SCHMITT, II, Anthony Bernard, 1970-
THE WINTER'S TALE IN PRODUCTION.
The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1970
Theater

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THE WINTER'S TALE IN PRODUCTION

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Anthony B. Schmitt, B.S., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1970

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
Division of Theatre
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their kind help in acquiring materials for this study, I wish to thank the following individuals:
Mrs. M. Darvill, The Shakespeare Center, Stratford-upon-Avon; Mr. George Nashe and Mr. Tony Latham, The Enthoven Collection, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Mrs. D. Anderson, The Garrick Club, London; Mr. Thomas P. Holte, Stratford-upon-Avon. I would also like to thank the staff of The British Museum Newspaper Collection at Colindale.

Since most of the materials for this study were collected in England, completion of the work would not have been possible without the research grants which I received from the College of the Arts, The Ohio State University, and the Lazarus Corporation, Columbus, Ohio. I am also blessed with a number of friends and relatives who shared my enthusiasm for study abroad with generous financial gifts.

I am especially grateful to Dr. John H. McDowell who, together with his staff at The Ohio State University Theatre Collection, stimulated me with the challenge for research and provided the materials to initiate it.

I am deeply indebted to the members of my committee: Dr. Rolf Soellner, who introduced me to the study area; Dr. Roy H. Bowen, who gave me constant encouragement throughout my program and who offered invaluable editorial suggestions for this work; and especially to Dr. John C.
Morrow who, thankfully, prodded me to do research abroad and whose continual guidance, reassurance, and understanding in this and all my graduate work was my life-line.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Jan, whose quiet confidence and warm smile kept me going and made it all seem worthwhile.
January 21, 1938  Born - Cincinnati, Ohio

1960 . . . . B.S., Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio.

1960-1961. . . Graduate Assistant, Saint Louis University, Saint Louis, Missouri

1961-1963. . . Lieutenant, United States Army

1963-1964. . . English Teacher, Western Hill High School, Cincinnati, Ohio

1964 . . . . M.A., Saint Louis University

1964-1967. . . Instructor of Speech and Drama, Gannon College, Erie, Pennsylvania

1967-1970. . . Teaching Associate, Division of Theatre, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Theatre.

Theatre History and Criticism. Professors John H. McDowell and John C. Morrow, The Ohio State University.

Dramatic Literature. Professor Robert O. Butler, Saint Louis University; Professors John C. Morrow and John Harold Wilson, The Ohio State University.

Theatre Production. Professor Roy H. Bowen, The Ohio State University.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In the summer of 1969, the Royal Shakespeare Company of Stratford-upon-Avon, England staged a rather peculiar production of *The Winter's Tale*. In this free-wheeling presentation, Father Time took the form of a Zulu in a plastic box, a bigger-than-life bear lumbered through a strobe light, and the Warwickshire shepherds and shepherdesses masqueraded as a tribal love-rock group. Members of the Royal Shakespeare Company were very enthusiastic about their work in the production. Critical reaction was generally favorable. And it was rumored that Peter Brook found it to be the most exciting Shakespeare he had ever seen. But the average Englishman in the audience was inclined to shake his head in bewilderment and wonder what was happening to poor old Shakespeare.

But Shakespeare most certainly had thrown down a challenge to theatrical producers when he wrote *The Winter's Tale*. In its rarefied atmosphere jealousy erupts volcanically where no crater was apparent. Time makes great delightful leaps forward. The sea separates relatives and reunites them at will. And a statue magically comes to life. This uncommon combination of events has puzzled
producers for centuries and the results have often been puzzling productions. Many critics have dismissed the play as error-ridden, or deemed it more suitable for the study than for the stage, or reveled in its poetry and ignored its dramatic potential. Yet, other critics consider this work to be a superb artistic achievement.

The play's stage history is erratic. It was evidently popular in Jacobean and Carolinian times but was totally ignored by the Restoration stage. When it was finally revived at Goodman's Fields in 1741, the producer claimed that it had not been acted in one hundred years.¹ In the eighteenth century strange alterations were made on the text. Fascinated by the Florizel-Perdita relationship, David Garrick rewrote the play as a pastoral comedy which he produced in 1756, and in 1761 a pastoral version of Shakespeare's original was presented at Covent Garden as an operetta. In the nineteenth century the complete play became very popular and was given elaborate productions by most of the prominent producers of the time. In the twentieth century the play's popularity has diminished, and it has once again become one of Shakespeare's less frequently produced works.

Purpose of the Study

In view of the critical disagreement about the play's dramatic value and because of its erratic stage
history, I have elected in this study to examine the effect of the play in production. Specifically, this study is an examination of four important productions of *The Winter's Tale*: Charles Kean's of 1856 at the Princess's Theatre, Herbert Beerbohm Tree's of 1906 at His Majesty's Theatre, Harley Granville-Barker's of 1912 at the Savoy Theatre, and Peter Wood's of 1960 at Stratford-upon-Avon. These productions, all of which were presented on the English stage, represent major peaks in the play's stage history.

Charles Kean unveiled the most spectacular scenic display ever seen on the London stage, and, as a result, created an audience demand which allowed his production to run for 102 consecutive nights, a record for the time. Tree's production, which starred the venerable actress, Ellen Terry, was a popular success and represents the culmination of the pictorial scenic tradition on the English stage. Returning to the stagecraft of the Elizabethans as a means of producing Shakespeare, Granville-Barker's production of *The Winter's Tale* introduced a new stylistic direction in the theatre which still exerts an influence on presentations of the Bard's works today. Peter Wood's mid-twentieth-century production was a popular and critical success which displayed an intriguing stage unity. My hope is that the close examination of these productions, which were staged by some of the theatre's finest artists employing the best human and
material resources available, will reveal something of the play's theatrical potential and dramatic value. At the same time, we must be prepared to accept possible difficulties and limitations of the play when it is enacted on the stage before an audience.

Methodology

The examination of the four productions of The Winter's Tale under consideration here has been focused essentially on four areas: (1) the producer's concepts and attitudes towards Shakespeare's text, (2) the employment of the actors and the effect of their performances, (3) the nature and contribution of the mise-en-scene, and (4) the critical response.

Each producer has stated his views of The Winter's Tale. Kean and Granville-Barker both wrote prefaces to printed editions of the play in which they outlined their thoughts on it. Peter Wood gave a lecture in which he disclosed his attitudes toward the romance, and Tree made some brief program notes about the play. These specific comments, combined with each producer's general attitudes toward theatrical production, are the keys to understanding the shape of the productions in this study. In addition to a producer's statements about the text, his promptbook also exhibits his attitude toward the play; Kean and Tree cut Shakespeare severely; Wood slightly; Granville-Barker
not at all.

Unfortunately, evidence concerning the working relationships of producers and actors as well as information on how the actors approached their roles is scanty. But the blocking recorded in the promptbooks does reveal some of the actions which resulted from the actors' work, and, at times, the hand of the producer is apparent in this stage business. Tree and Wood, for instance, scattered clever pieces of visual action throughout the production. Critical response also reveals a great deal about the ultimate effect of individual performances. Although it is dangerous to generalize from the judgments of newspaper critics, their opinions may be valid when unanimity exists. For example, the Hermione of Mrs. Kean drew unanimous critical praise, as did the Paulina of Mrs. Tree, and the Leontes of Eric Porter in Peter Wood's production. Criticism of the acting becomes all the more valuable when it goes beyond general praise and becomes descriptive, recording the detail of a particular performance. Happily, much of the acting criticism employed in this study recreated the most colorful detail of some of the finer performances.

Since the time of John Philip Kemble, productions of *The Winter's Tale* have frequently relied on magnificent scenery and gorgeous costumes to provide a substantial portion of theatrical viability. Without a doubt the most outstanding element in the four productions of the plays
examined here was the **mise-en-scène**; and, in fact, in the productions of Kean, Tree, and Barker, the scenery and costumes drew attention to themselves. Certain scholars believe that Shakespeare relied more heavily on spectacle, song, and dance in his later plays than he had in his earlier work. Although this theory has been disputed, the fact that producers since the eighteenth century have tended to emphasize these elements is incontestable.

In addition to using newspaper and magazine criticism for the reconstruction and evaluation of acting performances and visual effects, the attempt has also been made in this study to summarize and synthesize these reviews as they apply to the total production. Of course, the individual prejudices of reviewers demands that caution be exercised in such an examination. Reviews of Kean's productions were written by his very close friends as well as by his bitter enemies. Tree was producing at a time when some critics had begun to attack actor-managers and their entire tradition. But even Kean's enemies praised the spectacular allegorical sequence in his production of *The Winter's Tale*, and all the critics were entranced with the mood that Tree created in the pastoral scene.

**The Available Materials**

Fortunately, detailed production accounts and records for the presentations under consideration in this
study were available and proved to be rich and revealing. The promptbooks which exist for three of the four productions are invaluable accounts of the stage action and disclose the cutting that producers made on Shakespeare's text. Charles Kean's original promptbook for this production of *The Winter's Tale*, located in The Enthoven Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, contains copious stage business, cues for technical effects, and timings. A facsimile of the book is in this author's private collection. Kean's final souvenir promptbook is in The Folger Shakespeare Library and a microfilmed copy of it is in The Ohio State Theatre Collection, P 179. In addition to stage business and technical cues, this book contains Kean's famous preface explaining his use of archaeological detail and also includes some fine watercolor designs of sixteen of the scenes.

Tree's promptbook, also in The Enthoven Collection, is remarkable for its detailed description of actors' business as well as for the exactness of its recording of technical effects. Granville-Barker's promptbook has, evidently, passed out of existence, but Peter Wood's, located in the Shakespeare Center in Stratford-upon-Avon, is as rich in recorded detail as Kean's and Tree's.

If one picture is truly worth a thousand words, then the wealth of illustrations available for these productions has been by far the most bountiful source of information. Charles Kean, perhaps with an eye on posterity,
kept elaborate pictorial records of his spectacular productions. Colorful renderings of the historically accurate settings, costumes, and properties of The Winter's Tale are in the holdings of the Victoria and Albert Museum's Prints and Drawings room. The Enthoven Collection of the museum has a complete set of photographs of the scenery used in Tree's production. Pictures of the actors in costume for that production were printed in a number of periodicals of the time, with the September, 1906 issue of *Play Pictorial* magazine almost entirely devoted to *The Winter's Tale*. Photographs of Barker's innovative costumes and settings were published in *The Sketch* magazine, October 2, 1912, as well as other magazines and books. Stratford photographer, Thomas Holte, who took pictures of Peter Wood's production for the Royal Shakespeare Company, graciously made many of his pictures available for this study.

Reviews and articles from newspapers and magazines were plentiful and often most enlightening in their descriptive details and in the irony of their contradictions. Reviews of Tree's production were conveniently collected in a scrapbook which is now located in the Enthoven Collection. This book contains over fifty reviews or articles on *The Winter's Tale* from almost every London paper, many provincial papers, and even one French publication. Reviews for Peter Wood's production were similarly collected in a scrapbook held at the Shakespeare Center,
and contains nearly two dozen reviews of The Winter's Tale. The British Museum Newspaper Collection was the source of many of the reviews of Kean's and Granville-Barker's productions.

In addition to these materials which were directly related to the productions, writings of the producers, biographies, and general critical works of the play were consulted in order to give a solid foundation to the study. John William Cole's biography of Charles Kean, The Life and Theatrical Times of Charles Kean, was invaluable for its descriptions (often idealized) of The Winter's Tale on the stage of the Princess's Theatre. Tree has outlined his aesthetic philosophy in a book of collected essays and addresses, Thoughts and After-Thoughts, and Hesketh Pearson has written a fascinating biography, Herbert Beerbohm Tree. Barker, the most prolific writer of the group of producers considered here, has recorded his views on a great range of theatre subjects from the educational uses of drama to producing Shakespeare for modern audiences. Two of his works, On Dramatic Method and The Exemplary Theatre, were especially useful in this production.

Most of the important critical works on The Winter's Tale, especially those of the twentieth century, have been conveniently collected in Kenneth Muir's casebook on the play. Philip Edwards' article in Shakespeare Survey II, "Shakespeare's Romances: 1900-1957," is an excellent survey of the main trends in the criticism of the Bard's last
plays. The most valuable edition of the play has proven to be that of the New Arden series edited by J.H.P. Pafford. This work, which is by far the most comprehensive single source of scholarship concerning the text of the play, was used as the control text for this study. Pafford's edition includes an excellent stage history and the complete text of Greene's _Pandosto_ in its appendices. Of course, in a study of this nature, the work of Charles Shattuck, _The Shakespeare Promptbooks_, is indispensable for locating vital materials.

Each of the four productions examined in this study reveals how _The Winter's Tale_ fared at different points in its history, in the hands of different artists who produced it for different audiences. Like a gem, the play is turned in time and its values seem to change as it continues to reflect colorful rays. Collectively, the productions, which span over one hundred years of English stage history, reveal some of the play's common theatrical values. The initial task, however, is to set each production into the broad context of the play's stage history.
Footnotes Chapter I


CHAPTER II

THE STAGE HISTORY OF THE WINTER'S TALE

When Herbert Beerbohm Tree produced The Winter's Tale at His Majesty's Theatre in 1906, the reviewer for the Observer wrote:

As to the play itself, its theatrical history has been the reverse of encouraging, until nearly twenty years ago, when Miss Mary Anderson secured for it a run of one hundred sixty four nights, limited only by her tenancy at the Lyceum. Previously to that, although Mrs. Siddons had played Hermione, and though Charles Kean had given it one of his magnificent mountings, its runs have never exceeded some twenty or thirty performances.¹

Had the critic bothered to carefully check his theatre history, he would have been prevented from making at least two errors which occur in the above statement. Charles Kean's production played for more than one hundred performances, and the theatrical history of The Winter's Tale is not at all discouraging, though it is certainly strange.

Never a consistently popular play, it has, since its creation, been the victim of alternating periods of attention and neglect by theatrical producers. At those times when it has been produced regularly, it frequently has been given lavish productions which have generated much acclaim from professional critics and popular
audiences. At other times producers seem to have been unaware of or unconcerned with its existence. Although the play's attraction for producers has fluctuated through its stage history, each century has seemed to have stamped its own particular cultural impression upon productions of the play.

**Seventeenth-Century Courtly Productions**

"He who pays the piper"

The earliest record of a performance of *The Winter's Tale* has been handed down to us by an Elizabethan quack. Dr. Simon Forman was an astrologer who felt mystically drawn to the practice of medicine, a habit which resulted in his frequent imprisonment. But among his varied activities, which included the smuggling of love potions to certain women of the court, he wrote a manuscript entitled *The Booke of Plaies*, dated 1611. On the afternoon of May 15, 1611, Simon Forman went to the Globe Playhouse and saw a production of *The Winter's Tale*. Of it he writes:

Observe there how Leontes the king of Sicilia was overcome with jealousy of his wife with the king of Bohemia his friend that came to see him and how he contrived his death and would have had his cup bearer to have poisoned, who gave the king of Bohemia warning thereof and fled with him to Bohemia.²

Forman concluded his plot summary with a description of the machinations of the rogue, Autolycus, and drew the
moral, "beware of trusting feigned beggars or fawning fellows." How ironical it is that such a comment should come from a notorious charlatan.

In the same year of his visit to the Globe, Forman was drowned while crossing the Thames on the very day he had predicted he would die. There was suspicion of suicide. Poor man. Even in death he could not be trusted. And in our own time Professor Samuel Tannenbaum has suspected the manuscript, The Booke of Plaies, to be bogus. But most reputable scholars accept it as genuine, and so Simon Forman is remembered not as a distinguished doctor but as a notable documentor.

The description in The Booke of Plaies is the only known record of The Winter's Tale's being produced in a public playhouse in the seventeenth century.

Shortly after the Globe performance which Forman attended, The King's Men presented the play before James I at Whitehall. On November 5, 1611, the first of six performances was recorded. But probably the most splendid of all seventeenth-century court productions was presented as part of the wedding festivities of Princess Elizabeth and Frederick V, Elector Palatine, in the winter of 1613. The story of the betrothal of these royal adolescents and of their unhappy adult life is a melancholy chapter in English history. But their marriage was a joyous, lavish, opulent occasion. Spectacular water shows featuring floating castles, exploding dragons,
and a fiery stag which plunged into the Thames shared the entertainment bill with elaborate masques, epitomized by Inigo Jones's production of a dance of stars among the clouds. These displays were contrived from themes chosen to flatter the royal couple such as a water show which depicted the union of the Thames and the Rhine. This was the nature of the entertainment with which Shakespeare's plays had to compete during this elaborate marital celebration.

The Winter's Tale, like many of the entertainments at the wedding celebration, was probably selected for its thematic values. Frederick and Elizabeth were destined to become King and Queen of Bohemia, the idyllic setting of Act IV. The play's placid, pastoral qualities together with the appealing natures of Florizel and Perdita, who symbolize the beauty and innocence of Bohemia, would have been a compliment to the Elector and his bride. In addition, the pastoral elements of the play afforded lavishness of production to rival the many masques which were being presented. The play seems ideally suited to the demands of this magnificent marriage celebration and was probably a source of pride and profit for The King's Men and especially for their poet, William Shakespeare.

The Winter's Tale was produced at James's Court on at least three other occasions during his reign: on Easter Tuesday, 1618, sometime in 1619, and on January 18,
Evidently the play held some special fascination for the royalty since it was repeated so often. Perhaps the work served as a pleasant reminder of the winter of 1613 when King James I gave the hand of his daughter, Elizabeth, in marriage.

On January 16, 1634, the play was presented for the last time in the seventeenth century at the court of Charles I. Charles, an avid patron and critic of the arts, had a special fondness for pastoral drama and masques. His Queen, Henrietta Maria of France, not only shared his enthusiasm for drama but also produced and acted in pastoral plays at the court. The fact that Charles spent so much money on the production of plays and so much time viewing them has prompted Margaret Pickel to write, "Probably no other King of England was so interested in plays as Charles I." 6

Court records of the time record not merely the great number of plays produced there but also the royal reaction to them.

On Wednesday night the first of January, 1634, Cymbeline was acted at Court by the King's Players. Well liked by the King. 7

The Winter's Tale was acted on Thursday night at Court, the 16th of January, 1634, by the King's Players, and liked. 8

Probably the pastoral elements in the production were the reason for this favorable royal review. In any case it is a fitting comment for a play which was the delight of kings in its infancy.
Most of our knowledge of the seventeenth-century productions of *The Winter's Tale* is derived from the carefully kept court records of the period, but our only account of a production at a public playhouse is the private record of Simon Forman. But since the play was part of the repertoire of The King's Men, it was probably produced at the Globe on a number of occasions. And yet *The Winter's Tale* seems to have been more palatable to aristocratic than to public tastes. Theatrically it fit more comfortably into the indoor court theatre at Whitehall or the aristocratic theatre at Blackfriars, for its pastoral elements appealed to the tastes of the court and lent themselves to the elaborate production machinery available at these theatres. The increased use of music and dance indicates an attempt on the part of Shakespeare to realize the expectations of these sophisticated audiences. The preponderance of court productions of the play in the seventeenth century indicates the type of audience which found it appealing and the kind of stage which served it best.

**Eighteenth-Century Star-Studded Alterations**

"Good friend, for Jesus sake forbear"

For more than one hundred years *The Winter's Tale* remained unproduced. Despite the fact that it was...
allotted to Thomas Killigrew, the manager of the Theatre Royal, for His Majesty's Servants in 1669, it was never produced for Restoration audiences and was generally considered more suitable for the study than the stage. But on January 15, 1741, it was reborn in the theatre at Goodman's Fields and honestly advertised as "not acted these hundred years." The producer who deserves credit for its renaissance was Henry Giffard, an Irish actor who managed that illegitimate theatre. Although he had difficulty in keeping his bastard playhouse in operation he has branded his name in theatre history with his Shakespearean revivals and his introduction of the brilliant young actor, David Garrick, to English audiences. His ideas were quickly snapped up by his "legitimate" brethren, for Garrick was engaged at an enormous salary at Drury Lane after his first year at Goodman's Fields. The Winter's Tale was produced during the following season at Covent Garden. Giffard, struggling with the handicap of legal illegitimacy, soon lost the battle of existence to his legal rivals, and Goodman's Fields Theatre was converted into a warehouse.

Giffard's cast for his revival of The Winter's Tale was less than star-studded, but it did include a number of promising actors who eventually became major players of their time. Autolycus was played by Richard Yates, who became a leading comedian under Garrick at Drury Lane and later at Covent Garden. His wife, whose
subsequent success paralleled his own, appeared as Emilia. Mr. and Mrs. Dunstall played the Clown and Mopsa respectively, Mrs. Steel was Paulina, and Miss Hippisley, Perdita. Evidently Giffard's most outstanding talent was in the training of actors, for the alumni of Goodman's Fields ruled the stage for nearly a half a century.

Giffard's playhouse was not a "regular" eighteenth-century theatre, and paradoxically, neither was his production of The Winter's Tale a "regular" eighteenth-century presentation of the play. He was one of the very few managers of the century to produce Shakespeare's complete play under its proper title. Covent Garden copied his effort in November of the same year, but after that the play remained untouched for thirteen years. Then the butchery began.

It started with an Irish lawyer named MacNamara Morgan, whose most stirring contribution to eighteenth-century literature was a fifty-six page letter to an attractive young Juliet of the time. On March 25, 1754, Covent Garden produced his alteration of The Winter's Tale entitled, The Sheep Shearing or Florizel and Perdita: A Pastoral Comedy. Predictably, the young actress who was the recipient of his letter played Perdita.

Morgan's effort would be more correctly termed "a piece" of The Winter's Tale rather than "a version"
of it. The two-act afterpiece is limited to the Perdita-Florizel relationship in that land of grass and sheep called Bithynia (changed from Bohemia to explain the seacoast). The first act depicts Florizel's protestations of love to Perdita before the disguised Polixenes and Camillo. Some comic business of Autolycus is thrown in "for the hack of it." The second act is the sheep-shearing scene as essentially written by Shakespeare, and all characters are reunited by Antigonus, who escapes being eaten by a bear in this narrative.

Morgan's "petty pilfering," (which was presented upon the stages of Covent Garden and Drury Lane until the end of the century), premiered with a competent cast. The outstanding performance was the Autolycus of Edward Shuter, a heavy-drinking, low comedian who gained fame when he delivered an epilogue while seated on an ass. In Florizel and Perdita he merely did his comic business and sang a few songs. He appeared in it again on December 22, 1760, when it was converted into an operetta with music by Thomas Arne.

The most celebrated and successful pruning of the play was done by David Garrick for his production at Drury Lane, January 21, 1756, under the title, The Winter's Tale or Florizel and Perdita. Like Morgan, he concentrated on the relationship of the young lovers, but unlike his predecessor he pledged allegiance to Shakespeare as he
slashed away. In his oft-quoted prologue, Garrick uncorked a liquor metaphor which flowed on for fifty-five lines and ended with:

Lest then this precious liquor run to waste,  
'Tis now confin'd and bottled for your taste.  
'Tis my chief wish, my joy, my only plan  
To lose no drop of that immortal man!\textsuperscript{14}

Critics of the time felt that Garrick's phraseology was appropriate, but since then commentators have used it as an excuse for satirical metaphors of their own.

