson or Ted McGee, Department of English, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1, Canada. Phone (519) 885–1211, ext. 2759, or 884–8110, ext. 280; fax (519) 746–5788; e-mail LMAGNUSS@watarts.uwaterloo.ca.

Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association
1997 Meeting, Banff, Alberta, Canada
The RMMRA will meet at the Banff Centre for Conferences in Banff National Park May 15–18, 1997.
Papers on any subject from Charlemagne to Charles II are invited, with particular emphasis on international and intercultural aspects. Especially welcome are papers dealing with the history, literatures, and art of Africa, Asia, eastern Europe, and the Americas, with or without reference to contact with western Europe, literatures in languages other than English, and with pedagogical questions and the use of new technologies in teaching medieval and Renaissance subjects. Papers may be delivered in English or French. The deadline
for independent submissions is any time up to January 31, 1997. Only completed papers of 20 minutes reading time will be considered. Membership in the RMMRA is required of all participants. Contact the secretary, Professor Kenneth Graham, Department of English, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM 88003, USA. E-mail: kgraham@nmsu.edu
Address inquiries, proposals, and MSS to Professor Jean MacIntyre, Department of English, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6G 2E5. E-mail: jean.macintyre@ualberta.ca

ENGLISH ARCHIVAL SOURCES AT VICTORIA COLLEGE

With funds from SSHRCC, the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies (crrs) at Victoria College has recently acquired microfilms of the registers of the Archbishop of Canterbury from John Morton to William Laud (1485–1640). The registers are "out-letterboks" containing copies of documents issued by or concerning the Archbishops in their capacities as ordinary, metropolitan, and, until the Reformation, papal legates. The main types of documents are institutions, records of ordinations and appointments, of Convocation, of visitations, of the administration of vacant sees, and records of ecclesiastical courts, including wills. The registers thus constitute an important resource for the study of English religious and social history of the period.

The registers supplement the growing collection of English archival resources on microform at the crrs, which include the complete State Papers Domestic of Henry viii, Edward, and Mary; medieval and Renaissance manuscripts from the Society of Antiquaries in London; uncalendared state papers (foreign) of Queen Elizabeth; the Tanner papers; the Talbot papers; and the Fairhurst and Gibson papers from Lambeth Palace. A large selection of finding guides and indexes for other microform collections complements these holdings. The crrs is located on the mezzanine of the E.J. Pratt library, and is open to the public.

Joseph Black
Curator, crrs

Subscriptions to the REED Newsletter are invited. The cost of two issues for 1997 only will remain $10.00 for Canadian subscribers and $10.00 in U.S. funds for American subscribers. Cheques should be made payable to Records of Early English Drama, and mailed to 150 Charles St. W., Toronto, Ontario M5S 1K9, Canada. The cost per year for British and European subscribers is £5.50. Cheques should be made payable to University of Leeds, and mailed to Peter Meredith, School of English, The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, England. Please address correspondence and submissions to the editor, Helen Ostovich, REED Newsletter, Department of English, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4L9, Canada. E-mail correspondence may be addressed to ostovich@mcmaster.ca.