Garrick's three-act rendition was also set in Bithynia where Leontes had been conveniently shipwrecked. Fortunately he arrived in time for the sheep-shearing and heard it as Shakespeare wrote it. Harold Child compliments Garrick for his rearrangement of incidents here and for remembering to bring Paulina and her statue along to Bithynia, but adds:

It was less happy to write up Autolycus into vulgarity; to add to the clowning; to make many annoying little alterations in the words (omitting with much else, Perdita's cry to Prosperpina); to ruin by timorous elaboration Leontes' 'O, she's warm!' and the last speeches of Hermione and the last silence of Perdita and Florizel.\textsuperscript{15}

Garrick had at his command a stunning array of acting talent, all of which he employed in The Winter's Tale. He played Leontes opposite the Hermione of Mrs. Pritchard. Their superb portrayals prompted Odell to remark that "it held the stage as long as Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard cared to act it, and was frequently revived."\textsuperscript{16} The supporting cast was exceptionally strong.
The attractive tragedian Mrs. Cibber displayed her lovely voice in the role of Perdita opposite the Florizel of Charles Holland. Yates and Woodward as Autolycus and the Clown "gave great entertainment"; the dependable Howard played Polixenes and the undependable Davies played Camillo. They gave thirteen performances in the same year and repeated it in 1757, 1758, 1762, and 1756.18

During the remainder of the century, two other altered versions appeared. The actor Thomas Hull rewrote the play with relatively few major alterations and this version was produced at Covent Garden in 1771.19 Evidently it was not very popular because it was only performed twice, and in 1774 that theatre had returned to Garrick's version. In 1777 a version of *The Sheep Shearing* was produced at the Haymarket Theatre. This adaptation, an amalgamation of Garrick's and Morgan's inspirations, was written by George Coleman the elder, manager of the Haymarket.20 Despite the fact that he was a fairly successful dramatic writer of the time (*The Jealous Wife*, epilogue for *The School for Scandal*), this production played but one performance and was not repeated.

The eighteenth-century productions of *The Winter's Tale* can be most readily characterized by the surgery performed on the script. Although the play suffered at the anxious hands of script doctors, what remained was vitally performed by some of the finest actors in that
century of histrionic excellence. David Garrick's unrivaled portrayal of Leontes preceded the portrayals of an impressive list of actors who also performed that character, a list including Powell, Smith, Henderson, Pope, and Wroughton. Mrs. Pritchard's Hermione was probably the finest achievement in that role despite the fact that Mrs. Hopkins, Miss Farren, Mrs. Pope, Mrs. Inchbald, and the beautiful Mrs. Hartley also played the Queen. Excellent comedians such as Shuter, Yates, King, Edwin, Quick, Dodd, and Munden appeared as Autolycus, and the best Clowns were King, Moody, Quick, Yates, and Suett. Among the innumerable young ladies who followed the great Mrs. Cibber as Perdita were Miss Macklin, Miss Pritchard, George Anne Bellamy, Mrs. Dancer, Miss Younge, 'Perdita' Robinson (she first appeared in the part at Drury Lane on November 20, 1779, and again on December 3, "by command"—after which she left the stage, by command), Mrs. Crouch and Mrs. Mountain. Many of these actors, educated on the eighteenth-century stage, reached artistic maturity in the early nineteenth-century theatre and were, in part, responsible for The Winter's Tale's triumphal entry into that century.

Nineteenth-Century Spectacular Productions

"The scenes, dresses, and decorations entirely new"
When John Philip Kemble produced *The Winter's Tale* at Drury Lane in 1802, the above quotation appeared on the handbill which advertised the play. It could very well serve as a hallmark for nineteenth-century productions of the romance. Emphasis on scenic splendor grew as the century wore on, after the "Shakespeare plus scenery" productions which dominated the era were initiated, perhaps inadvertently, by Kemble's designer, William Capon. His scenery began to attract special attention. A review of *The Winter's Tale* in *The Sun* begins:

> The Winter's Tale was revived at Drury Lane last night with great magnificence of scenery. The Habits of the characters are superb, and the whole arrangement of the piece is highly credible [sic] to the taste and liberality of the managers.22

But of all the Kemble innovations, the most fortunate was his restoration of Shakespeare's text. Although he used Garrick's ending and eliminated Father Time, he broke with sixty years of tradition by producing the play in its essential entirety. As an actor, however, he was a product of the eighteenth century, as were many of the members of his cast. Sarah Siddons "acted the painted statue to life"23 as Hermione opposite the Leontes of Kemble, and of their performances William Hazlitt declared "we shall never see these parts so acted again."24 He felt the same way about Jack Bannister in the role of Autolycus. The "old croaker," Suett, played the clown, Mrs. Powell appeared as Paulina, Mr. Barrymore as
Polixenes, and Charles Kemble made a "very pretty Florizel." Drawing great crowds, this popular production played eight times that season and was revived in 1807 with "the scenery, machinery, dresses and decorations all either entirely new or repaired." It was revived again in 1811, at which time Mrs. Siddons made her farewell performance as Hermione, a portrayal that remained in the memories of theatre critics for decades after her retirement.

William Charles Macready first appeared in the role of Leontes at Bath in 1815 and later at Drury Lane in 1823. In 1837, when he took over the managership of Covent Garden, he chose The Winter's Tale to open the season. The most powerful moment of the production was Leontes' discovery of the live statue with the cry "O, she's warm!" Helen Faucit, who was playing Hermione, was so taken aback by Macready's passion that he found it necessary to whisper to her "Don't be frightened, my child! Don't be frightened! Control yourself." Although records of the production are scanty, Macready's designers must have created impressive scenery, for when he learned of Charles Kean's lavish spectacle a few years later, he accused himself of initiating the ideas that led to Kean's subsequent excesses. In 1845 Samuel Phelps mounted an elaborate production of the play which was repeated forty-four times that season, and soon after that
Mrs. Warner, the leading lady of Phelps and Macready, made a success of it at the Marylebone Theatre Royal.

The most elaborate of all nineteenth-century productions was Charles Kean's super spectacle, presented at the Princess's Theatre in 1859. Justifying his embellishments under the guise of historical accuracy, Kean placed his cast of nearly 300 in one reconstructed classical setting after another. The production lasted nearly four hours. Among his many scenic additions to the play, the most famous was an allegorical sequence accomplished by a series of dazzling dissolves that revealed Luna floating through the clouds in her car, Father Time seated on the globe, and Phoebus rising heavenward in a blazing chariot. This visual display resulted in Kean's production being the most popular ever presented. It established a record for long runs in its time by playing for 102 consecutive performances, and during that time it was the delight of Queen Victoria as well as of the general populace of London.

The next major attempt at producing The Winter's Tale in the nineteenth century was made by F.B. Chatterton at Drury Lane in 1878. Charles Dillon played Leontes and was so poorly received that it virtually ended his acting career. The production reflected the influence of Charles Kean in its spectacular scenery, and, in fact, The Times critic wrote, "Its [The Winter's Tale] present production is not more a revival of the play by
Shakespeare than the revival of a pageant by Mr. Charles Kean. 29 Three years later the Meiningen Troupe played it in London, and although the production's emphasis was visual, the object of fascination shifted from the scenery to the composition of the crowds on stage:

Great stress is justly laid on the purely picturesque side of the performance. Thus the court of justice in which Hermione is compelled to plead her innocence was itself a tableau vivant of the highest type of German art. The grouping of the figures and the composition as a whole were worthy of Kaulbach or Lessing. 30

Londoners loved the American beauty, Mary Anderson, who produced and starred in The Winter's Tale at the Lyceum in 1887. In spite of a rather unenthusiastic critical reception, her ecstatic public kept the play running for 164 performances. They loved to watch her. To satisfy their eager eyes, Mary Anderson played the roles of both Hermione and Perdita in a script which was edited to minimize her off-stage moments. Although her portrayal of the Queen was not completely satisfying, her Perdita was one of the most exciting that the stage has ever seen. She achieved significant success in a role which James Boaden thought was impossible to cast 31 and which Kenneth Muir believes is more difficult to play than Hamlet. 32 Her charm was most radiant in the dance of the shepherds and shepherdesses as William Archer notes in The Theatre, "As for her dance, it alone should fill the theatre for months. I do not hesitate to call it the most beautiful piece of dancing I ever saw." 33
Mary Anderson's production belongs to the family of nineteenth-century visually attractive presentations. Scenically the production was stunning, especially the pastoral scene created by Hawes Craven:

From the spectacular point of view The Winter's Tale has never been seen to equal advantage. The glade in which passed the wooing of Florizel and Perdita, with its wooded heights and long defile through which at the close of the scene the lovers took their departure past the blue lake in the direction of the distant hills, is a veritable piece of fairy land.34

As they did with the Meiningen Troupe, audiences had more to delight their eyes than the pictorial scenery. Theatregoers long cherished the memory of Mary Anderson singing sweetly and dancing lithely in a romantic pastoral setting fit for a shepherdess who was a queen.

During the nineteenth century, The Winter's Tale was given more productions by first rate artists than at any time in its history. True, it was more often than not exploited for the sake of scenery, a personality, or as an acting tour de force, but at least the play was not given merely perfunctory production or, what is worse, ignored. Indeed, the play had its heyday in the nineteenth century when its romantic nature was perhaps more compatible with the Victorian view of life. Twentieth-century productions fail to reflect the kind of energy and enthusiasm by which major artists of the past century brought the old tale to life on the stage.
"Something old, something new, something borrowed."

Female fashions and the theatre have at least two things in common. They both reflect the fickleness of the public in matters of taste, and, consequently, they both must accept change as a way of life. The fortunes of *The Winter's Tale* in the first twelve years of the twentieth century illustrate how abrupt a change in taste sometimes can be. In 1906 the last of the great pictorial productions of the play was presented on the London stage. In 1912 a presentational production inspired by Elizabethan stagecraft was hailed as a new stylistic direction for the theatre.

The flamboyant manager of His Majesty's Theatre, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, was the last in a line of nineteenth-century pictorial producers, a line which included John Philip Kemble, Charles Kean, and Henry Irving. In 1906 he produced *The Winter's Tale* with all the lavishness which his audiences had come to expect in his "home for Shakespeare," and the reviewer in *The Guardian*, dazzled by the splendor of it all, was compelled to describe it:

The staging of the whole is wonderfully beautiful. The palace scenes with marble columns and blue sky, bronze statues, the gleam of weapons, and the swaying haze of burning incense; the delightful woodland scene before the shepherd's cottage, with a stream of real water dashing and tinkling over
its mossy stones, and the great trial scene, with its crowds of warriors, women with their thrilling undercurrent of wailing, the white-robed priests of Apollo, and the ominous sky from which darts the blind flashes of lightning at the blasphemy of Leontes are all, in their way, perfect.35

Tree's contributions to Shakespeare were not limited to the scenery and costumes but also included conspicuous directorial touches such as complex stage business and elaborately worked up entrances and exits. The ending of Act IV is a case in point. Capitalizing on the real stream with its mossy stepping stones, Tree staged an elaborate melodramatic exit for Perdita and Florizel. Perdita, sentimental about leaving the old shepherd's cottage, eventually overcame her reluctance and tripped across the brook into the waiting arms of Florizel. But she forgot something. Tiptoeing back across the stones, she entered the cottage and returned with her birdcage. She then crossed the stream to Florizel, blew kisses to the unfeeling cottage, and exited. By the addition of these theatrical devices, Tree made Shakespeare palatable to a general public which, through the years, eagerly supported all thirteen of his revivals at His Majesty's Theatre.

Six years after Beerbohm Tree had decked out The Winter's Tale in elaborate realistic finery, Harley Granville-Barker re-clothed it in entirely new fashions and presented it from a completely different point of view. Relying upon scholarship to provide the key to
meaningful, refreshing production techniques, Granville-Barker found in the stage techniques of the Elizabethan theatre and in the complete texts of Shakespeare the means to revitalize the Bard for modern audiences. The effect of the former was a stage divided into three areas, an inner stage, a middle stage, and a forestage over the orchestra pit. Each area was separated from the other by curtains to enable a swift, cinematic flow of actions, a flow that eliminated the tedious intervals needed for changes of scenery in nineteenth-century productions. Scenery was simplified after the manner of Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia, and costumes were not cut in patterns of any particular historical period. The Pall Mall Gazette, in reviewing the production, indicated the influence of Gordon Craig and described its effect:

The setting of The Winter's Tale submitted at the Savoy on Saturday night, has, at any rate, accomplished one thing. It has proved the truth of what Mr. Gordon Craig has been saying for years past--namely that very simple scenery can suggest not only varied moods and "atmospheres", but also very splendid palaces and very humble and satisfying cottages. The palace of Leontes was nothing more than a few rectangular columns, yet nothing could have been more impressive. The shepherd's cottage was the simplest of things with a wicker fence, yet it sufficed.36

Out of his devotion to the integrity of the author, Granville-Barker cut only fourteen and one-half lines of the text. In order to avoid an unusually lengthy production, he found it necessary to have his actors increase their rate of speaking to resemble the
tempo that Shakespeare's actors probably employed. Audiences had difficulty adjusting to this change, and almost every reviewer took the producer to task for it. But critics generally welcomed the break with a tired stylistic tradition and were complimentary about the innovative production which came to be flippantly termed "Barkerized Shakespeare." The Winter's Tale, despite the encouraging notices, was taken off the boards after a short run and replaced by a "Barkerized" version of Twelfth Night. This offering proved to be highly successful, and, as a result, Granville-Barker succeeded in moving English Shakespearean production in a new stylistic direction. Although he retired as an active producer in 1914, he continued to communicate his ideals for the theatre to his admiring public, and his profound influence in the production of Shakespeare lasted for many years.

Since Granville-Barker's production at the Savoy, The Winter's Tale has met limited success as popular West End theatre. It has, for the most part, in this century, been produced by theatrical companies which are committed to the production of all of Shakespeare's works. In 1926 Michael MacOwen employed a first rate cast, including Alec Clunes, for a production of the play at the Old Vic. In 1931 and again in 1937, the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon
presented the play on April 23 for the birthday
celebration of the Bard. In 1955 Michael Bentall's
unsuccessful production at the Old Vic prompted a
candid comment by The Times reviewer: "It is not often
that it is so hard to sit out an Old Vic production." 

One significant exception to the less popular,
dutiful twentieth-century productions was Peter Brook's
presentation of the play in 1951. Conceived for the
drama festival held in Edinburgh in August of that year,
the production previewed in London in June and was
immediately successful. The review in The Times began:

It is a little odd that the chief attraction of the
Edinburgh Festival should first be given the chance
to draw in London. If there is an aggrieved party
it is certainly not London. It is a graceful,
measured production wholly free from personal
capriciousness and remarkable for the quiet skill
with which it imposes romantic unity on the bifur-
cated plot. 

In addition to Peter Brook's sensitive direction,
the production's popularity was, to a great extent, the
result of John Gielgud's presence in the cast. The
British stage star brought to the role of Leontes a
romantic fire which moved audiences and delighted critics.
His performance was ably supported by a strong cast
including Diana Wynyard as Hermione, Brewster Mason as
Polixenes, and Flora Robson as Paulina. The settings
and costumes of Sophie Fedorovitch won much praise, as
did the Elizabethan music composed by the poet-dramatist,
Christopher Fry.
In the 1960's, The Winter's Tale received two significant productions at Stratford-upon-Avon by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Peter Wood produced it in 1960 as the final show of that season. His fairyland approach to it was absolutely first rate. In 1969 it was produced under Trevor Nunn's direction. Attempting to make Shakespeare relevant, Nunn imposed on the play the idea that man is a toy to be played with by some greater force. Leontes' first fleeting appearance was as a whirling toy in a plastic box. After this moment the stage went dark and a music box tinkled the "Jack-and-Jill" tune. The lights then came up on Camillo and Polixenes, who held in his hands a miniature plastic box containing a whirling man. Father Time also appeared in a plastic box, and, of course, Hermione's statue scene suggested the same image. Modern production techniques such as a strobe light and rock music were employed to create a sense of relevance.

Conclusion

The production history of The Winter's Tale is erratic. In the centuries since its creation it has not been consistently attractive to producers and audiences but rather has been the victim of alternating periods of interest and neglect. Although frequently the subject of scenic and thematic experimentation, it has, through
the centuries, been acted and directed by many of the theatre's finest artists. But in spite of this important attention, it is far from being the most frequently produced of Shakespeare's plays, a fact which newspaper reviewers and literary critics have been quick to point out. Many of these critics cannot resist the temptation to speculate on the reason for the infrequent productions, as did the reviewer in the *Standard* for Tree's production, 1906:

> Among the least dramatic of all Shakespeare's plays, *The Winter's Tale* is at best dull and uninteresting as drama, and inferior as poetry. To render it attractive it requires much beauty of pictorial treatment—lovely scenes, gay and glittering crowds, and music. All of these, of course, were brought to its aid on Saturday evening at His Majesty's Theatre.

A more penetrating speculation was offered by the critic for *The Times* in his review of the Old Vic production of 1955:

> The romantic dramatist in this play is claiming the greatest possible freedom for himself, and the more freedom he actually takes, the more rigorous is the challenge to the modern producer. There must somehow be combined the tension which suits the working out of the tyrant king's fit of fond frenetic jealousy, the rhythm which suits the interlude of the delicate and humorous pastoral fantasy, and the different sort of tension which suits the reconciliation scenes. Mr. Peter Brook has recently shown how the challenge may be met; Mr. Michael Benthall seems scarcely aware that it exists.

Producers through the ages have found *The Winter's Tale* challenging to stage, and, indeed, certain critics have found it more suitable for the study than for the stage. The sudden and seemingly unmotivated jealousy of
Leontes, the strangely mixed genre, and the challenge to actors who attempt to play some of the roles are all elements which lead some critics to this opinion. Many producers have solved the problem by ignoring the play. Others have met the challenge through their productions. In the following chapters I shall investigate the approaches which four producers took to meet this formidable challenge.
Footnotes Chapter II

1Observer, September 2, 1906, p. 5.


3Ibid.


7Ibid., p. 105.

8Ibid., p. 106.

9George C.D. O'Dell, Shakespeare From Betterton to Irving (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), I, 221.

10When Charles II restored theatre to England in 1660 he limited the number of playhouses to two. In time other unpatented theatres crept into existence, and so in 1737 a Licensing Act was passed whereby the production of plays in London was restricted to two theatres: Drury Lane and Covent Garden. See Oscar G. Brockett, The Theatre: An Introduction (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 186-187.


12Ibid., p. 357.

13O'Dell, p. 360.
Footnotes Chapter II, cont.


16. O'Dell, p. 357.


20. Ibid., pp. 682-683.


22. The Sun, March 26, 1802, p. 3.


24. Ibid.


Footnotes Chapter II, Cont.


30. Ibid.


34. Ibid.


"I seek reputation— I look for fame— I trust to establish a name, not as the mere reflection of a parent's genius, but as emanating from myself, as having achieved something by perseverance, zeal, and energy, toward the elevation of an art of which I am proud."—Charles Kean

In 1848 Queen Victoria reactivated the long-defunct office of Master of the Revels and bestowed its romantic, courtly title on Charles Kean. When the actor assumed the managership of the Princess's Theatre in 1850, he was blessed with an enthusiastic royal patronage which drew with it many of the members of the fashionable English social world. Her Majesty's fondness for Kean's spectacular productions as well as her appreciation of his upright character were influential in his becoming the major English actor-manager of his generation.

As a result of his artistic achievements, his integrity of character, and his relationship with the Queen, rumors began to grow that Charles Kean might become the first man of his profession to be knighted. Those rumors sparked fires of anticipation in Kean, fires which began to consume his spirit as the suspense wore on. Sensitive to her husband's state of mind, Mrs. Kean made a direct appeal to the Queen in her husband's
behalfe concerning the matter of knighthood. In a letter dated June 28, 1857, she wrote:

It has been for a long time impressed on Mr. Kean's mind through various channels that it was in Your Majesty's royal contemplation to bestow on him the distinction of knighthood as occasionally conferred on those who have devoted themselves by their character and services to the art they profess. The report so strongly circulated has proven fallacious, but the seed once sown in an enthusiastic mind expands beyond the power of control, and the long-fostered hope terminating in extinction has thrown my husband into a state of health so painful to me, his wife and partner, that I have resolved at every hazard to entreat Your Majesty's favorable consideration of a subject which is hourly undermining his spirits and sapping the very root of his existence.

Kean, who had striven for personal and professional fame, undoubtedly longed for knighthood as the ultimate recognition of his work. He was never knighted.

Although Kean had succeeded in attracting the refined classes to his theatre, he was disappointed in their lack of genuine enthusiasm for his theatrical ideals:

... but I do wish I could see more real sympathy, more cooperation with my views on the part of the higher classes. It is true that the aristocracy visit the Princess's and express their admiration at the show, but they come with a kind of vague curiosity, unaccompanied with that respect and cordiality of feeling, which ever appears to actuate their appreciation of other branches of art.

Kean's aristocratic aspirations did not cause him to ignore the popular audience but rather to attempt to raise the level of their tastes. His primary ideal was that the theatre should not merely be a frivolous amusement but that it should be an educational tool as
well. He felt that his work as a producer would be somehow ennobled if he helped to raise the educational level of the average citizen. He wrote:

No one, I presume, will deny how necessary it is to guide into a wholesome channel, the minds of the middle classes, who are especially operated upon by theatrical exhibitions. If instruction can be blended with amusement, it surely must be advantageous and advisable, in due time, to use such influences for the benefit of the masses.

Kean attempted to accomplish this ideal by bringing contemporary scholarship to bear on his productions. He employed recent archaeological discoveries in the design of his settings, costumes, and properties in an attempt to make his productions visual history lessons. Historical accuracy, inspired by a fad for antiquarianism, became the instructional basis which he craved for his shows. Even the choice of music for certain productions was the result of careful scholarship.

Shakespeare's plays lent themselves quite easily to this kind of treatment, and so Kean approached each Shakespearean revival from an historical base which he selected for the play. But to Kean's mind, the presentation of the works of Shakespeare not only afforded an opportunity to explore and illustrate historical periods, but they also provided kernels of wisdom which were beneficial for the average viewer. He wrote:

Impressed with the belief that the genius of Shakespeare soars above all rivalry; that he is the most marvelous writer the world has ever known; and that his works contain stores of wisdom, intellectual and moral, I cannot but hope that one who has toiled
for so many years, in admiring sincerity, to spread abroad amongst the multitude these invaluable gems, may, at least, be considered as an honest labourer, adding his mite to the great cause of civilization and educational progress.

Despite Charles Kean's apparent preoccupation with his own social advancement and with the educational potential of drama, he was, at the core, a man of the theatre whose primary desire was for widespread public acceptance of his productions; not that he was primarily interested in financial gain, for he wrote:

I have a much higher object in view than mere profit which generally propels the managerial mind, for I cannot act in a commercial spirit.

Kean's theatrical methods reveal the fact that he was sensitive and responsive to the pleasures of his audiences. He spared no expense to create the most lavish scenery and costumes imaginable, and spectators could rely on his opulent productions to dazzle their eyes and delight their spirits. In order to achieve the spectacular effects required, Kean employed many of the finest scenic artists in England at the time, artists who painted not exclusively for the stage, but also for the thrilling cyclorama and diorama shows which were extremely popular entertainments of the period.

A second indication that Kean wanted to make his theatre a truly popular one is that he popularized the long-run in the English theatre. During the nineteenth century, prior to Kean's management at the Princess's
Theatre, only a few afterpieces and some melodramas had held the stage for more than a month at a time. In 1855 Kean's production of Henry VIII played for one hundred consecutive nights, beginning a trend in theatre which has extended down to the present day. The long-run itself is positive proof of the great popular success of Kean's productions, and evidence of his willingness to break decidedly with tradition and run a production for more than three months is a clear indication that Kean was concerned with attracting a popular audience.

Although Kean is generally remembered by theatre historians for the magnificent Shakespearean revivals which he staged, he actually spent more of his energies presenting French plays, melodramatic and romantic, to the English theatre-going public. These plays were built from formulae which were designed to produce popular theatrical successes. Abundance of action, economy and aptness of dialogue, and careful dramatic structure were their chief characteristics. Many of the plays enjoyed an enormous popularity throughout the remainder of the century, but it was Kean who first saw their potential for success and capitalized upon it.

The value which Kean placed on widespread popular acceptance of his productions is revealed in a message he wrote to his audiences just before he retired from the managership of the Princess's Theatre 1859:
My earnest aim has been to promote the well-being of my profession; and if, in any degree, I have attained so desirable an object, I trust I may not be deemed presumptuous in cherishing the belief, that my arduous struggle has won for me the honourable reward of—public approval.

When Kean made his debut on the English stage in 1827, he had difficulty in establishing his own identity. As the son of one of England's greatest actors, he suffered by constant comparison with his legendary father. But young Charles Kean had his own unique virtues. He was an educated gentleman and an energetic theatre practitioner who, in time, capitalized on his own peculiar talents, and, by so doing, influenced procedures in the English theatre for at least two generations. Inspired by his classical education he sought to use the theatre for instruction by imposing upon Shakespeare completely accurate historical detail. Realizing that the pill of instruction must be sweetened with the coating of theatrical delight, he presented his works with great lavishness of pictorial effect. He felt that:

... in illustrating the greatest poet who ever wrote for the advantage of men, historical accuracy might be so blended with pictorial effect that instruction and amusement would go hand in hand, and that the more completely such a system was carried out, so much the more valuable and impressive would be the lesson conveyed.

Charles Kean was a proud man whose accomplishments in the theatre warranted a healthy measure of self-esteem. He was also a sensitive man whose pride could be easily wounded by an unkind critical attack or by the lack of
proper recognition for his work. The failure of Queen Victoria to grant him knighthood hurt the pride of this sensitive man, and despite the fact that the royal patronage had contributed greatly to his theatrical success, the denial of the ultimate personal prize caused a pain which always remained with him.

The Winter's Tale at The Princess's Theatre

"In 1856 Charles Kean made Shakespeare's text the basis of his grandest effort in archaeology and spectacle."13

Charles Kean's production of The Winter's Tale is as fascinating for scholars today as it was the delight of audiences in 1856. Two reasons for the current interest in the production immediately present themselves. First of all, Kean and his assistants, working with the same passion for detail that they had for their productions, were very careful to record and preserve much of their work. As a result of the meticulously recorded promptbooks, and the elaborate, colorful scene, costume, and properties designs, scholars today have a relatively simple task in reconstructing visual aspects of this production. Most of the records and pictures of Kean's production are in The Folger Library in Washington, D.C., or in the Enthoven Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Secondly, since The Winter's Tale does not clearly
suggest a specific historical epoch, it provides an excellent illustration of Kean's imposition of historical accuracy on a play he chose to produce. Setting the action in Syracuse and Bithynia at the time of the golden age of Athens, Kean harmonized setting, costumes, and properties by placing them within a single period of historical time.

The Winter's Tale also represented a new height in scenic spectacle for Kean's theatre. Employing staging techniques which he had developed the year before in Henry VIII, Kean created a breathtaking allegorical sequence for The Winter's Tale. This elaborate series of "dissolves," used to bridge the gap of sixteen years in Act IV, was the primary attraction of the play and, to a large extent, was the reason why it played for 102 consecutive nights. But evidently the spectacle of the entire production was without precedent, even in the Princess's Theatre, as the reviewer in the Standard noted:

... it is sufficient to observe generally that all of Mr. Charles Kean's preceding revivals sink in comparison before this, the last and greatest.15

Critics of his day generally agreed that Kean was not a great actor. But he was certainly, at the very least, a competent actor who possessed the good judgment to hire a company of excellent actors to play in his productions. As Watson points out: Kean endeavored always to have a company of uniform excellence,
and to exhibit its members in the best parts suited to their abilities." In The Winter's Tale Mr. and Mrs. Kean played Leontes and Hermione respectively, to the delight of most of their admirers. Mrs. Kean was especially fine, as Cole points out:

What shall we say of Mrs. C. Kean's Hermione—whether in appearance, costume, manner, elocution, or conception? It was exquisite throughout.

Kean's production of The Winter's Tale is also important because it introduced to English audiences a precocious vivacious eight year old girl named Ellen Terry, who debuted as Mamillius. Other members of the Terry family were in the cast as well, viz. Kate Terry, Ellen's sister, who played the servant to the Old Shepherd, and their father, who was the Officer of Judicature in the trial scene.

Ellen Terry was not the only member of the cast who disguised her sex, for a Miss Heath played the role of Florizel. Lovely Carlotta Leclercq, who was "the sweetest Perdita in The Winter's Tale ever seen" was evidently a nineteenth-century pin-up girl:

I know that all the enthusiastic young students at Oxford, and they have ever been admirers of that irresistible "beaute de la jeunesse," had the walls of their rooms adorned with innumerable pictures—probably by Adolphe Beau—of Carlotta Leclercq as Perdita.

Other seasoned and popular actors in Kean's cast were: Drinkwater Meadows as the Old Shepherd, John Ryder as Polixenes, and the fine comedian, Harley, as Autolycus.
Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale* opened at the Princess's Theatre in Oxford Street on April 28, 1856, and played for 102 consecutive performances. Its popularity was so great that it generated many peripheral enterprises. Toy theatres displayed designs patterned after the Kean designs. Souvenir programs and fans which included pictures of the settings were sold. And on September 15, 1856, a satire of Kean's production entitled *Perdita; or the Royal Milkmaid* by William Brough, opened at the Lyceum Theatre. This clever little comedy was, in its own way, the greatest compliment to the success of Kean's production, for it spoofed the most successful aspects of the Princess's spectacular. Brough's printed edition of the satire featured a listing of the scenes highlighted by "a Classical Allegory; getting through a lapse of 16 years in something like 16 minutes" and a "Desert Spot, on the Shores of Bohemia, or Bithynia, or wherever it is."

*The Winter's Tale: Charles Kean's Production*

*and William Shakespeare's Script*

"I should not omit to state that the text of Shakespeare has been carefully preserved throughout."—Charles Kean

Charles Kean's penchant for historical accuracy was never more challenged than it was by Shakespeare's
romance, *The Winter's Tale*. Before he could begin to make production plans, Kean had to find a means of unifying the play's widely disparate elements. In the preface to his acting version of the play, he wrote:

Shakespeare has constructed the charming drama of *The Winter's Tale* from Robert Green's "History of Dorastus and Fawnia," and while he has sought to heighten and vary the interest of the story by the introduction of new characters, he has left the incidents of the play (as in the novel) alternating between Sicily and Bohemia, without assigning any specific date to the time of action. Chronological contradictions abound throughout the five acts; inasmuch as reference is made to the Delphic oracle, Christian burial, an Emperor of Russia, and an Italian painter of the sixteenth century.

Kean's solution for the chronological hodge-podge was to select one particular historical period for the play and then to either draw all elements into harmony with it or to eliminate anachronisms. He wrote:

It is evident that when an attempt is made to combine truth with history, conflicting epochs cannot all be illustrated; and I have therefore thought it permissible to select a period which, while it accords with the spirit of the play, may be considered the most interesting, as well as the most instructive.

The pivot on which the story revolves, is in fact the decision pronounced by the oracle of Delphi; and taking this incident as the corner-stone of the whole fabric, I have adopted a period when Syracuse, according to Thucydides, had, from a mere Doric colony increased in magnificence to a position in no way inferior to that of Athens herself, when at the summit of her political prosperity.

Kean's decision to set the entire play during the classical Greek period created complications within certain parts of the text. One of them was Bohemia, the setting for Shakespeare's Act IV, which Kean conveniently changed:
To connect the country known as "Bohemia" with an age so remote, would be impossible; I have therefore followed the suggestion of Sir Thomas Hanmer, in his annotations of Shakespeare, by the substitution of Bithynia.25

In an attempt to give greater classical dimension to the pastoral fourth act, Kean seized upon a servant's description of the dancing satyrs and expanded it into a Bacchanalian ritual:

A leading instance of local customs is furnished in the pastoral scene of the fourth act, where the festivities applicable to the season of sheep-shearing take place, and in which Shakespeare brings in, for the purpose of a dance, twelve rustics, "who have made themselves all men of hair, and call themselves satyrs." I have here ventured to introduce one of the festivals in honour of Bacchus, known under the title of "Dionysia," wherein similar disguises were used, while the actors indulged in mad enthusiasm and extravagant merriment.26

In his preliminary work with the script, Kean concentrated on the elimination of chronological contradictions by imposing one historical period on the entire action of the play. Thus in order to give historical consistency to all the play's parts, he shifted some of Shakespeare's locales and added certain theatrical devices which were appropriate to the historical period he had selected. But once he had committed himself to his own absolute historical consistency, he was forced to make several cuts in the script to achieve coherence; and despite his boast that Shakespeare's text was carefully preserved throughout, his cutting of the text was substantial.

Not all of the cuts in the play came as a result
of chronological contradictions, but those that were made on this basis, are quite obvious. In I,ii, when Camillo informs Polixenes of Leontes' groundless suspicion, the King of Bohemia responds:

Oh then, my best blood turn
To be an infected jelly, and my name
Be yoked with his that did betray the Best!
Turn then by freshest reputation to
A savor that may strike the dullest nostril
Where I arrive, and my approach be shunned.27

Obviously Judas Iscariot postdates classical Athens, and Kean resolved the problem by eliminating all but the first line and one-half and the last half line of the above passage.

Another example of Kean's cutting for chronological consistency occurs during the trial scene (III,ii) when Hermione conveys her misery to the court by exclaiming:

The Emperor of Russia was my father.
Oh that he were alive and here beholding
His daughter's trial! that he did but see
The flatness of my misery, yet with eyes
Of pity, not revenge!28

The entire speech was cut because of the anachronistic reference to Russia. Other anachronisms which were eliminated included a reference to Whitsun pastorals (IV,iv), a mention of the inheritance of Alexander the Great (V,i), and the crediting of the sixteenth-century Italian painter, Julio Romano, with having carved the statue of Hermione (V,ii).

Another reason which Kean had for cutting the script was his effort to please the most illustrious
member of his audience. Evidently Queen Victoria enjoyed the works of Shakespeare, but, at times, the poet's language and the Queen's sense of decorum were likely to clash. In order to avoid this, Kean removed those lines and phrases which might be offensive to Her Majesty, and, indeed, to the society on which she had a direct influence.

One instance of such cutting occurs in the first act, wherein Leontes makes many references to his being cuckolded as a result of Hermione's infidelity. In the line "Oh, that is entertainment my bosom likes not, nor my brows," he removed the final three words. Other similar offensive lines were removed such as:

Or I am deceived, cuckold's ere now (I, ii, 191).

Or your eyeglass is thicker than a cuckold's horn (I, ii, 268-269).

She has been sluiced in's absence
And his pond fished by his next neighbor, by Sir Simile his neighbor. Nay, there's comfort in't While other men have gates and those gates opened, As mine, against their will. (I, ii, 194-198).

Other sexual allusions were cut as well. For instance in the second act, Leontes' blatant accusations of Perdita's illegitimacy were cut, especially lines which contained the word "bastard." The same was true of the King's allegations that Hermione was a whore, and words like "bawd," "bedswerver," and "hobbyhouse" were cut.

Keen also cut the script for the sake of dramatic
The playing time of his production of *The Winter's Tale*, not including times for five intermissions, complicated set changes, and a curtain raiser, was two hours and forty-three minutes, so the entire evening's entertainment probably lasted for four hours. Since the climax of the production was a spectacular allegorical sequence at the beginning of the fourth act, Kean was obliged to cut the fourth and fifth acts severely and retain a sense of narrative motion to the conclusion of the play.

In Act IV Kean cut almost one-half of Shakespeare's lines and still the act played for a full hour. Every character suffered the effects of the blue pencil, with the result that Autolycus lost some of his songs, Perdita lost the entire flowers speech, and Camillo was robbed of practically every line he had. Kean's aim seemed to be the creation of an air of festivity in the act by emphasizing the group songs and dances at the expense of much of the dialogue. Of the lines following Polixenes' revelation of his identity to Florizel and Perdita, more than two-thirds were cut so as to retain only the barest narrative thread.

In all, Kean cut approximately one-fifth of the lines in Acts I and II, one-half of the lines in Acts III and IV, and one-third of the lines in Act V. Yet he could write in his preface:
I should not omit to state that the text of Shakespeare has been carefully preserved throughout; the omission of an occasional sentence or line sufficing to remove all prominent incongruities, without interfering with the natural course of the action.29

Kean adhered to Shakespeare's arrangement of acts and scenes except in one instance. He began his fourth act with Shakespeare's III,iii, in order to use the allegory most effectively. He wanted this sequence to depict the passage of time, and he could only accomplish that by beginning it immediately after the shepherd took the infant Perdita to his cottage.

A reader might well be suspicious of Kean's expressed devotion to Shakespeare in view of his alterations and excisions on the text of *The Winter's Tale*. But Watson cautions against such misgiving:

That Kean himself was a pretender or a quack, there is, I believe, no shadow of proof. It is to the revivals of Kean rather than to those of Macready that Irving and Terry owed their inspiration.30

Kean's devotion to scholarship prompted him to try to unite great literature of the past with the latest scientific discoveries. To accomplish this purpose, alterations on the script were required in the forms of a specified historical period, changed locales, and cutting of the text. How prudent Kean was in making these alterations is a matter of opinion. Two views of Kean's production expressed by theatre critics of the time indicate the wide variance on this point:
Mr. Charles Kean, by adhering to the original text, has proved himself by far the ablest commentator, and the truest restorer of Shakespeare. He has also fixed a specific date, and reconciled many incongruities which have been described as insurmountable. His view is to combine instruction and truth with the most intellectual of all amusements. (Standard, May 1, 1856, p. 3)

There can be no doubt that the experiment tried by Mr. Charles Kean upon Shakespeare will put money into the pocket of the manager; and what further end has Mr. Kean to serve? As for Shakespeare, the poet, he is absolutely buried; magnificently coffined, no doubt; wrapt in a thick fold of lead. (Lloyd's Weekly, May 18, 1856, p. 8)

Illustrated Shakespeare

Kean's Archeological Spectacle

"It was no part of Kean's intention to present the quiet interplay of Shakespeare's characters. In his production the play moved from spectacle to spectacle and this not necessarily with change of scene."—M.W. Merchant

Although Charles Kean expressed an eagerness to establish an historical period for The Winter's Tale in the interests of education and scholarship, he was also motivated by another, perhaps greater, consideration. By selecting a specific period in history for the action of the play, he provided himself with a justification to illustrate that era with all the elaborate scenic devices at his command, and to turn the production into a kind of visual history lesson. He suggested this aim in his preface:
An opportunity is thus afforded of reproducing a classical era, and placing before the eyes of the spectator, *tableaux vivants* of the private and public life of the ancient Greeks, at a time when the arts flourished to a perfection, the scattered vestiges of which still delight and instruct the world.\(^{52}\)

The elaborate scenery for *The Winter's Tale* was created by a team of England's finest theatrical artists, all under the direction of Thomas Grieve. All scenes, even shallow masking scenes, had an historical basis as illustrated by the very first one in the play (Figure 2). This setting, designed by W. Telbin, was a view of the Temple of Minerva in Syracuse with the fountain of Arethusa in the foreground. In his acting version, Kean explains each detail of the setting:

The first scene is taken from the space in front of the Fountain of Arethusa, in Ortygia, the oldest part of Syracuse.

The Temple of Minerva occupies the summit of the Island. It was erected by the Camori in the sixth century B.C. To the left are the public granary, the Embrontiaeaum, or consecrated house of Agathocles, the Architect of the Temple, which was struck by lightning. The roof of the Temple of Diana appears beyond that of Minerva, and to the extreme right is part of the Temple of Juno Olympia, with the hearth or altar before it.

The face of the Fountain of Arethusa is restored from representations of public fountains amongst the painted vases of the British Museum, and the collection of Mr. Rogers.\(^{33}\)

One of the production's most spectacular settings was designed by Thomas Grieve himself. Kean was inspired to set the trial of Hermione on the Theatre at Syracuse, and he justified doing so on the basis that it was known that such edifices were frequently used for legislative and judicial proceedings, and an opportunity is thus
Figure 2. W. Telbin's set design for the opening scene (I,i) of Kean's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
afforded for the introduction of a scenic display, equally novel and interesting. 34

Grieve created a magnificent setting which, on the tiny Princess's stage, gave the impression of great expanse and depth (Figure 3). Cole, enthralled by the grandeur of the scene, described it and its effect upon the audience:

The arrangement of the stage here presented an astonishing instance of scenic illusion. The area is extremely limited; yet by pictorial and mechanical combination, it appeared to expand to the colossal proportions which we read of as belonging to the most celebrated of those buildings in which thirty thousand persons might be seated on benches. A wonderful realization was presented by the dense assembly of auditory and officials, by the imposing appearance of the King on his throne, with sages and councillors ranged behind and on each side of him; by the arraigned Queen, borne on her litter, with attendant females; and by the solemn procession of the Oracle. When these were grouped together, and the varying emotions of the whole assembly reflected in animated gesticulation and expression, as the incidents of the scene proceeded,—the rapt intense attention of the entire house suspended applause for the moment; but at the close they relieved themselves by reiterated bursts of acclamation. 35

The spectacular climax of the production occurred near the beginning of the fourth act. After the Old Shepherd took the infant Perdita to his cottage (III,iii), Kean depicted the passage of time with ornate tableaus of allegorical figures which dissolved one into the other (Figures 4, 5, and 6). Cole describes the entire effect:

Clouds now descended and filled the stage, leading to a classical allegory, representing the course of Time. As these clouds dispersed, Selene, or Luna, was discovered in her car, accompanied by the Stars (personified by living figures), and gradually sunk into the ocean. Time then appeared, surmounting the globe, no longer represented by the raditionary
Figure 3. T. Grieve's set design for the trial scene (III,i) of Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Figure 4. T. Grieve's set design of Luna in her car from the allegorical sequence in Kean's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Figure 5. T. Grieve's set design of Time on the globe from the allegorical sequence in Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale*.Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Figure 6. T. Grieve's set design of the ascent of Phoebus from the allegorical sequence in Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
bald-headed elder, with his scythe and hourglass, but as a classical figure, more in accordance with the character in the play as now represented. He spoke the lines with which Shakespeare has connected the two separate epoches of his play. As Time descended, Phoebus rose with surpassing brilliancy in the chariot of the Sun, encircled in a blaze of light which filled every portion of the theatre. The group appeared to be derived from that in the center of Flaxman's Shield of Achilles. The horses were modelled with a life and fire that would have done honour to Baron Marcocetti himself. The statue-like grace and immobility of Apollo, as he stood in the car, reining in his impetuous steeds, impressed a universal conviction that this figure also was artificial; but the living reality was conveyed in the most startling manner, when, at the full height of his ascent, he suddenly raised his right arm to lash a restive courser. The effect baffles description. The entire allegory may be pronounced the greatest triumph of art ever exhibited on the stage.36

Kean's insistence on accurate archaeological detail was not only applied to the scenery but extended to the costumes and properties as well. In The Winter's Tale the costumes of the two countries, Sicily and Bithynia, were faithfully represented with the intention of illustrating the difference in the two cultures, as Kean remarked in his preface concerning his choice of Bithynia:

...it enables me to represent the costume of the inhabitants of Asia Minor at a corresponding period, associated so intimately with Greece, and acquiring additional interest from close proximity to the Homeric kingdom of Troy.

The Phrygian dress presents a marked distinction between the two races that constitute the chief actors in the drama, while at the same time scope is afforded for the introduction of customs common to both.37

In the historical notes of his acting version of the play, Kean has listed the sources of the costumes for his
production. A few examples are listed below:

Leontes, (First Dress)—From a Figure of the Lycian King, Jobates, on a vase in the Hamilton Collection. Engraved in Tischbein's Hamilton Vases, vol. 1, pl. 1.

Antigonus, (First Dress)—From a Figure of Priam, on a vase in the Museum of the Vatican. Museum Gregor- anum, vol. 2, tav. 60.

Autolycus, (First Dress)—Wears the felt cap, still used in Asia Minor.

Autolycus, (Second Dress)—Hamilton Vases, vol. 1, pl. 43.
(Third Dress)—From a vase, engraved in Gerhard's Auserlesene Vasenbilder, taf. 166.38

When Ellen Terry wrote her memoirs in the late 1920's, she still recalled with nostalgic amusement a very special property which was made for her for The Winter's Tale:

Besides my clothes, I had a beautiful "property" to be proud of. This was a go-cart, which had been made in the theatre by Mr. Bradshaw, and was an exact copy of a child's toy as depicted on a Greek vase. It was my duty to drag this little cart about the stage, and on the first night, when Mr. Kean as Leontes told me to "go play," I obeyed his instructions with such vigour that I tripped over the handle and came down on my back.39

All of the properties were based on historical models and drawings of them are in the holdings of the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 7).

In an attempt to win the enthusiastic approval of his audiences, Kean developed the art of pictorial realism for the stage to a far greater extent than had any of his predecessors. He tried to ennoble his work by basing spectacle upon historical accuracy and thereby instructing his audiences as well as amusing them. With the enthusiastic patronage of Queen Victoria to lead the way, audiences
Figure 7. Drawings of some of the properties for Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
packed the Princess's Theatre for the long-run spectacular productions. But there were also those who felt that Kean had overstepped the bounds of modesty in his use of pictorial realism. William Charles Macready, himself an actor-manager of the same tradition, was dismayed after reading a detailed account of Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale* because he concluded that the accessories had swallowed the poetry. He confided to a friend:

Do you know why I take it so much to heart? It is because I feel myself in some measure responsible. I, in my endeavor to give Shakespeare all his attributes, to enrich his poetry with scenes worthy of its interpretation, to give his tragedies their due magnificence, and to his comedies their entire brilliance, have set an example which is accompanied with great peril, for the public is willing to have the magnificence without the tragedy, and the poet is swallowed up in display. When I read such a description as this of the production of a great drama, I am touched with a feeling something like remorse. Is it possible, I ask myself? Did I hold the torch? Did I point out the path?40

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**Keen's Crowds—Carefully Organized Confusion**

"It is usually said that the Meiningen Company introduced to the English theatre the dramatic manipulation of large groups of players, but Kean, some twenty years before their first visit to England, was consciously employing the same methods."—M.W. Merchant41

Kean's concern with detail was by no means limited to the technical aspects of his productions, for he was just as exacting in his work with the actors, the extras as well as the major performers. Watson remarks:
He drilled his company so that everyone, down to the merest mechanic and supernumary, should produce the effect required of him in the most harmonious and telling manner. His own self-control and diligence he imparted to all with whom he worked. There was in his theatre no more of that violent point-making and distortion of the dramatist's intent which so marred the work of even Macready. Kean's mastery in all these respects admits of no question. Even his enemies praised it.\textsuperscript{42}

One of those enemies was Phelps. He and Kean were rival managers whose artistic views usually clashed, especially on the subject of producing Shakespeare. But evidently Phelps was objective enough in his criticism to respect the work of a rival when respect was warranted. Such was the case on a particular occasion when Phelps was in the audience for one of Kean's productions in which the crowd scenes were especially well rendered. During the curtain call, an enthusiastic reception for the play and the principal actors turned into a call for the "Supers":

"By god!" said Phelps, 'they are calling for the supers, and, damme! they deserve it--I never saw better acting in my life!" The act-drop was then raised, disclosing the unusual spectacle of the supers 'taking a call' loudly cheered by the spectators.\textsuperscript{43}

The remarkable effects which Kean achieved in the crowd scenes were the results of long, arduous rehearsals. Ellen Terry described the rehearsals for The Winter's Tale as "a lesson in fortitude" during which she discovered once and for all "that an actress's life is not all beer and skittles, cakes and ale, or fame and glory":
Rehearsals lasted all day, Sundays included, and when there was no play running at night, until four or five the next morning! I don't think any actor in those days dreamed of luncheon. Sometimes I could hardly keep my eyes open when I was on the stage, and often when my scene was over, I used to creep into the greenroom and forget my troubles and my art in a delicious sleep.44

Kean's method of handling the crowds in rehearsal was described to Clement Scott by two actor friends of his, David Jones and Edward Righton, who began their careers as supers at the Princess's Theatre:

They both told me Charles Kean's method of stage managing an excited crowd. He divided it into sections and groups, and gave to each some little drama to enact, so as to lend variety and impulse to the picture. In fact, the group in which Edward Righton was included was provided with words to speak, and spoken they were at every rehearsal—save the final one, much to the chagrin of all concerned.45

In The Winter's Tale Kean used the crowd for amazingly spectacular effects, and, in fact, he may have become a bit over-zealous in his use of them as Merchant suggests:

Sometimes indeed, as in this production of The Winter's Tale, the crowd becomes so obtrusive a part of the decor as to dominate the scene and wrest the Shakespeare out of its shape.46

After the play's first brief scene, the shutters parted revealing a banqueting hall in the palace of Leontes. A sumptuous farewell feast in honor of the departing Polixenes was in progress. As twelve musicians played the hymn to Apollo, six pages entered and placed garlands over the heads of the royalty and the lords of the court. Upon the exit of the pages, a butler entered followed by
six slaves carrying wine jugs and by three female water carriers. After the butler mixed the wine, the slaves filled the goblets of the royalty, who prepared themselves to view the Pyrrhic Dance (Figure 8). Cole describes the effect:

Thirty-six resplendently handsome young girls, representing youths in complete warlike panoply, entered, and performed the evolutions of the far-famed Pyrrhic Dance. The effect was electrical, and established at the commencement an impression of what might be expected as the play advanced.47

The next major crowd scene occurred at the trial of Hermione in the Theatre at Syracuse as pictured in Figure 3. But evidently the largest grouping of extras in The Winter's Tale was during the fourth act dances of shepherds and shepherdesses and of the satyrs.

There must have been at least three hundred persons engaged in this revel of organized confusion, which worked up to a maddening burst at the end, when they all rushed out, presenting a perfect revivification of Comus and his Bacchanalian crew.48

Kean used the crowd in the final scene and introduced them with one of his favorite devices, the procession. Dressed in robes of the court and in military uniforms, the crowd, which at this point included everyone in the cast, entered the sculpture gallery of Paulina's house carrying torches and grouped themselves around the peristyle for the revelation of the statue. Although this scene as written by Shakespeare focuses on Leontes, Hermione, and Paulina, in Kean's arrangement...
Figure 8: A drawing of the Pyrrhic Dance in Kean's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
the revelation. The tension is increased by the lighting, for there is the fullest dramatic contrast between the brilliantly lit crowd at the back, and the darker crowd in front kneeling or hiding their faces in awe.49

Quite obviously Kean used the crowd in his productions as a spectacular device to thrill his audiences. But, as with the other elaborate elements of his productions, he justified the spectacular with historical accuracy and spent long, painstaking hours determining and achieving the correct details. In his attempt to establish a balanced level of performers among all the members of his company, he raised the level of competence of the supers from what it had been under managers before him.

Kean and the Critics

"There have been few theatres in London at which I have spent happier hours than at the Princess's Theatre in Oxford Street, from the first to last."—Clement Scott50

Clement Scott penned the above comment at the end of the nineteenth century, at least forty years after having experienced Kean's productions at the Princess's. The critic's memory was a reservoir of pleasant recollections of Kean and company at its zenith. But critics writing at the time of Kean's management were sharply divided on their views of The Winter's Tale.
The critic for the *Morning Post* expressed a view typical of the affirmative reaction to the play:

Mr. Kean's success thus far is a matter of dramatic history but in no case has he been more felicitious than in his last; never have the resources of scholarship, taste, of practical knowledge and of decorative skill been brought to bear with happier effect than in the production of *The Winter's Tale*.51

Predictably, Douglas Jerrold, a bitter enemy of Kean's wrote a scathingly negative review in *Lloyd's Weekly*:

Now it may be made worth the while, as we firmly believe it is, for certain writers to praise Mr. Kean for his stage doings; but we honestly believe him to be the greatest mischief-maker that the true interests of drama have hitherto encountered. We want a tragedian and we have a showman. Thus, *The Winter's Tale*, with all its magnificence, is tedious beyond all patience.52

Merchant cautions against Jerrold's "baleful outbursts" and cites "more judicious criticism" in an issue of *Blackwood's Magazine*.53 An essay in this publication on the state of the theatre in 1856 concerns itself with the success of spectacles and berates managers who transform the theatre into a prodigious panoramic peep-show, to which the dialogue of the players has about the same merely accessory relation as the music of an orchestra.

But even Kean's detractors were duly impressed by the allegorical sequence. Jerrold wrote: "this is arranged similarly to the vision in Henry VIII, but it is far more splendid."54 In the art of acting, however, Kean received more negative criticism, and perhaps justly
so, for as Watson points out "he was not a great actor." The Times reviewer made a feeble attempt at blaming Shakespeare for writing a bad role, but it is all too obvious that Kean's performance was less than brilliant:

Leontes, with his careless jealousy, is but an unthankful personage to the tragedian, but Mr. Charles Kean judiciously labours to make the conduct of the whimsical tyrant as accountable as the text will allow. . . .

Mrs. Kean's portrayal of Hermione, on the other hand, was favorably received. The Times reviewer wrote:

Mrs. Charles Kean's Hermione is such a performance as might naturally have been expected by all who witnessed her Queen Katherine--a picture of sorrow so intense, and accompanied by such a consciousness of rectitude, that it will look forward to death as a welcome relief, but will start with horror from a risk of indignity.

Conclusion

Charles Kean's production of The Winter's Tale is a high-water mark in English theatrical history. Not only did it represent the culmination of stage spectacle in its own day, but it influenced the nature of staging in Britain for the next two generations.

In mounting this production, Kean applied historical accuracy to the execution of the acting, scenery, costumes, properties, and music in order to make the presentation a valuable educational experience for his audience. He presented the play with the most
lavish decor in order to delight and thrill his patrons. To achieve his first goal he altered the text, changing locales for the sake of geographical and chronological coherence, and cutting lines to avoid anachronisms, to gain dramatic economy, and to avoid offense to the members of his audience. In order to accomplish his second goal, Kean expended great sums of money on a multitude of actors, and for the creation and execution of ornate scenery, costumes, and properties.

Stimulated by royal patronage, his success created for the legitimate drama in England the first real prosperity it had known since Kemble. It was prosperity grown out of spectacle, but so outstanding and elaborate was this spectacle that its influence continued for decades. In an article in Shakespeare Survey II ("Fifty Years of Shakespearean Production: 1898-1948," p. 2) M. St. Clare Byrne wrote:

Kean's spectacles determined the main trend in English Shakespearean production for sixty years: this was the tradition inherited by Irving at the Lyceum from 1878 to 1902.

The reviewer for the Daily Telegraph partially prophesied Kean's influence in 1856 when, in reviewing The Winter's Tale, he wrote:

To those who may at a future period record the progress of the drama during the nineteenth century, a decided epoch will be furnished by Mr. Charles Kean's Shakespearean revivals at the Princess's Theatre; greatly to his honor, it will be stated, that he was the first to turn the glitter and magnificence of spectacle to useful account, and to impart to the most gorgeous decorations such
historical accuracy, that whilst the eye was dazzled with brilliancy, the spectator was afforded an opportunity of searching beneath the mere surface, and of discovering matter wherewith to improve understanding.59

In March of 1859, after Kean had decided to retire from the management of the Princess's Theatre, he wrote on a fly-leaf affixed to the hand-bills for a production, a message to his audience. He began it with words which summarized his honest intentions in his productions during the preceding nine years:

As the term of my management is now drawing to a close, I may, perhaps, be permitted, in a few words, to express my thanks for the support and encouragement I have received. While endeavouring, to the best of my ability and judgment, to uphold the interests of the drama in its most exalted form, I may conscientiously assert, that I have been animated by no selfish or commercial spirit. An enthusiast in the art to which my life has been devoted, I have always entertained a deeply rooted conviction, that the plan I have pursued for many seasons, might, in due time, under fostering care, render the stage productive of much benefit to society at large.60
Footnotes Chapter III

1 A letter from Charles Kean to Colonel C.B. Phipps, Keeper of the Privy Purse, September 10, 1856, in The Victoria and Albert Museum, Enthoven Collection, The Windsor Correspondence Box.

2 For a detailed examination of Queen Victoria's patronage to Charles Kean see Douglas R. Vanderyacht, "Queen Victoria's Patronage of Actor-Manager Charles Kean" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Theatre, The Ohio State University, 1970).

3 A letter from Ellen Kean to Queen Victoria, June 28, 1857, in the Folger Kean Collection, Ye402 (49).

4 Letter to Phipps.

5 Ibid.


7 Letter to Phipps.


9 Ibid., p. 228.


11 Cole, II, 341.


Footnotes Chapter III cont.

15Standard, April 29, 1856, p. 1.

16Watson, p. 224.

17Ibid., p. 225.

18Cole, II, 177.


20Ibid., I, 284-285.


22Charles Kean, promptbook for Kean's 1856 production of The Winter's Tale, The Ohio State University Theatre Collection, Microfilm, No. P179, p. v. The original is in The Folger Library, Washington, D.C.

23Ibid.

24Ibid.

25Ibid.

26Ibid., p. vii.


28Ibid., III, ii, 126.

29Promptbook, p. ix.

30Watson, p. 224.

31Merchant, p. 213.

32Promptbook, p. vi.

33Ibid., p. 27.
Footnotes Chapter III cont.

34 Ibid., p. vii.


36 Ibid., p. 172.

37 Promptbook, pp. vi-vii.

38 Ibid.


41 Merchant, p. 215.

42 Watson, p. 225.

43 Scott, p. 288.

44 Terry, pp. 14-15.

45 Scott, pp. 286-287.

46 Merchant, p. 214.

47 Cole, II, 170.

48 Ibid., p. 173.

49 Merchant, p. 214.

50 Scott, p. 216.

51 Morning Post, April 29, 1856, p. 9.

52 Lloyd's Weekly, May 18, 1856, p. 8.

53 Merchant, p. 218.
Footnotes Chapter III cont.


55. Watson, p. 224.

56. The Times (London), May 1, 1856, p. 5.

57. Ibid.

58. Watson, p. 234.


"Tree—the charming fellow—I could murder him with great pleasure."—Gordon Craig.  

Shortly after the death of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree in July of 1917, William Archer wrote an eulogy in *The Nation* which he began with a guarded comment: "The death of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree leaves London the poorer by a notable personality." Archer, who found Tree's eccentricities irresistible, never considered him a great artist of the theatre. Neither did Bernard Shaw, whose play, *Pygmalion*, premiered in Tree's theatre with the actor-manager in the role of Henry Higgins. But these major theatre critics represented the minority opinion about the portrayals and productions of Beerbohm Tree. 

His popularity as an actor and a producer was widespread and long-lasting in the London theatre. He first attracted attention as an actor by playing exotic characters in popular farces and melodramas. Not satisfied to limit his energy merely to acting, he took over the managership of the Haymarket Theatre in 1887 and eventually built his own theatre, Her Majesty's. During
his twenty-nine years as a manager, he produced sixteen Shakespearean revivals as well as premiering plays by Shaw, Wilde, Jones, and many other important dramatists of his time.  

Tree was the last in a line of distinguished actor-managers who dominated the English theatre for two centuries. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the position of this once-esteemed figure was under attack by certain forces which craved a new direction for the theatre. Proud of his position and his heritage, Tree took every opportunity to defend the concept of the actor-manager and its tradition. His defense was based on the public taste and the satisfaction of the aesthetic appetites of the entertainment-hungry masses. In an essay entitled, "The Living Shakespeare: A Defense of Modern Taste," Tree wrote of the popularity of his productions:

In London alone two hundred and forty-two thousand people witnessed Julius Caesar, over one hundred and seventy thousand came to see King John, and nearly two hundred and twenty thousand were present during the run of A Midsummer Night's Dream—in all a grand total of six hundred and thirty-two thousand visitors to these three productions. And no doubt my brother managers who have catered for the public in this manner could, with the great successes that they have had, point to similar figures. I think, therefore, it is not too much to claim that the public taste clearly and undoubtedly—whether that taste be good or bad—lies in the direction of the method in which Shakespeare has been presented of late years by the metropolitan managers.  

Tree's aesthetic of the theatre was composed of five basic concepts which he continually reiterated in
his writing and which evolve logically one from the other. First, and most basically, he believed the primary purpose of any play in production was to please the audience. "Rail at it as you will," he wrote, "the first merit of a play is that it shall satisfy the artistic conscience of an audience." He never discriminated between classes of people, and, indeed had a reputation for treating dukes and dustmen with equal respect.

Second, he believed that audiences have demonstrated by their patronage that they are most pleased with theatrical production when they can lose themselves in the illusion of it. He wrote: "I take it that the entire business of the stage is—Illusion. As the entire aim of all art is Illusion, to gain this end all means are fair." To Tree's mind, the means by which illusion was achieved in the theatre was elaborate realistic detail in the business and movement of actors and in the visual effects of scenery and costumes. "Accuracy of detail, for the sake of perfect illusion, is necessary for us," he wrote. But he added:

What we have to see is that the details are not allowed to overshadow the principal theme, and this they never can do while they are carefully and reasonably introduced.

Whether he actually adhered to this cautionary note is questionable, for his added directorial touches often called attention to themselves.
Building on these three concepts, Tree went on to infer that Shakespeare wrote his plays with elaborate realistic productions in mind. Tree offered as proof certain stage directions, the use of masque elements, and the abundance of elaborate properties and costumes required in the plays. He believed:

No dramatist of the French, English, or Athenian stage relies as Shakespeare does for his effects on the dress of his actors; he not only appreciated the value of costume in adding picturesqueness to poetry, but he saw how important it is as a means for producing certain dramatic results.

In synthesizing the four points of his aesthetic, Tree concluded that the actor-managers of the past and present, having produced Shakespearean plays with all the realistic detail at their command, and having thereby created effective theatrical illusion, had both pleased the public and elevated its tastes:

It is, I maintain, a fallacy to say that the manager merely follows the public taste; by giving a supply of his best he often creates a demand for what is good, and it is largely his initiative—the stimulus which his individual enthusiasm and imagination give to the production of great works—which preserves for those works the recognition and support of the public which follows him.

Tree's Production of the Winter's Tale

"The Winter's Tale as now produced is, after all, a setting—a beautiful and most artistic setting—for the Hermione of Ellen Terry."

Ellen Terry made her theatrical debut as Mamillius
in Charles Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale* in 1856. To celebrate her jubilee year in the theatre (and certainly with an eye on the box office), Tree hit upon the idea of having Miss Terry appear again in the same play, this time in the role of Hermione. Obviously the idea appealed to her and upon her agreement to play the part, Tree had not only secured a star but created an occasion for his production. Newspaper and magazine publicity prior to the opening focused on the jubilee performance, and on the second page of the program for Tree's production was a reproduction of Kean's playbill, which included, of course, Ellen Terry as Mamillius.\(^\text{12}\)

Although Ellen Terry's promised appearance generated a great interest in the production, Tree also succeeded in engaging an experienced cast to support her and to give the production proper balance. Tree's policy was to employ the best players of his time in order to give his productions every advantage for success.\(^\text{13}\) In his production of *The Winter's Tale* Charles Warner, a popular melodramatic actor, played Leontes, Basil Gill played Florizel, and J. Fisher White doubled as Antigonus and Father Time. However, Tree's casting was not completely motivated by business considerations. The role of Perdita was played by Viola Tree, his daughter, and Paulina was played by Maud Tree, his wife. A common quip at the time was that at His Majesty's, it was difficult to see the production for the Trees. This particular production played without the services of the
greatest Tree of them all, Herbert, who was engaged to
tour the provinces in Colonel Newcome.

The Winter's Tale, the twelfth Shakespearean
production by Tree, opened on a warm Saturday evening,
September 1, 1906, and from all indications was favor­
ably received. But the first-nighters' enthusiasm was
somewhat wilted by the weather. The reviewer for Punch
considered it a stroke of genius that Tree produced
The Winter's Tale during a heat wave, and concluded his
review with the quip, "Meanwhile I look forward to a
revival of A Midsummer Night's Dream during the next
cold snap."¹⁴

Tree and the Script: Arrangement of Acts and Cuts

"Tree was the despair of authors."—G. Bernard Shaw¹⁵

In the latter part of the nineteenth century,
when the tradition of the actor-manager was being
challenged, one of the frequent charges leveled at him
was that he ruthlessly cut the texts of Shakespeare in
order to give predominance to certain parts.¹⁶ Aware of
and sensitive to these accusations, Tree expressed his
theory of cutting for the modern audience:

In regard to this cutting of the text, it is only
fair to point out that the process to an extent is
necessary in the present day. It would be impossible
otherwise to bring most of Shakespeare's plays within
the three-hours limit which he himself has described
as the proper traffic of the stage. In times gone by when there was practically no scenery at all, when the public were satisfied to come to the playhouse and remain in their seats without moving from the beginning to the end of the performance (taking solid and liquid refreshment when it pleased them) a much lengthier play was possible in these days; . . . Modern conditions of life obviously do not admit of such a system. Dinner is so necessary—nowadays! Moreover, Shakespeare himself did not represent the entire play of Hamlet, which was subjected to judicious cuts in his own time—and there is nothing to show that his dramas were ever performed in their printed entirety.  

When Tree produced The Winter's Tale, he cut more than one-third of Shakespeare's lines and presented the play in three acts rather than in five. In a program note he explained his arrangement of acts and cutting as an attempt at achieving coherent action. Tree's first act, which included four scenes, comprised the Leontes-Hermione tragedy, concluding in the trial scene. The playing time recorded in the promptbook was sixty-seven minutes, but this limit did not include the time required for lengthy set changes. The first scene of the Tree production, a room of state in Leontes' palace, included Shakespeare's scenes from the beginning of the play through Hermione's condemnation to prison (I,i thru III,ii). The second scene was the prison scene, the third, the confrontation between Paulina and Leontes, and the fourth, the dramatic trial scene.

Act II included three scenes and a tableau and had a total playing time of fifty-four minutes. The first scene was Shakespeare's III,iii, depicting the abandonment
and discovery of the infant, Perdita. A tableau of Father Time atop the world and pushing time forward followed. The second scene was set in the palace of Polixenes and involved a discussion between Polixenes and Camillo concerning the secret activities of Florizel; and the third was the joyous pastoral scene.

Act III included two scenes, the first depicting the sorrow of Leontes and the second being the statue scene. The act had a total playing time of seventeen minutes. A comparison of Tree's arrangement of the play for production purposes to Shakespeare's version is illustrated below:

Tree's Production \hspace{1em} Shakespeare's Version

Act I

Scene i \hspace{1em} I,ii (Leontes' jealousy) and II,i (Hermione condemned)
Scene ii \hspace{1em} II,ii (Prison)
Scene iii \hspace{1em} II,iii (Paulina vs. Leontes)
Scene iv \hspace{1em} III,ii (The trial)

Act II

Scene i \hspace{1em} III,iii (Seacoast of Bohemia)
Tableau \hspace{1em} IV,i (Father Time)
Scene ii \hspace{1em} IV,ii (Polixenes' plan)
Scene iii \hspace{1em} IV,iii (Autolycus and Clown) and IV,iv (Pastoral)

Act III

Scene i \hspace{1em} V,i (Leontes' sorrow)
Scene ii \hspace{1em} V,iii (Statue)

Tree completely cut Shakespeare's I,i, III,i, and V,ii.

In making his cuts on the script, Tree apparently did not proceed indiscriminately but rather made his excisions for one of three basic reasons. First Tree
eliminated many of the lines of characters whose importance he chose to reduce in his presentation of the play. A prime example is Antigonus, a character who, as written by Shakespeare, possesses some depth of personality, expressed mainly through his relations with Paulina, his wife. In Tree's production he became merely a lord of the court, his marital situation barely hinted at. To achieve this result, more than one-half of his lines were cut. Even in his most important scene, the one in which he leaves the infant Perdita on the Bohemian seacoast, fifty percent of his lines were eliminated.

Other characters who were severely affected by the blue pencil were Paulina and Camillo. As the agent who first presents to Leontes both the infant and the statue of Hermione, Paulina has an extremely important function in the play. Tree retained enough of the role so that these basic actions could be performed, but he eliminated more than half of her lines, depriving her of character complexity. Tree cut many of her lines of accusation to Leontes, with the result that she tended to be less testy and more sentimental. Camillo, too, became merely an agent because of cuts in those lines that tend to deepen his character. In particular, Tree cut Camillo's lines near the end of IV, iv, when Florizel makes plans to run away with Perdita. But Antigonus, Paulina and Camillo fared far better than Dion and Cleomenes who were reduced to walk-ons, and none was as
unfortunate as Archidamus whose name was eliminated from the *dramatis personae*.

Often Tree cut lines and scenes which did not seem essential to the forward movement of the narrative. He evidently considered lines which described actions rather than depicting them, elaborate qualifications within speeches, or catalogues of items and images as inessential for production purposes. In *The Winter's Tale* Tree eliminated, as noted earlier, three entire scenes which Shakespeare had written. The very first scene in the play, in which Camillo and Archidamus discuss the affection between Leontes and Polixenes, was cut; Tree began his production with Shakespeare's I,ii. He also cut Shakespeare's III,i, which takes place between the oracle bearers, Cleomenes, and Dion, on their return from Delphi. The recognition between Perdita and Leontes as described by Paulina's steward (V,ii) was also cut in its entirety. In the case of each cutting, the narrative thread remained essentially unbroken, and the producer was kept from introducing characters whom he had no intention of developing.

Although Tree eliminated lines from every scene in the play, his most severe cutting came in the pastoral scene (IV,iv), and most of these cuts were at the expense of the characters, Autolycus and the Clown. The latter, before being robbed by the former, entered recounting to himself the items he had to get for the sheep-shearing
feast. The elimination of part of his catalogue and qualifications exemplifies the kind of cuts Tree made on this basis. The following lines were cut:

She hath made me four and twenty nosegays for the shearsers (three-man song-men, all, and very good ones) but they are most of them means and bases; but one puritan amongst them, and he sings psalms to hornpipes. I must have saffron to colour the warden pies, mace; dates, none; that's out of my note. 20

In the same scene prior to Autolycus' arrival at the sheep shearing, Shakespeare had heightened his entrance by having some of the characters at the feast discuss and describe him. Tree having cut twenty-four of thirty-three lines in that sequence, retained only the lines needed to get the character onto the stage.

Later in this scene when Florizel pledges his love to Perdita, Polixenes revealed himself and demanded that his son break off relations with the beautiful shepherdess. From this point until the end of the act, Tree appeared anxious to retain only those lines necessary to maintain the story, the elopement of Florizel and Perdita. To achieve this he cut two-thirds of the lines, 280 from a possible 424. He retained only the details of the lovers' escape, but, in the process, he provided time for the complex pantomimic business which began and ended the scene, and for the lengthy dance of shepherds and shepherdesses which was the scene's high point.

Tree's third basis for alteration of the text was formed by the moral sensibilities of his audience. In
some instances he replaced Elizabethan directness of speech with Victorian euphemism, as in the case of Leontes' command to Paulina concerning the infant Perdita, II,iii: "Take up the bastard." The word bastard was dropped and the less offensive brat substituted for it. But far more extensive cuts were made in those speeches where indelicate references to sexuality occur. In the second scene of the play, Polixenes recounts for Hermione the joyous innocence of his boyhood association with Leontes, and he remarks of the changes which have occurred since they have matured and married. Hermione replies:

Grace to boot:
Of this make no conclusion, lest you say
Your Queen and I are Devils: yet go out,
The offences we have made you do, we'll answer,
If you first sinn'd with us: and that with us
You did continue fault: and that you slipp'd not
With any, but with us (I,1).

Tree cut this speech and thirteen lines which precede it, apparently because of the nature of the subject matter rather than for the sake of economy. Audiences had paid to see Ellen Terry, and to satisfy them (and probably to satisfy his leading lady), Tree was conservative in his cutting of Hermione's lines.

The extent to which Tree went in eliminating offensive lines and phrases can be illustrated by a speech in which the jealous Leontes describes the actions of Hermione and Polixenes:

Is whispering nothing?
Is leaning cheek to cheek? Is meeting noses?
Kissing with inside lip? stopping the career
Of laughter, with a sigh? (a note infallible
Of breaking honesty) horsing foot on foot?
Skulking in corners? wishing clocks more swift?
Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes
Blind with pin and web, but theirs; theirs only.
That would unseen be wicked? Is this nothing? (I,i)

The only cuts made in the above speech were the phrases
"is meeting noses?" and "kissing with inside lip?"; and
in the phrase "horsing foot on foot," the first "foot"
was removed.

Tree also cut blatant references to Hermione's
pregnancy and to her expanded physique. The Ladies' lines
in II,i were cut:

Lady:
The Queen, your mother, rounds space; we shall
Present our services to a fine new Prince
One of these days, and then you'd wanton with us,
If we would have you.

2nd Lady:
She is spread of late
Into a goodly bulk: good time encounter her! (I,i).

So was Leontes' remark in the same scene:

and let her sport herself,
With that she's big with, for 'tis Polixenes
Has made thee swell thus (I,i).

In Tree's production of The Winter's Tale, the
cuts were extensive and appear to have been made: (1) if
a character's reduced importance in the production did
not warrant the lines, (2) if lines or scenes were unneces-
sary for the forward movement of the narrative, (3) if
words and ideas might offend the moral sensibilities of
the audience. In addition Tree was probably motivated
by a fourth consideration. Because of the addition of
elaborate pantomimic business and the necessity for complex set changes, an uncut Shakespearean text could have resulted in an insufferably long production. Tree, fearing that his audience would be bored by five hours of theatre, gave them less of Shakespeare and more of Tree in the forms of elaborate spectacle and added actor business.22

Tree and the Production—Directorial Embellishments

Involving the Actor

Just as Tree defended his cutting of the text on the basis of audience demands, he used the same reasoning against those who criticized his spectacular productions on the basis that presentations of Shakespeare ought to be simple:

Much has been written of late as to the manner in which the plays of Shakespeare should be presented. We are told in this connection that the ideal note to strike is that of "Adequacy." We are assured that we are not to apply to Shakespearean productions the same care, the same reverence for accuracy, the same regard for stage illusion, for mounting, scenery, and costume, which we devote to authors of lesser degree; that we should not, in fact, avail ourselves of those adjuncts which in these days science and art place at the manager's right hand; in other words that we are to produce our national poet's works without the crowds and armies, without the pride, pomp, and circumstance which are suggested in every page of the dramatist's work, and the absence of which Shakespeare himself so rightly or wrongly—(but I hope I shall be able to prove to you rightly) the public has spoken with no hesitating voice; the trend of its taste has undoubtedly been towards putting Shakespeare upon the stage as worthily and as munificently as the manager can afford.23
This managerial munificence was apparent in two basic areas of Tree's productions: (1) the directorial additions involving the actor and (2) the contributions of the scenic artists and musicians. In producing *The Winter's Tale* Tree achieved the first goal basically by means of three techniques: (1) dynamic crowd scenes, (2) pantomimic business, (3) exact and detailed blocking.

Tree's production of *Julius Caesar* in 1898 was his first major Shakespearean spectacle, and it earned for him the title of heir-apparent to Henry Irving. Pearson writes:

> It was generally agreed that no play of Shakespeare's within living memory had been mounted with such magnificence or acted so well, and that no crowd like that in the forum scene had been so skillfully and realistically handled.\(^24\)

By the time he produced *The Winter's Tale* in 1906, the crowd had become a stock-in-trade device at His Majesty's.

When the house lights dimmed before the beginning of *The Winter's Tale*, a chorus could be heard singing a sacred hymn. The curtain rose to reveal a crowd, arms extended heavenward and gathered about a statue of Apollo, raising their voices in praise. By means of this stunning effect, the crowd performed one of its major functions in the production, i.e., seizing the attention of the audience and overpowering it through visual and auditory display. The same effect was repeated in the final moments of the production, here with the twofold result of leaving a strong final impression and of
unifying the whole.

The crowd was also used at certain moments in the production to underscore and intensify the mood. In the trial scene (III, ii) the dramatic contribution of the crowd during the reading of the oracle is quite evident from the stage directions in the promptbook (I, i):

Leontes:
Break up the seals and read.
(Officer breaks seal with sword and hands sword to bearers)

Officer:
Hermione is chaste; (Excitement among crowd: officer turns and gets on steps and repeats) "Hermione is chaste;" (forte to the crowd who break out with loud cries of joy. Hermione rises and moves to statue arms upward and crying "Praised be Apollo," at end of second "Hermione is chaste.") Polixenes blameless: (shouts) Leontes a jealous tyrant; (very slight murmer) His innocent babe truly begotten; (great shout and movement among the crowd, which ceases when Leontes raises his arm. Officer turns to Leontes and kneels on bottom step.)

Leontes:
Hast thou read truth?

Officer:
Ay, my lord, even so as it is here set down. (Leontes snatches oracle, lifts it up in the air)

Leontes:
There is no truth at all i' th' Oracle. (distant thunder) The sessions shall proceed: this is mere falsehood. (Leontes throws oracle on the floor. Big crash of thunder. At flash of lightning all but Hermione fall on knees in great fright)

In this scene, the, the crowd serves to intensify the dramatic effect of Apollo's wrath, and, at the same time, it acts as a contrast to the defiance of Leontes.

The crowd was also used in musical and dance
sequences, which Tree included whenever possible. In *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare provided the perfect opportunity for the inclusion of these elements in the pastoral scene (IV,iv) by his stage directions which read simply, "Here a dance of Shepherds and Shepherdesses." The description of the dance in Tree's production, and recorded in his promptbook, requires nearly five hundred words and begins:

Music begins, to which enter: First satyrs, second children, third shepherds and shepherdesses. Three satyrs stand playing on the bank immediately in front of the cottage, three on the bank at the side of the cottage, left. They keep time by lifting legs alternately in a grotesque manner. The children dance in circles downstage left. Shepherds enter holding shepherdesses by the hand and move down the bank, join hands in a circle, dance to a common center, turn round and dance outward. Clap hands, bang crooks (each movement four times) turn partners then men take the girls by the waist and pas de basque around them (II,iii).

The final sentence describes the intended total effect:
"The whole dance must be lively, animated, and fairly noisy." As used in this manner, Tree's crowd must have had the theatrical appeal of the chorus of an opera or a musical comedy.

In Tree's production of *The Winter's Tale*, then, the crowd was used to: (1) impress the audience with big scale visual effects at critical dramatic moments in the production, (2) underscore and intensify mood, and (3) add spectacle and animation to those scenes employing music and dance.

As an actor, Tree was famous for the clever pieces of business with which he peppered every part he
played. His Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* was especially well seasoned with many little additions, and, for that play, he devised one of his most famous bits. Descending the steps of a terrace with stupendous self-importance, he tripped and fell headlong, but recovered his balance in the nick of time and managed to descend in a dignified sitting position. As a producer Tree used the same methods which had brought him success as an actor. Trusting in the inspiration of an unbridled imagination to suggest clever actions, he added pantomimic business to his productions at every opportunity. His pantomimes served to: (1) give special theatrical emphasis to the beginning and ending of scenes, (2) intensify the mood, (3) impress audiences with the pantomimes themselves and with his own managerial prowess.

Tree added dramatic power to the very first scene by following the hymn to Apollo with a lengthy series of actions which led up to the first line in the play:

At the end of the hymn principals turn and face audience. Hermione gets hold of Mamillius, moves down R, sits on stool next to throne. Leontes sits on throne. Polixenes sits on couch L. Soft music on orchestra during these moments. Camillo moves to C upstage and then to R.2.E. Enter Leontes' servant carrying cup and two attendants with jug. Camillo takes jug and offers it to Leontes who makes a gesture toward Polixenes at which Camillo turns and offers cup and just as he drinks—fanfare. Camillo takes back cup to Leontes' servant who exits with attendants R.2.E. Camillo turns to Bohemian Lord who had entered back L E at fanfare and is standing top of steps with a letter in his hand. Camillo takes letter and gives it to Polixenes. Bohemian Lord comes down steps and stands L. Polixenes rises opens letter and reads it while moving down L. Polixenes
turns, folds up letter and moves up C to address Leontes (I,i).

Another function of the pantomimic dramatization was to intensify the mood. To this end Tree introduced the newborn babe, Perdita, into the prison scene in which Emilia presented the child to Paulina. This action is not indicated in Shakespeare's stage directions, but Tree, in a program note, justified this added business by stating that Shakespeare had made references to the infant in the scene. His directions in the promptbook read:

Enter Emilia from cell with baby. Paulina turns and meets her C, takes baby, kisses it and turns to exit door L. In the doorway she turns, looks at Emilia, and by her expression reassures her of the child's safety, as she turns to exit (I,ii).

By far the most elaborate and inventive business in the entire production occurred at the beginning of the pastoral scene. For this setting the designers provided a cottage nestled beside a babbling stream, and Tree took advantage of the setting by introducing the kind of elaborate realistic business which had become a hallmark of his productions. Using a myriad of bucolic detail such as stepping stones in the real water, a grassy hill, and a live donkey, he succeeded in making this scene the "joy of the whole production" as well as making his own hand in it "everywhere patent." The directions in his promptbook read:

At cue from orchestra, first note of Perdita theme,—Curtain—Perdita is heard singing from cottage. Enter Florizel from back L.E., crosses stepping stones to front of cottage, moves down bank to first
tree; there stands listening to Perdita's song. At end of song, Florizel turns, moves up to cottage and throws flowers in at cottage window, then moves back to first tree. Perdita appears at cottage window. Florizel beckons her to come out, which she does. Perdita runs down bank to Florizel and takes both his hands. Florizel leads her up bank and across stepping stones, then off L U E. When thoroughly off, Autolycus is seen rising from bank of rushes 0, yawning, stretching. Autolycus moves around bank and down to 0. humming melody (viz:—"will you by any lace and tape" etc.), turns sees water. Moves on to 1st stepping stone, kneels, washes hands and arms then splashes water over face. Crawls on to the bank L., rises, takes handkerchief from pocket and while drying himself begins his speech (IV,iii).

To complete this rustic picture, the clown entered shortly thereafter leading a live donkey who proceeded to quench his thirst at the stream. Many of the reviewers described this scene and praised Tree for his work in it. Thomas Booth Haas writes:

Tree wished to create effects which would not only astound the audience in their transference to the stage of reality, but would emphasize his managerial art.

In the pastoral scene of The Winter's Tale he succeeded in doing just that.

As an actor, Tree worked from the inspiration of the moment rather than from careful study and laborious plan. As a producer he worked in the same manner, to the exasperation of many of those who worked with him, and his rehearsals seemed endless to everyone but himself. All sorts of people wandered about the stage or in and out of the auditorium; no one seemed to know anyone else's responsibilities; everyone seemed to interfere in other people's business. And yet, out of it all, Tree
shaped a beautifully harmonious production. His biographer, Hesketh Pearson, writes of him:

Out of chaos Tree created cosmos; out of vagueness came clarity; from conditions that reminded many people of a more than usually riotous playground, there emerged a production of admirable smoothness, carefully considered detail, and unrivalled magnificence. It seemed, and was, a miracle. But perhaps miracles cannot occur without a great deal of preliminary fumbling.30

The promptbook for The Winter's Tale is anything but chaotic, for the blocking of actors was recorded in a careful, exact, and detailed manner. Tree, himself, mentioned that accuracy (for the sake of illusion) is necessary.31 In Tree's mind this accuracy was not limited to the detail of scenic decor but affected the movement and business of actors as well. As a few lines of Leontes in I,iii, of the promptbook reveal, the movements of actors were begun on specific words and carefully executed:

Why then the world, and all that's in't is (move back two steps) nothing

It is: you lie, (turn to Camillo) you lie.
I say thou (move up to Camillo as speaking) liest Camillo,
And I hate thee. (strikes Camillo on chest)

The precision with which Tree shaped his production is also revealed in the careful coordination of the technical effects and the blocking. In I,ii, after Leontes plots with Camillo to poison Polixenes, he exits, but as he leaves, Apollo's wrath is dramatized by a thunder effect:
Leontes:
I will seem friendly, as thou hast advis'd me
(Leontes turns, moves up C. When his first foot
is on step, distant thunder. Leontes looks up,
gets on platform, turns, looks at Camillo, then
at first step of exit another peal of distant
thunder) (1,1).

Whenever possible, Tree utilized set properties
in the blocking and business of his actors. When Leontes
denied his distraction to Hermione (I,ii) and revealed
it to the confused Mamillius, Hermione had an interesting
piece of business:

(Hermione moves upstage R., dips hand in fountain,
then X's behind throne to throne and sits.)

So the care which Tree exercised in mounting his
productions was reflected in: (1) the carefully planned
actor movements, (2) the careful coordination of technical
effects and actor movements, and (3) the integration of
set properties and actor movement.

Tree and the Production—Scenery and Music

Tree always argued that Shakespeare wrote his
plays with elaborate stage effects in mind, that he
lamented the inadequacies of his own Elizabethan public
stage, and that he was attracted by the lavishness of
the private theatres of his day. By this reasoning Tree
attempted to justify his own use of elaborate and
expensive scenery. He believed that the public demanded
that he use all of the resources available to the theatre
in staging a production, and he further believed that
these demands were proper. Tree channeled most of his resources into the production of: (1) elaborate ornamental scenery, (2) highly naturalistic detail, and (3) extensive use of lighting.

Thomas Booth Haas, writing of the art of the period and applying it to the work of Beerbohm Tree, writes: "Decorative art indulged in a wealth of ornamental details to create a picture of opulence and novelty." Tree's settings for The Winter's Tale are an example of this type of art, especially the first palace scene with its canopied ceiling, classical columns and statuary, and painted background (Figure 9).

Tree was also given to the use of naturalistic detail for its startling effect. His reputation for this kind of novel addition was made in 1900 when, in producing A Midsummer Night's Dream, he used live rabbits in the wood-scene near Athens. In The Winter's Tale six years later, Tree used a live donkey who drank from a real stream in a woodland scene. Not content in merely displaying these live devices, Tree pointed out their "liveness" by integrating them into the action. Most reviewers agreed that the cottage setting was incomparably beautiful with its grassy turf, leafy borders, and romantic cottage nestled in a few stage trees (Figure 10).

Just as he took great care with the design and building of the scenery, Tree took equal pains to light
Figure 9. Design for Leontes' palace setting in Tree's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Entloven Collection. Victoria and Albert Museum and the executors of the Tree estate.
Figure 10. Setting for the pastoral scene in Tree's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum and the executors of the Tree estate.
it effectively. Comparing the different uses made of lighting among English actor-managers, Odell remarks:

In principle the men were at one; of course Kemble could not do with lamps and candles, nor Kean with gas, what Irving's contemporaries—Beerbohm Tree, especially—could do with electric light.34

The Winter's Tale promptbook reveals an extensive use of lighting instruments in various positions as indicated by the electric and lime plots which precede each scene. Evidently the technicians whom Tree employed must be credited for the great flexibility of the lighting system, for the producer knew practically nothing of their operation:

He never troubled to learn the names of things, such as battens and floats. He knew what he wanted, and got it, but could not tell how it was done.35

Auditory Effects

Tree's enthusiasm for music resulted in his making it an integral part of all his work. He employed some of England's finest composers, who contributed many charming musical pieces to his productions. The orchestra at His Majesty's made a major contribution to productions there, and, indeed, Tree used background music much as many modern filmmakers use music in their soundtracks.

The Winter's Tale had its own original score composed by Adolph Schmidt. Musical selections were
used to identify characters and to underscore or heighten sentimental or dramatically tense moments. For example, a "Perdita theme" was played at the beginning of the prison scene, repeated when Paulina presented the baby to Leontes, repeated again when Antigonus left the baby on the Bohemian seacoast, and repeated again at the beginning of the pastoral scene. Dramatic moments, heightened by background music, included Leontes' growing jealousy during the "Too hot, too hot" speech (I,i), Father Time's monologue (IV,i), and Perdita's flower speech (IV,iv). The orchestra was also used for special effects, such as fanfares during royal entrances or the "fateful trumpet" which sounded at the end of the trial scene for a Leontes sunken in defeat.

In addition to the instrumental effects, Tree made extensive use of vocal effects, e.g., in the hymn to Apollo. In addition, he began his third act with a hymn to Zeus sung by a chorus of Vestal Virgins gathered in a sacred grove. In both cases the hymn preceded the raising of the curtain, a piece of timing which undoubtedly gave increased emphasis to the song itself and added dramatic impact to the raising of the curtain. A musical alteration occurred when Tree gave Autolycus' song "When daffodils begin to peer" to Perdita who began the pastoral scene singing it. Once again Tree set the mood of a particular scene at its outset through song.

Other auditory effects in Tree's production of
The Winter's Tale included crowd noises and thunder, described earlier, as well as orchestrated music for set changes, musical bridges which not only bridged lengthy pauses in the production but also provided transitions in mood from one scene into the next.

Tree, then, relied heavily upon spectacle and sound to dazzle and please his audiences, but his use of lavish scenery caused certain critics to reject his work. Even today he is remembered as an old-style actor-manager whose excesses far outweighed his artistic merit. We must allow him to have the final words in his own defense, words he wrote after his production of The Tempest in 1904:

This brings me to the main purpose of the Personal Explanation. It has been freely stated that in the presentation of this play, I had but pandered to a vulgar public, incapable of appreciating the works of the poet, and that, in order to attract that public, I was driven to overload the play with a lavish expenditure of money. To this charge I reply by the simple statement of fact that its cost was half that expended on a modern play recently presented at His Majesty's Theatre. And I fail to see why Shakespeare should be treated with less care, with less reverence and with less lavishness of resource than is demanded by modern authors.36

Tree and the Critics--Reviews of The Winter's Tale

In reviewing Tree's production of The Winter's Tale, most of the newspaper and magazine critics were in agreement about three areas of the production: (1) the script, (2) the scenic effects, and (3) the acting.
Many of the reviews began with or included a statement to the effect that *The Winter's Tale* was one of Shakespeare's worst theatrical ventures. As proof of their position, critics cited the play's theatrical history, which they believed was not impressive:

And certainly Time has tried *The Winter's Tale*, and with its adverse judgment we have no desire to quarrel.37 *Pall Mall Gazette*

In the course of dramatic history *The Winter's Tale* has been found dull.38 *Daily Telegraph*

*The Winter's Tale* is a poor play. Charles Kean knew that well enough. ...39 *Manchester Guardian*

The play is seldom revived for obvious reasons.40 *Morning Leader*

When reviewers sought for more positive statements about the play, they usually focused upon the scenery:

The success of the production was largely due to the splendid stage pictures and imaginative treatment of an intractable play, and in this, the hand of Mr. Beerbohm Tree was everywhere patent.41 *Daily News*

The pastoral scene is the joy of the whole production distinguished though it is by other scenic triumphs.42 *The Glasgow Herald*

There can be little doubt about the popular success of *The Winter's Tale* at His Majesty's. It is everywhere a magnificent spectacle.43 *Daily Chronicle*

But the excellence of the interpretation and the beauty of the mise en scène over and over again redeemed the evening from tedium and the audience from dullness.44 *Daily Telegraph*

The most general reservation about the production concerned its mediocre acting. With the exception of Maud Tree, who was generally praised as Paulina, most of the actors were singled out by at least a few critics for
flawed performances. Even some of the compliments paid to Ellen Terry were colored with amusing reservations:

It is hardly possible to judge of the Ellen Terry's performance as a whole until she is enough at home in it to think of her performance rather than her words. Manchester Guardian

Leontes is an uninteresting character and Charles Warner in that role, makes the play drag. Truth

Miss Viola Tree will never be much of an actress until she thinks less of herself and more of the character she is playing. The World

We sighed for a subtle, a sane Leontes; for a blithe, a boisterous Autolycus. Smith's Liverpool Weekly

That the performance at His Majesty's is so frequently on the verge of the tedious, and several times oversteps that boundary, must be due, I am afraid, to the fact that the acting is not exceptional enough. The World

Conclusion

If Beerbohm Tree's production of The Winter's Tale was not his most memorable Shakespearean revival, neither was it his least successful. Combining the theatrical resources available to him in a manner which his audiences had come to expect, Tree maintained the tradition of expensive production which he had established at His Majesty's. But in addition to the anticipated lavish scenery and costumes, the hypnotic crowd scenes, the beautiful orchestrations, and the captivating pantomimic dramatizations, Tree had three other attractions to offer The Winter's Tale's audiences. Each
act had its own peculiar dramatic strength. In Act I it was Ellen Terry, who was not only a popular stage star but who was celebrating her fiftieth year in the theatre in this production. In Act II it was the entire pastoral scene with its naturalistic detail, its rustic pantomimes, and its lively songs and dances. Act III contained the play's most potent dramatic action, i.e. the statue scene. By making massive cuts in the scenes which preceded it, Tree proceeded quickly to the resurrection of Hermione and was thereby able to maintain the dramatic tension which he desired. Once again he had succeeded in creating the pleasant illusion which mesmerized audiences and kept them buying tickets at his box office. But at the core, he was an artist, as well as a businessman, and he worked to satisfy his artistic conscience rather than satiate his bank account.

Art's loftiest mission is to preserve for us, amid the din and clash of life, those illusions which are its better part—to epitomize for us the aspirations of mankind, to stifle its sobs, to nurse its wounds, to requite its unrequited love, to sing its lullaby to death. It is the unwept tear of the criminal, it is the ode of the antagonist to immortality, it is the toy of childhood, the fairyland of the mature, and gilds old age with the afterglow of youth.50
Footnotes Chapter IV


3Pearson, p. 114.


5Ibid., p. 46.

6Ibid., p. 179.

7Ibid., p. 57.

8Ibid., p. 65.

9Ibid., p. 63-64.

10Ibid., p. 67.


12Program for Tree's production of *The Winter's Tale*, p. 2, in Tree Collection, Box No. 188, The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

13Pearson, p. 119.


15Quoted in Pearson, p. 1.

16Tree, *Thoughts*, pp. 52-53.

17Ibid.

18*The Winter's Tale* Program, p. 3.
Footnotes Chapter IV cont.


20 All references to promptbook directions and editing are from a facsimile copy of Tree's 1906 promptbook for *The Winter's Tale* in this author's possession. The original is in the Tree Collection, Box No. 188, The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

21 Tree Promptbook, I,iii.

22 Tree, *Thoughts*, pp. 52-54.

23 Ibid., p. 43.


25 Ibid., p. 130.


29 Pearson, p. 197.

30 Ibid., p. 200.

31 Tree, *Thoughts*, p. 65.

32 Haas, p. 163.

33 Pearson, p. 128.


35 Pearson, p. 199.
Footnotes Chapter IV cont.

36 Tree, Thoughts, p. 222.

37 Pall Mall Gazette, September 3, 1906, p. 3.

38 Daily Telegraph, September 3, 1906, p. 4.


40 Morning Leader, September 3, 1906, p. 5.


42 The Glasgow Herald, September 3, 1906, p. 5.


44 Daily Telegraph, September 3, 1906, p. 4.

45 Manchester Guardian, September 3, 1906, p. 5.


50 Tree, Thoughts, p. 119.
"Altogether the most distinguished and incomparably the most cultivated person whom circumstances had driven into the theatre at that time"—George Bernard Shaw

If ever anyone provided a perfect contrast to Herbert Beerbohm Tree in temperament, talent, and artistic ideals, that man was Harley Granville-Barker. Although they were contemporary London producers, and, indeed, produced The Winter's Tale within six years of one another, they were separated by their artistic philosophies and theatrical aims. In his biography of Barker, C.B. Purdom concludes his considerations of Granville-Barker as a stage producer with the judgment:

He was a drama producer in the true sense, in contrast to the theatre producer. Irving, Tree, Boucicault, even Barrie were theatrical producers and their work may be contrasted with his. Barker was a scholar whose highest admiration for the play's script was truly the essential thing; Bernard Shaw pointed out that fact (and perhaps took a jab at Tree) in an interview with the Observer just after Barker's production of The Winter's Tale had opened:
You see, to Barker the play’s the thing; and consequently in his theatre the stage is the thing. People used to talk of the tyranny of the actor-manager, gloating over his rows of well-dressed deadheads, and oblivious and contemptuous to the Punch and Judy show in the corner called the stage. In Barker’s house the stage is triumphant; the play is triumphant . . .

Barker's devotion to his playwright was always deep and complete; consequently, he considered all of the theatre's resources—including its actors—as servants of the playwright. At times, this passion to become totally subservient to the playwright's intention resulted in his ignoring or sacrificing theatrical values which often enhance a play's stage worthiness. Purdom makes this point:

What was intended in the play, what was implicit in it, its content and dramatic meaning, Barker never went outside. That is why weak and shallow plays in his hands remained exactly what they were. He was not the sort of producer to make one kind of play into another. His failures were almost always the failure of the play.4

A second point of division between the actor-manager, Tree, and the scholar-producer, Barker, was their differing views of the actor's contribution to a production. To Tree, theatrical tricks were a valuable theatrical asset in his ability to attract patrons to the box office. To Barker the actor was the primary theatrical artist whose task it was to submit himself totally to the demands of the play. Purdom explains the actor's position in the total scheme of a Barker production:
Barker put the play before the producer, just as he put the part before the actor. The latter was as revolutionary a principle of stage management as the former, for actors took it for granted that the script of a part was there in the first place to enable them to display themselves, and if they were star actors, to regard the entire play as no more than a vehicle for their personalities. With Barker, because the play itself took precedence, stars were not required.  

A third component of the theatrical event which Tree and Barker regarded from totally different points of view was the audience. Tree catered to a large popular audience by using proven traditional production techniques in the presentation of classical plays, foreign commercial successes, or the works of domestic popular playwrights. Barker hoped to create a selective enlightened audience which, by exposure to truly artistic dramatic presentations and accompanied by a study of the art of theatre, could appreciate the finest drama. He spelled out his hopes for the ideal theatre audience in his book, *The Exemplary Theatre* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1922, p. 254):  

Crowded houses are exhilarating, but the cause of the crowding must be any management's concern. What is wanted is a determinant. This can be found, it would seem, in the audience—that essential part even of the artistic completion of a play. But by no means in the haphazard collection of people that we now describe by the term. If the audience is a completing part of the play's performance, obviously its quality and its constitution matter ... Therefore, not the least of the tasks of any theatre is to develop out of the haphazard, cash-yielding crowd a body of opinion that will be sensitive, appreciative, and critical. And when such an audience has been formed it can be regarded as an integral, if not too rigidly calculable, part of the theatre's constitution.
When Herbert Beerbohm Tree and Harley Granville-Barker looked at the same theatre they saw two different things. Tree, accepting the stage as he found it, saw it as a medium by which the great mass of people could be entertained and uplifted by expensive, elaborate productions acted by star performers. Barker, dreaming what theatre could be, saw it as an art medium where cultural awareness might be formed in the minds of the audience through the works of a gifted dramatist and played by talented actors. Barker, however, saw this ideal only in his mind's eye until 1912 when he produced his Shakespearean revivals at the Savoy Theatre. In these productions he introduced an approach to Shakespearean presentation which grew out of his carefully conceived aesthetic philosophy.

Barker's major goal, then, in his productions was to accomplish the intent of the dramatist. To achieve this goal, he made a startling innovation in the production of Shakespeare on the English stage—the presentation of the entire text. He gave his reasons in an interview with The Evening News: (September 24, 1912, p. 4):

We first take the play and the whole play. Shakespeare, an actor, wrote it for the stage to be played, not for the closet merely to be read. To play it a great simplification of our stagecraft is necessary, and to a certain extent a going back to the restrictions and limitations of his time.

In the comment above, Barker reveals another extremely important point of his aesthetic, a point on
which most of his other innovations were based. He believed that in order to understand properly the plays of Shakespeare, and, consequently, to be able to produce them effectively, one had to understand and attempt to simulate the conditions under which they were originally produced. As a scholar, Barker was well aware of the basic nature of Elizabethan stagecraft, and as a man of the theatre he knew its importance in shaping the drama of its time. He wrote:

Very obviously a particular sort of stagecraft must be rooted in the opportunities of its particular stage. But I suggest that the whole fabric of a play's artistry will ultimately rest here.  

Barker reasoned that the Elizabethan playhouse made certain demands upon its playwrights which necessitated specific production techniques from the modern producer. The first was that the physical arrangement of Shakespeare's platform stage forced a greater focus of attention on the actor's creation and presentation of character than on scenic elements. Barker insisted that illusion in Shakespeare was centered in the character which the actor created for the audience:

But how to turn a flagrant publicity—the disillusionary daylight, the platform for a stage, the spectators as aware of each other as of the actor—to such intimate account? Here the discovery is consummate in a seeming paradox. Let all other aid to illusion be absent and the illusion lodged in the actor himself will only grip us the more strongly. Set him in our midst, make him one of ourselves, fix our attention wholly on him, and we shall come to feel so at one with him that not only will the barrier between our actual world and his imagined world the more easily vanish, but the innermost of
the character he plays will be just what it will be easiest for him to reveal and for us to respond to. The discovery was the more readily made because, as we saw, all illusion upon the platform stage inevitably centered on the actor. Barker believed that it was not possible in the contemporary illusionistic theatre for actors to establish a relationship with the audience that Shakespeare intended. In the realistic theatre, the actors are isolated within a picture frame in another world, a world of visual illusion. The specific setting is very important to the play's meaning and has an effect upon the thoughts and feelings of its characters. In Shakespeare, exact locale for individual scenes is seldom important.

In an attempt to overcome the drawbacks of the illusionistic theatre, Barker extended the apron over the orchestra pit at the Savoy Theatre to try to bring his actors closer to the audience. He also neutralized the scenery and costumes by avoiding historical accuracy and by permitting the visual aspects to be suggestive rather than explicit.

Another feature of the Elizabethan stage which Barker wished to renew was its stress upon the poetry of a play. Shakespeare used poetry to paint his settings and to stimulate the imagination and emotions of his audience with poetry's magical rhythms. Barker felt that verse for the Elizabethan dramatist was more than a convention, for with the actor prominently displayed on a platform stage, language was the primary device for
capturing and holding the audience's attention. Barker indicated his feeling for the importance of poetry in Shakespeare's plays in production, when he wrote in his preface to *The Player's Shakespeare: A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

And one piece of practical advice may be offered. Let the producer first bring his work to completion upon Shakespeare's own terms, and none other. If he can perfect the music of the poetry and the grace of the play's movement, not so much else will need doing.

Barker's attempt to emphasize Shakespeare's poetry in his Savoy productions was evident in the innovative speech patterns of his actors. Critics complained that many of Shakespeare's lines were lost because the actors spoke too rapidly. Barker, who was convinced that the enunciation of his actors was quite good, had simply introduced a new rhythm pattern in the delivery of the lines, a pattern which was dictated by the verse itself. Barker continually emphasized the importance of a play's rhythm, for, to his mind, rhythm was an expression of meaning. Purdom notes:

What attracted people in Barker's production and caused them to be so well remembered (as I among others remember them) was precisely their element of rhythm: repetition of the rise and fall of the action, variations in time, the relation of speech to movement—in fact, the action as a whole... As Barker sought to establish it in his productions, it was the meaning of the play.

One other convention of the platform stage, the convention of place, had a very particular effect on the shaping of Shakespeare's plays. With no realistic scenery
to be shifted, Shakespeare was able to achieve a continuous flow of action in his plays while he shifted the locale frequently. Barker believed that the illusionistic stage with its cumbersome realistic scenery was unsuitable for the presentation of the almost cinematic, free-flowing Shakespearean drama. To achieve the speed and rhythm which he believed Shakespeare intended in his plays, Barker altered the Savoy stage so that it contained many of the features of an Elizabethan platform stage. He eliminated the need for realistic scenery by dividing the stage into three horizontal areas which were separated by curtains. By merely drawing a curtain and changing a few properties a scene could be changed, and, in the process, Barker was able to achieve a pace in his productions which, he believed, approached that of the Globe.

As the distinguished and cultivated gentleman whom Shaw respected so much, Harley Granville-Barker refused to accept the rather mediocre theatre which he found in England at the turn of the century. He dreamed of a theatre which, offering more than mere entertainment, would be a vital force in the improvement of society. He and his circle of associates, which included Gilbert Murray, George Bernard Shaw, and James M. Barrie, envisioned a theatre of truly educational value which would further the understanding and appreciation of genuine dramatic art. His productions at the Court
Theatre from 1904 to 1906, as well as his Shakespearean revivals at the Savoy Theatre, illustrated the type of drama and theatrical technique which he felt were worthy of dramatic art. In his revival of *The Winter's Tale*, he premiered his production techniques for Shakespearean revivals, and, in a very real way, he initiated a style for English productions of Shakespeare which still has a strong influence on contemporary stage production of Shakespeare's works.

Granville-Barker Recreates *The Winter's Tale*

"To say that the production *The Winter's Tale* startled London on Saturday 21 September, was to put it mildly."—C.B. Purdom

In 1907 Barker took a lease on the Savoy Theatre for the theatrical season during which he produced, *You Never Can Tell* and *The Devil's Disciple* by Shaw, *Joy* by Galsworthy, and Euripides' *Medea*. His fondest wish was to stage a Shakespearean play during that season, but Bernard Shaw was completely against it. In 1912 he took a lease on the same theatre, and this time, urged by his actress-wife, Lilah McCarthy, to produce Shakespeare, he staged *The Winter's Tale* as his premiere production for the season. At last Barker was able to put into practice the theories that he preached about the production of Shakespeare's plays. His staging of *The*
Winter's Tale was highly controversial, and the review in the Observer indicated the importance of the controversy:

What is of real importance is that the experiment has caused the widest attention, and that the controversy between the upholders of the effete convention which passes as stage realism and the small but enthusiastic band of reformers has awakened public curiosity in the important question at issue. The strife is serious. If Mr. Granville-Barker should lose, the birth of the art of the theatre may be delayed for ten or twenty years. If he wins, other producers will have to fall into line with him, and we shall be able to enjoy poetic drama in poetic setting.15

The critical controversy mainly focused upon two aspects of the production: (1) the "decoration" and costumes for the play, and (2) the rate of speed at which the actors spoke.

Although most of the critics were inclined to accept the new style of scenery and costumes as a new direction in Shakespearean production, they were divided in their judgments about the actual effect of the "decoration" in this particular production. The Pall Mall Gazette was completely positive in its praise for the scenery:

The setting of The Winter's Tale submitted at the Savoy on Saturday night, has, at any rate, accomplished one thing. It has proved the truth of what Mr. Gordon Craig has been saying for years past—namely that the very simple scenery can suggest not only varied moods and "atmospheres," but also very splendid palaces and very humble and satisfying cottages.16

The reviewer for the Daily Chronicle had just the opposite reaction:
The production has not managed to free itself from the bane of the modern stage—to make a "boom" out of Shakespeare. It is the same old story—scene after scene overdone, over-strained, over asserted, out of tone and sympathy with the play... The "decorations"—as Mr. Barker proudly calls the Savoy scenery—are just as much a distraction as ordinary painted canvas, if not more so.17

Almost all of the critics took Barker to task for the "breakneck speed" of the actors' speech. The reaction of the reviewer for The Tatler typifies this response:

Moreover Mr. Barker's way of producing Shakespeare in a hurry gives the impression not so much of witnessing The Winter's Tale as a winter's whirlwind. Everybody speaks at such a rate that often they are inaudible. They stand reciting Shakespeare's lovely verses as if Mr. Barker stood behind them with a whip and they were within five minutes of closing time. Sometimes it is very effective—occasionally one would like to cry out, "What, what?" like a deaf man.18

Barker replied to these charges in an interview with the Evening News:

The first thing I aimed at was to try to get the thing alive at any cost. You can't do that without swiftness. You can't have it with the old style of mouthing and mawing with the "effective" pauses and that sort of thing. Swiftness was the Shakespearean tradition. You had the whole play between the three o'clock dinner and the seven o'clock supper, a matter of three hours, say.19

Although there were no stars in Barker's production of The Winter's Tale, he engaged an exceptionally talented cast to portray its characters. Yielding to Lilah McCarthy's wish to perform Shakespeare, he cast her in the role of Hermione. Well known at this time to London playgoers, Miss McCarthy had created many of Shaw's heroines, and, in fact, he had written a few of
them with her in mind. The critics found her Hermione beautifully majestic but restrained to the point of coldness. The reviewer for the Daily Telegraph expressed a typical reaction:

Lilah McCarthy's Hermione in beauty and dignity was altogether admirable . . . What she seemed to lack was tenderness.20

Henry Ainley, himself an established London actor, played the role of Leontes, stressing the acute psychological problems of the king. The reviewer for the Pall Mall Gazette thought the character was portrayed as an hystero-epileptic21 while the critic for the Daily News and Leader accused him of being a neurasthenic.22 The reviewer for the Referee expressed the most penetrating and sympathetic analysis of Ainley's characterization:

. . . rightly there is no show of real strength, but there is passion and obstinacy and spasmodic fierceness, the weak man's counterfeits of strength, and in the days of his remorse, a most affecting gentleness.23

Probably the most critical attention was focused on a refreshing newcomer, Cathleen Nesbit, who was introduced to London audiences in the role of Perdita. She played the character as a rollicking country girl, but in their criticism of her performance, London reviewers indicated an unwillingness to accept this fresh concept of the role. Disturbed by her earthy vitality, the critics, however, seemed to be captivated by her beauty as was the reviewer for the Daily Chronicle who found her to be a "charming little actress but far
The critic for the Westminster Gazette, although distracted by her exposed legs, managed a judgment of her characterization:

Cathleen Nesbit represents Perdita as a merry country girl without a trace of anything to indicate her noble birth, except, of course, her physical characteristics. She romped about wearing an ugly costume which revealed a great deal too much bare leg and her poetical speeches seemed rather strange in her mouth.

The reviewer for the Standard had just the opposite response:

Miss Cathleen Nesbit was the outstanding delight of The Winter's Tale. She like the others spoke quickly, but her words were winged with meaning.

Other members of the cast included Esme Beringer as Paulina, Arthur Witby as Autolycus, Charles Graham as Polixenes, Herbert Hewetson as Time, Leon Quartermaine as the Clown, H.O. Nicholson as the Old Shepherd, and Dennis Neilson-Terry as Florizel.

Barker's production of The Winter's Tale opened at the Savoy Theatre on Saturday evening, September 21, 1912. Despite all of the critical controversy that it caused, the production failed to attract audiences and on November 2, after sustaining heavy losses at the box office, it closed. However, The Winter's Tale proved to be merely a prelude for Barker's next Shakespearean offering, Twelfth Night, which was immensely successful. The two productions earned for Barker a prominence he had not yet known in the London theatre. Purdom writes of his success:
The two Shakespearean productions put Barker into an unassailable position as the leading London stage producer: not manager or actor or dramatist, but producer, the man in whose hands the play became not simply a practicable thing, but a work of art. Even those who did not like what he did admitted his great talents. The Barker star was high in the theatrical firmament.

Barker Interprets Shakespeare's Text

"The Winter's Tale, as I see its writing, is complex, vivid, abundant in the variety of its mood and pace and colour, now disordered, now at rest, the product of a mind rapid, changing and over-full. I believe its interpretation should express all that." — Harley Granville-Barker

Barker has achieved literary fame largely through his prefaces to Shakespeare's plays which he published leisurely throughout the 1920's, 30's, and 40's. These rather lengthy critical works still maintain the attention and respect of producers and scholars today, and it is upon the prefaces that the greatest measure of Barker's fame rests. But few people realize that his first attempt at prefacing Shakespeare appeared in his acting version of The Winter's Tale issued in 1912. In this preface Barker stressed the importance of the play's tragicomic structure and praised Shakespeare's mature technique in achieving the difficult generic blend.

Barker saw great importance in the magical passing of sixteen years which occurs in The Winter's Tale during the interval between the third and fourth acts. He felt that Shakespeare had shifted moods from
the first three acts' gloom to the last two acts' brightness, and upon this determination he discovered the play's nature. He wrote in his preface:

But if this is a masterpiece, one questions several essentials of its making. One may wonder at first at the break in the interest made by the passing of sixteen years. To a comedy this would be deadening; for in comedy, no doubt, the closer the action the better. To a tragedy it might be fatal; for once well-started, a tragedy must not relax tension. But in tragicomedy, as this is, is it not just some jar that is needed to break the play from one mood to the other?30

These concepts led Barker to allow only one intermission where the play seemed to demand it, between the third and fourth acts.

Barker was fascinated with Shakespeare's use of bold theatrical devices in his later plays.31 In The Winter's Tale the playwright created the character, Time, to achieve a magical advance of sixteen years in the middle of the play. Of this character Barker wrote:

It must have pleased Shakespeare, I think, to use once more, with mature skill, a device of his prentice days . . . the artifice of the device attunes us to the artifice of the story . . . a simple way to bridge dramatically the sixteen years.32

Just as Shakespeare created Time as an obvious theatrical character, Barker presented him as an artifice of the story, made up "like some bizarre figure out of commedia dell'arte"33 (Figure 11).

Barker's concept of tragicomedy did not imply the welding of a three-act tragedy to a two-act comedy. To his mind the first three acts of The Winter's Tale
Figure 11. Herbert Heweston as Time in Granville-Barker's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
were not totally tragic, as undoubtedly the last two are not entirely comic. He based his belief upon the lack of tragic stature of Leontes and discussed it in his preface:

There is one more touch in the first half of the play, designed, I believe, to keep the tragedy a little less than tragic. Leontes' jealousy is never, as is Othello's, a strength, even a seeming strength; it is even less than a spiritual—it is a nervous weakness, a mere hysteria ... The man is a very drunkard of passion. Only in a passion of anger or cruelty, cold or hot, can he be sure of himself at all. Let him relax and he is as he says, a feather for every wind that blows ... Even in the scene of the trial when the tyrant breaks down, there is something a little ridiculous in his breathless confession to the surrounding courtiers, his frantic promises to undo what he has done.34

Henry Ainley's portrayal of Leontes as a mentally disturbed monarch resulted in the less-than-tragic character which Barker had envisioned. In the Savoy production, the King of Sicily was a demented human being rather than a motiveless jealous tyrant.

Granville-Barker began his preface of *The Winter's Tale* with the exploration of a fact—the play's tragi-comic genre. His second preoccupation was an attempt to solve a fascinating mystery—why was Shakespeare attracted to Robert Greene's story of Dorastus and Fawnia as potential dramatic material? Barker deduced that Shakespeare saw three opportunities for theatrical excitement in Greene's romantic tale: (1) the character of Leontes, (2) the sheep shearing, and (3) the potentiality of the statue scene.
George Bernard Shaw and Barker both believed that Shakespeare had not presented a true picture of jealousy when he wrote *Othello*, and that he knew it. They believed that *The Winter's Tale* was his attempt to present a man who was jealous by his impetuous nature, not the victim of a calculated scheme. Barker wrote in his preface:

> Othello was not really a study of jealousy but rather a study of a primitive and noble nature, building its happiness upon a civilized ideal, and of the catastrophe that follows the destruction of the ideal . . . Leontes was a chance to write a true study of jealousy, perverse, ignoble, pitiable . . . jealousy upon any foundation is less than jealousy.\(^35\)

Ainley's Leontes, humanized by psychological problems, was theatrically fascinating and dominated the play's first three acts. One cannot forget that six years earlier, Tree made Hermione the subject of the first part of the play which featured the noted actress, Ellen Terry.

To Barker's mind, Shakespeare was fascinated by Greene's Bohemian sheep shearing feast because of its similarity to rural Warwickshire, the county of his youth. Barker noted:

> Since the writing of *Henry IV, Part I*, he had not been able to bring English country life into the theatre to any purpose . . . Bohemia is pure Warwickshire, and there are signs that Autolycus is something of a portrait.\(^36\)

In Barker's production the sheep shearing scene was dramatically compelling, but, unlike the romantic
rustics in previous productions, Barker's shepherds and shepherdesses were realistically boisterous and wild. Critical reaction to this scene was somewhat unfavorable, for certain reviewers seemed disappointed not to have their traditional expectations fulfilled. The critic for the *Daily Chronicle* wrote:

> The whole sheep shearing scene is a full-size marionette show, all clamour and colour, with tender sweetness of the idyl replaced by jostle and jerk . . . it hardly expresses "a flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme." 37

A favorable notice in the *Standard* conveys some of the spirit which the scene may have transmitted to the members of the audience:

> The revels are tremendous. Never has there been an orgy of such high spirits. Here we became Elizabethan. The dances, the tempest of movement, the utter abandon of it all, are things to be seen. It is not beautiful but it is colossal . . . Toes, fingers, eyelids (most are barefooted) tell the story. 38

Barker found Shakespeare's theatrical invention of Hermione as a living statue to be an ingenious piece of dramaturgy. Barker believed that this particular stage effect was so crude that poor writing might have spoiled it, but Shakespeare, because he prepared the audience perfectly for the scene through Paulina's steward in the previous scene, converted this raw material into dramatic gold. 39 Far from being the spectacular splash that it had been in previous traditional productions, this scene in the Savoy production was a model of simplicity. Barker set the scene before
the downstage curtain and placed a curtained pedestal before it, stage right. One critic remarked that the "most delightful scenes were those right at the end, done unaggressively in front of a simple curtain" (Figure 12).

Although Barker is usually credited with having produced uncut texts of Shakespeare's plays, he actually did make cuts in _The Winter's Tale_—fourteen and one-half lines. A critic for the _Outlook_ examined Barker's acting version of the play and concluded that five lines were cut because they were bawdy without being helpful, four more for probably the same reason, five because they are obscure, and one-half because Mr. Barker had a private reason.

Barker expressed his devotion to Shakespeare's text in a letter which he sent to the _Daily Mail_ shortly after the opening of _The Winter's Tale_:

> There is no Shakespearean tradition. At most we can deduce from a few scraps of knowledge what Elizabethan methods were, while as to our modern production deluxe—dislike or admire—I am sure Betterton, Garrick, or Kean would be far too breathless with amazement to take up a part in them at any short notice. We have the text to guide us, half a dozen stage directions, and that is all. I abide by the text and the demands of the text, and beyond that I claim freedom.
Figure 12. Photograph of the statue scene in Granville-Barker's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Barker and His Actors

"Barker's approach to the theatre and to drama from first to last was that of an actor."—C.B. Purdom

Granville-Barker, who began his theatrical career as an actor, always maintained a great respect for the actor's art and for the actor's essential contribution to the theatre. As a producer who worked patiently but persistently with his performers, Barker formulated a few basic guidelines for an actor to follow in approaching his work.

First and foremost, he believed that theatre was the result of the collaborative efforts of the actor and the dramatist in which the former totally surrenders himself to the work of the latter. Barker felt that not merely interpretation but collaboration was demanded in this relationship. He wrote that "much more than interpretation is asked of the actor. He has to embody the character." Consequently, Barker had no use for the personality-star type of performer, and, in fact, in his productions at the Court and Savoy Theatres, he employed no stars. His ideal actor was an artist who could crawl into the skin of his character with the sole purpose of bringing the playwright's work to life on the stage.

The second demand which Barker made of an actor was that he work and study very hard to possess a deep
understanding of his role and its relationship to the play. He wished this work to be done in cooperation with the other actors in the drama. In his book, The Exemplary Theatre, he writes:

To find the inferential knowledge of it [the play] that he needs the actor must search, so to speak, behind the scenes, before the rise of the curtain and even after its fall. This is a commonplace; and all actors who can be said to study their parts at all, not merely to learn them, do, instinctively if not deliberately, work in this way. But unless they do so in concert with their fellows they really more often harm the rest of the play than help the whole.45

Third, Barker abhorred automatic acting as he found it in most West End productions, and he demanded that an actor, having studied his role carefully, build the character's traits into his own personality. The desired goal was for spontaneous playing arising from profound understanding of character rather than a mechanical repetition of theatrical tricks. Writing in the New Quarterly in 1909, he said:

... if acting cannot seem spontaneous, it is nothing. It can only seem so by the actor coming fresh to his work, his whole personality like a sensitive plate, which he exposes untouched to the light of his conception of the part. The image produced, valuable according to the rightness of the conception, will vary from time to time according to the condition of the plate, but each time it must be a fresh image.46

Barker applied his general views on acting to the performance of Shakespeare in particular. First, since theatre was to be a collaborative effort between dramatist and actor, Shakespeare, of course, had to be
the guiding influence, and all work was directed to the discovery and accomplishment of his intent. He rejected the popular notion that a Shakespearean tradition existed in England, and he looked back to the Elizabethan stage, not to the nineteenth-century stage, for his model for playing. Second, Barker claimed that Shakespeare's greatest talent was for the creation of complex, subtle characterizations, and he encouraged his actors to probe the characters carefully, from fresh viewpoints, in an attempt to understand them and to portray them as true human beings. Inspired by the composition of Shakespeare's acting company, The King's Men, Barker strove for a true repertory company of actors who could achieve an ensemble spirit in the performance of the Bard's plays. In an address at King's College in 1931, he said:

... we need a company of actors with something of the quality of The King's Men, and brought to such a pitch of excellence as their years of cooperation and discipline must have brought them.47

Third, Barker felt that the conditions of the Elizabethan theatre demanded a swiftness in playing. In an interview with the Evening News, he said:

Swiftness is the classic tradition. You get it, for instance, at the Comedie Francaise—in the whole of the French Classic school and swiftness alone gives the life I aim at. Tragedy is, in the main, a swift, not a slow business.48

And in his preface to The Winter's Tale, he wrote:

But that any and every Elizabethan play, any drama of rhetoric and the platform stage, should be played
as swiftly and uninterruptedly as possible of that I have not the shadow of doubt. Therefore for The Winter's Tale I made the obvious and natural division into two parts, and allow for one pause only.49

Barker applied his theories of playing Shakespeare to his production of The Winter's Tale and startled the London audiences with his innovations. I have already noted how Henry Ainley and Cathleen Nesbit employed fresh approaches to the creation of their characters. Although I have been unable to find a detailed account of how the actors in this production went about preparing their roles, Purdom does mention that Barker made great demands of his players in The Winter's Tale:

He rehearsed the company until every member was worn out, and drove poor Henry Ainley almost demented. Left to himself at first and restricted in his movements, that experienced actor had no idea beyond reciting his part; only when Barker took him seriously in hand did he start to act and to put into his playing the passion that rendered him prostrate. Yet the result was worth all the pains. Every player added to his or her reputation. All were raised to the highest level; some to heights never before thought possible for them.50

In his 1912 season at the Savoy, Barker took a step toward the realization of his dream of forming a "King's Men Troupe" by hiring a company which played in repertory during that season. The same cast for The Winter's Tale opened with Twelfth Night on November 15, and apparently the actors began to develop the ensemble spirit for which Barker had strived.

The swiftness which Barker tried to achieve in his production evidently forced the actors to increase
their rate of speaking, confounding the ears of the critics. To some of them the actors appeared to have been reduced to puppets as the critic for the Daily News and Leader remarked:

The real expression of the drama—the poet's verse—is killed by spiritless gabbling. Acting is sacrificed to a false idea of the need of rapidity of action. The dramatis personae are the merest puppets.\footnote{51}

The reviewer for the Globe echoed the above sentiments:

\ldots we resent the impertinence of a scheme which gives us stage colour without stage movement, wonderful dresses, clothing not Shakespeare's characters but Granville-Barker's automata \ldots \footnote{52}

Nothing could have been further from Barker's aim than to have his actors become automata. Such reviews must have upset him greatly or perhaps he was amused by them. But even more disturbing to the man who put so much emphasis on acting and so little on the other areas of production was the damning judgment made by the reviewer who wrote: "A critic at the Savoy must deal with the acting last for it is the least important."\footnote{53} A more heartening and hopefully more accurate comment concerning the acting was written in The Sportsman:

Shakespeare has not been played in this fashion before. It is a fashion that should establish him in renewed and greater favor. The play for once is made to be the thing. The setting is a secondary matter. This puts the actor back into his rightful place, and the scene painter back—emphatically back—into his.\footnote{54}
Barker and "the Decorations" for The Winter's Tale

"As to the scenery as scenery is mostly understood—canvas realistically painted—I would have none of it."—H. Granville-Barker

Although Granville-Barker viewed the actor's contribution to dramatic production as collaborative and primary, he considered the work of the scenic artist to be supportive and secondary. While he worked closely and carefully with his actors to realize the dramatist's intent, he allowed his scenic and costume designers great freedom to work as they saw fit. As a producer his main concern with the scenery and costumes was that they not stand apart from the production and be recognized for themselves. He clearly expressed his opinion of this subject in The Exemplary Theatre:

But far better four boards, creaky and unscrubbed, as a stage for our passion than that it should be choked by a collection of bric-a-brac. And what else do scenery, furniture, costumes, however fine in themselves, accumulate into if they have not the right and intimate relation to the production as a whole? And in nineteen cases out of twenty their relation should be subordinate also. For to surround a play with foreign bodies of scenery and costume which, alien in origin and in intention, only obscure its meaning while they pretend to illustrate it, is an artistic crime.

Barker was totally against the use of realistic scenery in the production of Shakespearean plays, but he was also aware of the fact that the proscenium theatre had become the conventional stage of the twentieth
century. In view of the vast differences between the theatres of the seventeenth and twentieth centuries and because the craft of the playwright is somewhat determined by the theatre for which he writes, Barker believed that the modern producer of a Shakespearean play was faced with a dilemma—"deforming Shakespeare's plays to suit our theatre or reforming our theatre to suit his plays."^7

He further reasoned:

We are agreed that the deformed Shakespeare of the realistic stage must go . . . but if we abolish this, we had better consider—as reformers are not apt to—exactly what we mean to put in its place.58

What Barker put in its place was a stage which incorporated some of the physical features of the Elizabethan playhouse. For his production of The Winter's Tale, Barker altered the stage of the Savoy Theatre in an attempt to make it less of a proscenium theatre and more of a platform stage. First, he removed the footlights and extended the apron over the orchestra pit in a semi-circular pattern. This extra playing area, painted white and two steps lower than the main stage, was added in order to get the actors closer to the audience for the purpose of establishing a more direct interaction between them.

Second, he reduced the size of the proscenium opening and stripped it of its elaborate ornamentation and gaudy colors. Barker was trying to de-emphasize the picture frame nature of the stage by making the proscenium arch less conspicuous.
Third, he added a door on both sides of the proscenium opening which actors reached by going through the stalls. In the absence of a promptbook for Barker's production, I have not been able to determine exactly how they were employed but reviewers did point out that the actors made use of them.

Fourth, he installed stage lights on the dress and upper circles in order to illuminate actors on the apron. Also, in keeping with the presentational nature of his stage arrangement, he made no attempt to conceal these new lighting unit positions.

As the audience members took their seats at the Savoy Theatre for Barker's production of The Winter's Tale, they must have been startled by the stark white act curtain, proscenium arch, and apron which dazzled their eyes. When the curtain rose on designer Norman Wilkinson's first setting, they discovered that the whiteness in front of the act curtain was carried back and included in the color scheme of the palace of Leontes, the play's first scene. This setting, a series of levels, columns, and curtains, painted in white and gold, was "a study in whitewash and lovely curtains" as one reviewer described it. In addition to depicting the palace, this setting (with changes in furniture) was also used for the Mamillius scene (II,i) and for the trial of Hermione (III,ii)(Figure 13).
Figure 13. Photograph of the palace setting in Barker's production of "The Winter's Tale." Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Although many of the scenes were played before a downstage curtain near the proscenium arch, Wilkinson designed one other deep setting for the sheep shearing feast. This scene was dominated by a Warwickshire-inspired thatched cottage ("A model bungalow from the Ideal Homes Exhibition" as The Times reviewer described it) decorated in wicker and white (Figure 14).

If Norman Wilkinson's settings were a sudden departure from the scenic conventions of the time, Albert Rothenstein's costumes were even more startling and controversial. Barker and Rothenstein had decided not to use classical dress for the characters because they felt that it would offend the very spirit of the play. But to spur their imaginations they decided upon Renaissance Classical—classic dress as Shakespeare would have seen it. Once they had settled upon that style, Barker got the idea that Julio Romano—the artist who reportedly carved the statue of Hermione—would be their pattern designer. The result was an array of bizarre and bold costumes which—as with most elements of this production—drew mixed critical response. The reviewer for the Manchester Guardian referred to the costumes as "studiously original," and his notice gives some indication of the stunning mixture of patterns and colors which marked Rothenstein's costumes:

The artist has left his fancy roam over every period and many pictorial modes from Botticelli to Bakst and Agustus John. Their note of unity is
Figure 14. Photograph of the pastoral setting in Barker's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
gaiety in colour, which is insisted on throughout and alike in dresses and wigs; the aim is to be pictorial rather than naturalistic. The designs are from all periods. Leontes is fifteenth-century in the first scene, Byzantine in the trial. Hermione and Perdita are Renaissance-Classical. The courtiers of Leontes resemble the ballet designs for the entertainments of Louis XIV except one, who suggests the matador. The Old Shepherd has a touch of Durer. His son recalls the Italian Comedy.63

The critic for the Sunday Times did not share the positive viewpoint:

The costumes are not so satisfactory... Never has one seen so many plumes worn; the play might almost have been "Chanticleer". So bizarre are some of the costumes that one's sense of the comic is constantly tickled. Julio Romano or no Julio Romano, is it wise to have Ferdita remind one of Miss Maud Allan, or to place on the head of Leontes a crown that strongly recalls one of those resplendent cannisters that some manufacturers "throw in" to induce you to buy their biscuits?

But even though the critics' reaction was mixed, the audience on opening night demanded that Albert Rothenstein take a special curtain call at the evening's end. Rothenstein's design sketches and photographs of the finished costumes reveal the imaginative innovations he employed in his work (Figures 15 and 16).

Critics attempted to solve the mystery of Barker's new production style by tracing its influence to Gordon Craig, Reinhardt, the Russian Ballet, and William Poel. Since so many critics declared the major influence to be Craig, Barker wrote a letter to the Daily Mail to explain:

... Mr. Craig's influence has been mainly destructive. Certainly his own production twelve years ago of Mr. Laurence Housman's "Bethlehem" destroyed for me once and for all any illusion I may
Figure 15. Albert Rothenstein's design for and a photograph of Autolycus' costume in Barker's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
Figure 16. Albert Rothenstein's design for and a photograph of Perdita's costume in Barker's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of The Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
have had as to the necessity of surrounding every performance of a play with stuffy, fussy, thickly-bedaubed canvas which we are accustomed to call stage scenery, while he opened my eyes to the possibilities of real beauty and dignity in stage decoration . . . So what I am trying to steal from Mr. Craig and Mr. Poel is a little of the freedom of spirit and fearlessness of purpose with which they have pioneered. But beyond that I do protest that all this talk about Craig-ism or Reinhardt-ism or Moscow Art Theatre-ism or Russian Balletoxy is futile.65

Conclusion

Whether he intended it or not, Harley Granville-Barker's production of The Winter's Tale acted as a trial balloon. In it the producer sprung new stage conventions and theatrical styles on an unsuspecting audience, and, as is often the fate of such innovations, the unfamiliar techniques were generally rejected by the public. In his later life when Barker did more theorizing about the theatre than production in it, one of his theoretical preoccupations was the dilemma which arises out of a producer's need to change and purify conventions, which, when changed, can jeopardize an audience's response to a theatrical presentation. Applying this dilemma to the production of Shakespeare he posed a question:

Next comes the question of the audience, and its natural taste for a dramatic convention to which it can spontaneously respond. Are we here upon the horns of a dilemma; must we deform Shakespeare to the shape of our modern theatre, or restore for him a theatre to which we can now only make a self-conscious and sophisticated approach?66
In his attempt to thrust the conventions of the Elizabethan stage into the twentieth-century theatre, Barker created two paradoxes. The first arose out of his desire to rid the theatre of realistic scenery which was inconsistent with Shakespeare's intent and which called attention to itself. In fact, the critics (and probably the audience as well) were so preoccupied with the strange new scenery and costumes that they tended to overlook the acting and the play. Second, in keeping with the tradition of the Elizabethan stage, Barker wished to get a swiftness into his production in the hope that the play's basic rhythm would help to communicate its meaning. Once again, the audience, laboring to separate ideas from the garbled speech, had the illusion broken for them, and the play's meaning became more clouded. One reviewer, attempting to point out the disastrous effect of the inarticulate speech, related a brief dialogue between two gentlemen as they left the Savoy Theatre. One man remarked to the other, "Ripping costumes" to which the other answered, "Rather! But tell me--what play was it?"  

Aware of the problem of introducing the new conventions to his audiences, Barker pleaded with the critics for openness in allowing for the new styles. In his letter to the Daily Mail he wrote:

Norman Wilkinson, Albert Rothenstein and I have set out, quite simply and sincerely, by the method of trial and error, and by the light of our own wits
and imagination to interpret a dramatic masterpiece. All we ask in return of the critics and the public is to be allowed to make that trial upon their open minds and natural taste, not upon their artificially stimulated prejudices.

Barker's close friend, George Bernard Shaw, when asked by a reporter from the *Observer* to comment upon *The Winter's Tale* at the Savoy, launched an attack on the critics in his reply:

The critics never noticed any change at all. It was so right that they took it as a matter of course. What they didn't like was Shakespeare. It will take them ten years to acquire a taste for Shakespeare's later plays, and to learn his language which is now almost a dead language. Just read one of their notices purely as a piece of English. Then read a page from *A Winter's Tale* and believe, if you can, that the two writers were fellow countrymen. Probably they will never learn the root of Renaissance art. On the whole they don't like art. They always speak of it as something new and disagreeable. To Barker it is something eternal and delightful. That is what nerves him to these astonishing adventures.
Footnotes Chapter V:


2 Ibid., p. 109.

3 Observer, September 29, 1912, p. 9.

4 Purdom, p. 165.

5 Ibid.

6 Evening News, September 24, 1912, p. 4.


10 Ibid., p. 41.

11 Barker, Companion, p. 48.


13 Purdom, p. 164.

14 Ibid., p. 140.

15 Observer, September 12, 1912, p. 9.

16 Pall Mall Gazette, September 23, 1912, p. 5.

17 Daily Chronicle, September 23, 1912, p. 3.

18 The Tatler, October 9, 1912, p. 41.
Footnotes Chapter V cont.

19 Evening News, September 24, 1912, p. 4.
20 Daily Telegraph, September 23, 1912, p. 11.
21 Pall Mall Gazette, September 23, 1912, p. 5.
22 Daily News and Leader, September 23, 1912, p. 5.
23 Referee, September 22, 1912, p. 3.
24 Daily Chronicle, September 23, 1912, p. 3.
26 Standard, September 23, 1912, p. 4.
27 Purdom, p. 141.
28 Ibid., p. 143.
29 Quoted in Purdom, p. 145.
31 Barker, Companion, p. 69.
33 The World, September 24, 1912, p. 456.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., p. viii.
37 Daily Chronicle, September 23, 1912, p. 5.
38 Standard, September 23, 1912, p. 4.
Footnotes Chapter V cont.

39 Ibid.

40 Daily Chronicle, September 23, 1912, p. 3.

41 Outlook, October 5, 1912, p. 452.

42 Daily Mail, September 25, 1912, p. 7.

43 Purdom, p. 21.

44 Barker, Method, p. 29.


50 Purdom, p. 141.

51 Daily News and Leader, September 23, 1912, p. 5.

52 Globe, September 23, 1912, p. 4.

53 Daily News and Leader, September 23, 1912, p. 5.

54 The Sportsman, September 23, 1912, p. 7.


56 Barker, Exemplary, p. 138.

57 Barker, Associating, p. 15.

58 Ibid.
Footnotes Chapter V cont.

59 Standard, September 23, 1912, p. 4.

60 The Times (London) September 23, 1912, p. 4.

61 Barker, The Winter's Tale, p. xii.

62 Ibid.


64 Sunday Times, September 22, 1912, p. 7.

65 Daily Mail, September 25, 1912, p. 10.

66 Barker, Associating, p. 29.

67 Pall Mall Gazette, September 23, 1912, p. 5.

68 Daily Mail, September 25, 1912, p. 10.

69 Observer, September 29, 1912, p. 9.
CHAPTER VI

PETER WOOD PRODUCES THE WINTER'S TALE

"... and with Mr. Peter Hall's appointment as director, a new era begins. It may well be a great era too--the auspices are excellent. But it will be different."—Financial Times

The year 1960 was probably among the most significant in the long and eventful history of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. In January of that year, the theatre's Board of Governors appointed Peter Hall as its managing director, and he, in turn, hired Peter Brook and Michel Saint-Denis as directors. Although that season's significance might have merely been based on the wealth of talent concentrated in that one theatre, its importance was much farther reaching, for, under Peter Hall, the theatre became one of the most important in the world.

Prior to 1960 the Stratford Theatre housed a different company each season and the top British stars were employed to head its productions. Peter Hall succeeded in changing this arrangement by hiring a company of actors on a long-term contractual basis. His dream was that these actors, by continual training, and
by working together over a long period of time, would be able to play the works of Shakespeare effectively. Of his goal, he wrote:

A highly trained group of actors, constantly playing Shakespeare, but with antennae stretched towards our world of contradictions, can, perhaps, be expert enough in the past and alive enough to the present to perform the plays. This has been my aim and hope for four years.²

Among the actors who were signed to long-term contracts in this innovative season were Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Ian Richardson, Brewster Mason, Janet Suzman and many others who have developed a superb artistry in the playing of Shakespeare and who still perform with the Royal Shakespeare Company today.

Hall's second goal was the establishment of an actor-training studio on the premises of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. This studio, a strictly private endeavor restricted to the members of the company, was under the direction of Michel Saint-Denis. It was designed to help the actors develop a facility for speaking Shakespearean verse effectively, to give them the opportunity to experiment with the portrayals of unusual characterizations, and to develop among the company an understanding of and sensitivity to each other's working habits.

Another goal was the securing of a London theatre where new plays and non-Shakespearean classics could be produced. Hall felt that such an acquisition would provide
his actors with a variety of performance experiences, so necessary for their complete artistic development. To comply with Hall's wish, the governing board of the Memorial Theatre acquired the Aldwych Theatre in London, where, in its first season, The Duchess of Malfi was produced. In the seasons which followed, many plays of the classic repertoire as well as new plays by writers such as John Whiting, Harold Pinter, and Arthur Kopit have been produced at the Aldwych Theatre.

Hall's concept of producing Shakespeare was amazingly similar to that of Granville-Barker. With complete devotion to the author's intentions, Hall wished to express Shakespeare's ideas in terms that modern audiences could comprehend. Like Granville-Barker, he praised Shakespeare's great understanding of human nature, and he wrote:

Yet in human terms, the plays are very near to us. I doubt if animal man fundamentally changes at all over the ages. The disciplines and dreams he invents for himself—his religions, ethics, philosophies, moralities—change radically. In these, Shakespeare is often far away from us, for our own chaotic public thinking is very contrary to the world order of the Elizabethans. So, what man hopes he is like changes, but not, alas, what he really is like. Shakespeare deals in this constant.

Having received the support of the Board of Governors for his artistic and managerial goals, and having carefully selected the artists with whom he chose to work, Hall picked the plays for his first season. On the bill were six Shakespearean comedies, works which
illustrate the playwright's development in the comic genre. The plays selected were: Two Gentlemen of Verona directed by Hall, The Taming of the Shrew directed by John Barton, The Merchant of Venice directed by Michael Langham, Twelfth Night directed by Hall, Troilus and Cressida directed by Hall and Barton, and The Winter's Tale directed by Peter Wood.

Peter Wood Creates A Wonderland

"Peter Wood puts it [The Winter's Tale] in true perspective; the dark and the light mingled and distilled as Shakespeare wrote it—a fantastic fantasy, a fairy-tale with black undertones leading to the happiest of happy endings."—Stratford-upon-Avon Herald.

The final production of the 1960 Shakespeare Memorial Theatre season was The Winter's Tale. In a season that featured plays depicting the range and development of Shakespeare's growth as a comic dramatist, The Winter's Tale represented his most mature effort, the tragicomic product of his final years. And besides, the time had come for the Memorial Theatre to produce this play which had not been presented on the Stratford stage since Anthony Quayle produced it there in 1948.

The 1960 production opened on August 30 with a superb cast headed by Dame Peggy Ashcroft in the role of Paulina. Elizabeth Sellars played Hermione opposite the
Leontes of Eric Porter, a last minute substitute for Harry Andrews, who was taken ill shortly before the opening. The cast also included two young minor character actors, Ian Richardson and Roy Dotrice, who were to make their mark on London and festival theatres in the years that followed. The settings and costumes were designed by a young Frenchman, Jacques Noel, a newcomer to British theatre. The entire production was under the direction of Peter Wood, who was producing his first work at Stratford with *The Winter's Tale*. Most of his professional directing experience had been with modern scripts such as those of Ionesco and Pinter, although he had directed a production of *As You Like It* in London the previous year.

Shortly after the opening of *The Winter's Tale*, Peter Wood gave a lecture at the Shakespeare Center Library in Stratford-upon-Avon. In this lecture, reported in the *Evesham Journal*, the director outlined some of his views of the play. His first and truly governing concept of *The Winter's Tale* was that it was a fairy tale.

*The Winter's Tale is a fairy story... All of us are disarmed by a tale and it is not called *The Winter's Tale* for nothing. Mamillius doesn't say 'a sad tale's best for winter' for nothing. Because it is a tale and you have to give the tale your faith. And in an age when there is no faith--so much is specialization and scientific explanation--there is hardly an innocent soul left in the audience.*

Wood took issue with the nineteenth-century critics who by the application of logic, tried to find an Othello-like reality in the play. He believed the play to be
actable if approached as a tall tale. Wood evidently succeeded in creating a fairy-tale mood in his production, for some of the critics noted this in their reviews.

The critic for the Stratford-upon-Avon Herald wrote:

So it is presented—as a fairy tale, against the huge, deep settings by Jacques Noel... The whole production is so steeped in unreality that the darkness of Leontes' jealousy, doubts and fears becomes more terrible; and the clowning, romance, laughter and flowers of Bohemia more wonderful. And just as Shakespeare dissolved the darkness of The Tale into light, so Mr. Wood allows the settings, circumstances and moments to dissolve one into another, so avoiding an endless series of scenes and creating the even flow of a story well told.

Wood's second major concept about the play concerned the statue scene. Building on his governing idea about the play's fairyland existence, Wood believed that the statue scene, the most effective theatrical moment in the play, was the raison d'être of the entire work and could only realize its author's intention in a mythical world. He said:

Shakespeare wrote it [The Winter's Tale] as a pathway to the monument scene—a incredible device making it a tall tale to swallow. All the way through, therefore, he insists on the fairy story.

Third, Wood believed that the play had a deep religious significance because of the number of Christian symbols that Shakespeare uses in it. Evidently the director considered the play's religious nature to be a major theme, for he said:

It is not for nothing that the child falls into the hands of shepherds; that the scene of the young shepherd is a good Samaritan story; that the last scene takes place in a chapel. Shakespeare obviously
intended that there should be great solemnity, religious power—forgiveness. These briefly recorded remarks constitute Peter Wood's public statements on the nature of *The Winter's Tale* as he saw it. And yet, sketchy though these comments may be, they enable us to realize what the director considered important about the play and why he shaped his production in the particular manner that he did.

On August 1, 1969, a group of Ohio State University theatre students assembled in the Shakespeare Center Library in Stratford-upon-Avon and listened to an enlightening talk by Mr. Maurice Daniels, the Planning Controller for the Royal Shakespeare Company. I was in this group, and after the talk I took the opportunity to ask Mr. Daniels some questions about the 1960 production of *The Winter's Tale*. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that he had been the lighting designer for that production, and, indeed, recalled his experiences in it quite well. When I questioned him about Peter Wood his immediate response was that the man was a very fine director, but that perhaps *The Winter's Tale* was not the sort of play with which he was completely comfortable. Mr. Daniels then revealed his belief that Wood was a gimmicky director who sought surface values rather than deep meanings in his production of *The Winter's Tale*.

What Mr. Daniels referred to as gimmicky direction, some reviewers termed inventiveness, and indeed, an
analysis of the promptbook for Wood's production supports the latter contention. In reviewing the 1960 Stratford production of *The Winter's Tale* for the *Birmingham Post*, J.C. Trewin accused Shakespeare of indirection in his telling of the tale, for the author frequently resorts to reporting a scene instead of presenting it in action. In his inventiveness and desire to achieve fairy-tale animation in the production, Peter Wood devised actor business which he sprinkled throughout the production. He used the added actions most consistently at the beginning of scenes in an apparent attempt to set the mood and perhaps to grab audience attentions. The most striking example of this director-devised animation occurred in the beginning of Act IV during the monologue of Father Time.

Entering far upstage, Time, cloaked as a fanciful warlock and carrying an hour-glass-topped staff, strode into the downstage light and began his address. Half way through his speech, as he made magic with the declaration "I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing as you had slept between," the upstage light was splashed with a reddish glow. As Time narrated "Leontes leaving, the effects of his fond jealousies so grieving, that he shuts himself up," Leontes entered into the red illumination, paced from stage right to stage left, waved away his sympathetic followers, Dion and Cleomenes, and exited as Time began to speak of Bohemia. At this point the
upstage lights brightened, and as Time reminded the audience, "and remember well, I mentioned a son of the King's, which Florizel I now name to you," Florizel entered upstage left and, with his hunting falcon, began to cross right. Time continued, "and with speed so paced to speak of Perdita," at which point the lovely shepherdess entered upstage right and crossed left until she and Florizel discovered one another. Slowly they passed around one another, stood and gazed for a moment, and exited at opposite sides of the stage.  

This scene reveals Wood's urge to illustrate rather than merely narrate all parts of the story. In the process he created a story-book quality in the beginning of the Bohemian scene which probably set the mood for the remainder of the act.

Following the exit of Father Time, Wood brought Polixenes and Camillo into the Bohemian setting by another clever bit of invention. As hunting horns blared off stage, three arrows flew through the air and landed on the stage floor. Polixenes' servants entered to retrieve the arrows, and when the King entered, they offered him a drink from the wine bottle. To quench a thirst generated by a day of sport, Polixenes and Camillo shared the refreshment as the dialogue of the scene (IV,ii) began.

A second example of Peter Wood's addition of inventive business occurred in the very beginning of
play. Not content to merely allow Archidamus and Camillo
to stroll onto the stage and talk, Wood (prompted perhaps
by Charles Kean's work) began the play with a bang of a
gong, at which cue the servants of the court sprang into
the action of preparing a royal banquet. After fruit
bowls had been set in place and the wine had been tasted,
Camillo and Archidamus carried on their dialogue while
servants completed the final banquet preparations.

Near the end of the brief expository scene (I,i),
as Archidamus said:

I think there is not in the world either malice or
matter to alter it. You have an unspeakable comfort
of your young Prince Mamillius; it is a gentleman of
the greatest promise that ever came into my note.

Three Old Pedants who followed Mamillius wherever he
went entered with the young prince. Illustrating the
content of his expository poetry, Archidamus patted the
boy on the head as he said the words, "Prince Mamillius."
The dialogue and business which followed laid the
foundation for a comic effect which Wood built upon later
in the play:

Camillo:
I very well agree with you in the hopes of him.
It is a gallant child; (Mamillius bows to Camillo,
crosses and exits. Three Pedants start to follow
him.) One that, indeed, physics the subject,
makes old hearts fresh; they that went on crutches
ere he was born (Pedants stop and react) desire
yet their life to see him a man. (start to walk
again)

Archidamus:
Would they else be content to die? (Pedants stop
and react)
Camillo:
Yes, if there were no other excuse why they
should desire to live. (Pedants acknowledge
remark and exit)

Wood did not limit his inventive business to
illustration of the text, but he devised actions for comic
effect as well. Having added the characters of the three
Old Pedants to the play, Wood used them initially to
illustrate Camillo's remark concerning "they that went
on crutches," but later in the play their comic potential
was more fully developed. J.C. Trewin related one
particularly comic incident as he complimented Wood on
his imaginative use of the old men:

It is when we get back to Sicilia that Shakespeare
has his real fun in the notorious second scene of
the fifth act, a piece of sheer laziness . . . as the
scene proceeds, we realize that Shakespeare--whether
he knew it or not--was offering a chance for
imaginative production . . . Now Peter Wood has done
it better than anybody with his three old men, who in
the spirit of fantasy, remain at the same age after
a lapse of sixteen years. I thought in the first
part they were merely naughty superfluous decorations,
as "Q" said of the bear; but we see the full reason
for them in that amazingly orchestrated last-act
trio. I like especially one ancient cackle at "he
was torn in pieces with a bear," and later there is
the steward's pleasure in his own joke at "One of the
prettiest touches of all, and that which angled for
mine eyes, caught the water though not the fish."12

As Trewin pointed out, Wood was able to mingle comedy with
fantasy in the situations with the Pedants.

Another sample of Wood's comic additives occurred
in the scene in which the rogue, Autolycus, is introduced
(IV,iii). In this instance Wood's inspiration for the
comic business was drawn from the setting rather than
from the script. Consisting of a diagonal line of scarecrows which ran from downstage left to upstage right, Jacques Noel's set provided natural hide-and-seek properties for the comic pickpocket.

At the very beginning of the scene cries of "stop thief" came from off stage. Autolycus entered from upstage right, ran downstage left holding a bunch of stolen linen, and stood in front of the line of scarecrows in a pose. After he took his position as a scarecrow, Mopsa and Dorcas ran in crying, carrying pitchforks, and looking for the robber. They circled him in their search, practically poked him with their pitchforks, and then exited.

Following his song, "When Daffodils Begin to Peer," Autolycus had another clever sequence of comic business. Hearing the approach of the Clown, the rogue changed clothes with one of the scarecrows and concealed himself behind his former clothes. As the monied young shepherd entered and recounted the items he must purchase for the sheep-shearing feast, Autolycus sneaked downstage inching the scarecrow ahead of him. The Clown, in a carefree mood, tossed his purse in the air and Autolycus, still behind the scarecrow, reached out, grabbed it, and dropped it at the Clown's feet. Still unaware of Autolycus' presence, the Clown returned the purse to his person as the thief flung himself on the ground and feigned sorrow at the supposed loss of his money and clothes.
The inventive business which Peter Wood devised for his production of *The Winter's Tale* had essentially one of two purposes: (1) it was designed to illustrate certain narrative elements in the script, (2) it was created for comic effect. Wood usually infused a fairy-tale quality into his invention and used it most regularly at the beginning of scenes in order to set the mood and to arrest audience attention. Whether the results should be termed gimmicky, inventive, or imaginatively creative seems to be an unresolved matter of critical opinion.

The critic for the *Observer* wrote:

> ... the action splutters along in similar half-hearted reliance on short-winded ideas. The effect of these hand-to-mouth tactics on scenes requiring sustained atmosphere is lethal.\(^4\)

The critic for the *Financial Times* offered an opposing point of view:

> Triumphant over the bristling incredibilities and complex snags of this melodramatic fairy-tale ... Mr. Peter Wood and his company have achieved a small theatrical near-miracle with a minimum of trickiness and slummery.\(^5\)

In their reviews of productions of *The Winter's Tale*, many modern critics seem predisposed to judge a producer's effectiveness on his ability to resolve the problem of the play's extreme contrasts. Although Peter Wood did not discuss the problems of unity and contrast in his public statements about the play, his production revealed the fact that he was very much aware of this difficulty and that he took specific measures to cope
with it. For the most part, critical response to his efforts in this area was affirmative. Jeremy Brooks, the reviewer for the *New Statesman and Nation*, wrote:

Attempts to impose unity on this play have in the past succeeded only in levelling the whole thing down to a flat, motiveless charade. Mr. Peter Wood has wisely avoided this, has in fact gone all out for dramatic contrast, and, as far as the play allows, has triumphantly succeeded.16

The critic for the *Morning Advertiser* wrote:

On the remodeled 'stage this play's strange contrasts in the mood and style are emphasized more effectively than ever before and problems which have baffled many producers are brilliantly solved by Peter Wood.17

Specifically, and most obviously, Wood emphasized the contrast between the first three acts and the fourth act by means of lighting. The first three acts, splayed generously with red light, were gloomily overcast with ominous shadows which lengthened and deepened as the jealousy of Leontes grew and as his tyranny became more terrible. Act IV was splashed with "sunlight, a world of humor and grace where all was washed in yellow and green and gold."18

Wood's actors also helped to establish the dramatic contrast between the first and second half of the play by their manner of emotional display. In the ordered world of the Sicilian court Leontes twitched and writhed in a jealousy which he tried desperately to conceal as he played games with his son or evaded the persistent Paulina. In the carefree world of the Bohemian country side, the peasant revels resembled a
"full-blooded fertility rite where barefoot rustics stamped their dances to finger-click and pipe and tambourine."  

While Wood exploited the dramatic contrasts of The Winter's Tale, he was also faced with the problem of unifying the play's seemingly incongruous elements into a meaningful whole. One reviewer felt that Wood had "not only stressed the poetry but also imposed a remarkable degree of unity in spite of widely dissimilar phases." J.C. Trewin wrote: "It is in its drama that this strange, misshapen Janus-play of winter and spring now succeeds."  

Wood's attempt to achieve unity was directed in three areas: (1) the acting, (2) the settings and costumes, (3) the statue scene. Eric Porter, in the role of Leontes, succeeded in unifying the disparate nature of his character by presenting him in such a way that "the hysterical tyrant of the play's opening and the benign penitent of its close are credibly one and the same part." The spaciousness and simplicity of the settings and the bold, vivid colors of the costumes, all drawn together by a mythical Renaissance style, unified the visual elements of the production. But the statue scene was the culmination of Wood's effort at unification, for, to his mind, it contained the play's paramount theatrical moment and the full expression of its theme.  

After the frenzied jealousy of Leontes in the first three acts, and the orgiastic celebrations of the
revellers in Act IV, the warmth and calm of Paulina established the proper mood for reconciliation of the final scene. Dame Peggy Ashcroft as Paulina possessed a regal tenderness which enabled her to be compassionate but yet commanding in the play's final moments. Jacques Noel's setting, which was highlighted by a row of statues and candelabras, reinforced the theme of religious forgiveness which Wood had in mind. Trewin wrote: "The statue scene, as it should, crowns all," and the critic for The Times said:

Whatever its faults the production is blessed with staying power and rises to the difficult final scene. Mr. Jacques Noel's background of skyline statues, Mr. Lennox Berkeley's music and the cunning folds of Hermione's dress go a long way to impose the illusion. Mr. Porter achieves a benevolent calm; and there is the clinching authority of Dame Peggy Ashcroft, never more evident than when her hands are folded on a stick and her eyes show the weary pathos at the heart of the play.

Peter Wood's direction of The Winter's Tale was characterized by: (1) inventive business, (2) emphasis upon the play's contrasts, (3) use of subtle unifying devices. Wood added business in order to give a fairy-tale illustration to the text, such as he did in the address by Father Time, and for comic effect, such as he did in the Autolycus pickpocket scene.

In order to emphasize the play's contrasts, Wood used changes in lighting colors in a progression from the red of passion, to the gold of celebration, and the purple of repentance. Also his actors altered their
manner of emotional display from the restrained intensity of the Sicilian Court to the boisterous joyousness of the Bohemian countryside. Wood achieved unity in his production through completely developed characterizations, a uniform spaciousness and simplicity of style in the settings and costumes, and by means of a statue scene which drew together the play's dissimilar elements and expressed its overall theme.

The Acting

"Startling though the method seems, Peter Wood has allowed (or persuaded) his players to come on to the stage, speak their lines with appropriate gestures and facial expression and go off. Trimmings are minimal, Shakespeare triumphant."—Sunday Times

By the time the final production of the 1960 Stratford season was about to open, the theatre's permanent acting company had established a solid reputation for high quality performances in the major as well as the minor Shakespearean roles. Predictably, then, the critical response to the acting in The Winter's Tale was highly favorable, so much so that certain few critics, who were not entirely satisfied with the production, were generous in their praise for the actors. The reviewer for The Guardian, who found the production to be "not much more than so-so in the magic department" believed
that "all was salvaged—as is only right—by the players." Although this reaction to Wood's production was far from representative of the majority of critical opinion, the reviewer's praise of the players was consistent with most views.

Without a doubt the most arresting performance in the production was that of Eric Porter, who received rave reviews in the role of Leontes. With John Gielgud's 1951 performance of the Sicilian King still in their memories, critics couldn't avoid comparisons between Sir John and the young Leontes at Stratford. Commenting on Porter's performance, the critic for the Evening Standard exclaimed, "This is a brilliant, vehement achievement rivalling Sir John Gielgud's brilliant interpretation some years ago" and J.C. Trewin wrote that "beside Mr. Porter's Leontes even Sir John Gielgud's seems to have been principally a vocal exercise."

Porter's Leontes seems to have been characterized by vocal strength and powerful movement, for, as The Times reviewer mentioned, "his voice and presence were in his favour." The critic for the New Statesman and Nation described him as "roaring and twitching with a passion that almost physically communicates itself to the audience." Porter's performance was as powerful as Leontes was powerful, and he painted the character in bold, wide strokes. In this respect, his portrayal seems to have contrasted with the subtlety of John Gielgud's.
Although power and subtlety were points of difference in the performances of Gielgud and Porter, their portrayals shared one important similarity. Both actors played the king as having been in the grip of jealousy before Hermione's unfortunate success at persuading Polixenes to remain in Sicily. The reviewer for the *Sunday Times* explains:

> The curtain rises on the heavily Doric Sicilian court, black and red shadowed in Jacques Noel's fine set. Leontes is already in the grip of jealousy. Of its last fatal outburst Eric Porter makes a fearful torment.

Porter conveyed the jealousy at the outset by an infatuated fondling of his queen's shoulders and by an infantile search for sympathy in the scene with his son. Later, when Hermione and Polixenes were engaged in warm conversation, his jealousy boiled more heatedly, and he released it in a cape-swinging play bull-fight with Mamillius as he exclaimed, "How now, you wanton calf! Art thou my calf?" (I,ii). The reviewer for the *Observer* described it best:

> With full support of the text, Eric Porter plays Leontes as a sick man, jealousy twisting his body even when he spreads his red cloak in a mock bullfight with Mamilius, and his mind racing with tremor cordis that finds its natural expression in the feverishly disjointed verse.

Evidently Peter Wood could not have hoped for a more effective Leontes than he had in Eric Porter (Figure 17), and Porter himself could not have wished for a more enthusiastic critical response. One reviewer,
Figure 17. Photograph of Eric Porter as Leontes in Peter Wood's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of Thomas F. Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
without even mentioning Gielgud's portrayal, proclaimed Porter's Leontes to be the finest since Baliol Holloway played the king in the 1930's. Peter Sykes, reviewing for the Oxford Mail, raved:

So far this year there had been much to admire... But last night there came the performance of the season. It came from Eric Porter... He made Leontes' rash, willful rejection of his chaste wife absolutely believable. He made the repentance scene in which Paulina brings news of Hermione's "death" a most moving piece of theatre...

Much has been written about Peter O'Toole's impact on the 1960 Stratford plays, and I have contributed by piece. But Eric Porter is the man I will remember when winter's tedious nights return.

The frenzied power of Porter's Leontes in the first three acts found its contrast in the dignified control of Elizabeth Sellers' Hermione. The Times critic found the dissimilarity too severe:

Miss Sellers' delivery of her defense, with fluent poetry and changes of tone, makes too great a contrast; they both come, after all, from the same courtly world.

But evidently Miss Sellers failed to extend the placidity of Hermione to all moments of the character's stage life. She became overly enthusiastic in her attempts to persuade Polixenes to remain in Bohemia, for, as the reviewer for the Liverpool Post noted, "her entertainment of Polixenes was too effusive to harmonize with her general modesty of deportment." Of course, the danger of such behavior is that it can tend to justify Leontes' jealousy. The critic for the Sunday Times indicated that perhaps Leontes was not entirely incorrect in his suspicions:
Sexual jealousy, one of Shakespeare's enduring preoccupations, never springs from nothing; Hermione, the Queen, and Polixenes do indeed behave in a manner likely to raise the eyebrows of the most indulgent husband... padding palms and pinching fingers is no overstatement.41

If as a result of this indiscreet conduct Leontes' fears ever seem justified, he could tend to become a more sympathetic character in the play's first three acts and Hermione less so. A flirtatious Hermione would be a less important character, and, as a result, Leontes' dominance of the first half of the play could increase, and the statue scene would become Paulina's. Perhaps, to a certain extent, this happened in Wood's production.

The most prominent member of The Winter's Tale's cast was Dame Peggy Ashcroft who played the role of Paulina. After having played Kate in The Taming of the Shrew earlier in the season, Dame Peggy avoided playing Paulina with any abrasiveness and rather gave the character a queenly dignity mingled with a great deal of human warmth. Her reasoned disagreement with Leontes and her compassion for his queen contrasted with the stolidity of the other members of the royal household. The Times reviewer wrote:

Another contrast, this time a proper one, is the humanity of Dame Peggy Ashcroft's Paulina, not robust enough perhaps for every taste, but a focus of impulsive indignation which brings reality to events often slurred over in the barbaric turmoil prevailing.42

Of course, her contribution to the all-important statue scene was immeasurable, for undoubtedly her warmth
set the tone for its theme of religious forgiveness.

Susan Maryott's Perdita drew more negative critical response than did any other performance in the production. Critics generally agreed that the fourth act pastoral scene was the least effective segment of the production, largely because of the inability of Florizel and Perdita (Figure 18) to speak Shakespeare's poetry effectively. In his review of the 1960 Stratford season for the Shakespeare Quarterly, Robert Speaight remarked:

But neither Perdita nor Florizel could master the pure music that their parts require, and the sheep shearing scene, though it was very prettily staged in the moonlight, somehow went askew.\(^3\)

J.C. Trewin concurred:

Nothing should interfere with the verse, and it is a pity that for awhile the speech becomes self-conscious rather than summoning; neither Perdita with her flower-garland nor Florizel can burnish the language.\(^4\)

The Times critic was more specific in his remarks:

... Miss Susan Maryott, an enchanting Perdita, to break up some of the most strongly fashioned lines in the language and to obscure Perdita's superiority in a flood of emotion which sometimes makes nonsense of the part.\(^5\)

In addition to her problems with the poetry, Miss Maryott suffered the fate of most Perditas—failure to unite effectively the shepherd girl and the princess into one person. Perhaps she captured some of the qualities of a rugged shepherd girl, for one critic found her to resemble a Soviet athlete,\(^6\) but she failed to make a believable transition to the princess of the fifth act. The critic for the Liverpool Post noted this
Figure 18. Photograph of Florizel and Perdita in Peter Wood's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of Thomas Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
"curious inconsistency" as she expressed an "uninhibited... gypsy quality as a shepherd" and adopted the "stance of regal austerity after she runs away." 48

The Settings and Costumes

"A last and most especial mention must go to designer Jacques Noel who uses the vast empty spaces of the Stratford stage to conjure up medieval palaces, great plains and mighty seas in the grand manner of Gordon Craig."—Evening News 48

Just as Eric Porter received uniformly good notices for his portrayal of Leontes so did Jacques Noel win wide acclaim for his design of the settings and costumes of The Winter's Tale. His sets conveyed a remarkable feeling of simplicity and spaciousness by his sparing use of furniture, curtains, and costumes. Reviewers referred to it as an uncluttered, non-fussy production which, by conveying a romantic, magic-land atmosphere, fulfilled the director's intent. Robert Speaight wrote:

As an example of a production in depth Mr. Wood's staging of The Winter's Tale was a classic. He had been wonderfully aided by Mr. Jacques Noel; both costumes and decor evoked a kind of mythical Renaissance, a world in which anything can happen, and anything did. 49

Noel's sets for the first three acts were characterized by a medieval quality. Although most of the play's action occurred on a two-level platform which
was thrust before the proscenium arch, Noel, refusing to ignore the proscenium structure of the theatre, created a series of sliding arches and curtains which formed a background for the action. Repeated in every scene in the first three acts, the arches helped achieve a special unity in the play's tragic first half.

But the color transformed potentially Spartan set pieces and bland backgrounds into lively, otherworldly atmospheres. A color print of the play's first scene helps to illustrate this fact (Figure 19).

The second scene (II,i), another more private room of Leontes' palace, is notable for its spaciousness, for the repetition and dominance of its arches, for the great availability of acting area, and for its scarcity of stage furniture (Figure 20).

The prison setting (II,ii) was described by one reviewer as a Disney dungeon, probably because its color scheme was vividly unreal. A photograph of the setting reveals it to be painted canvas, probably a down-stage drop, which incorporates the arch-and-canvas motif of the scenes in the first half of the play (Figure 21). Unlike the play's other settings the prison scene, with its old-style proscenium theatre flavor, appears to be a throw-back to the pictorial settings of the turn-of-the-century stages. This particular setting is reminiscent of the prison scene Herbert Beerbohm Tree used in his production of The Winter's Tale in 1906 (Figure 22).
Figure 19. Photograph of Jacques Noel's palace (I,ii) for Peter Wood's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of Thomas Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
Figure 20. Photograph of Jacques Noel's setting of a private room in Leontes' palace (II,i) for Peter Wood's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of Thomas Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
Figure 21. Photograph of Jacques Noel's prison setting (II,ii) for Peter Wood's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of Thomas Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
Figure 22. Photograph of the prison setting for Herbert Beerbohm Tree's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of The Enthoven Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum and the executors of the Tree estate.
Jacques Noel also achieved visual unity by repeating certain set pieces in different scenes. For example, a dowelled dock was used to suggest a part of a ship in the Dion and Cleomenes scene (III,i), and served as the courtroom dock in the trial scene (III,ii) (Figure 23).

When the play shifts genres from Act III to Act IV, Noel's sets changed from the sedate to the bizarre. For the introduction of Autolycus (IV,iii), he devised a diagonal line of sunwashed scarecrows (Figure 24). Their rather imaginative arrangement and colorful execution highlighted the comic business of Autolycus, who, in fact, was dressed somewhat like a scarecrow himself.

Noel created his most unusual setting for the Bohemian pastoral scene (IV,iv). Deciding to set the scene at night, Noel devised sparkling trees which he placed before a starlit Bohemian sky. The entire effect was described by one critic as "a decorated night piece with suggestions of carnival sophistication."

Just as Jacques Noel changed the mood of the settings from the first three acts to the fourth, so did he change the cut and color of the costumes to harmonize with the decor. The royal personages and the members of their court were clad in regal, flowing robes of bright warm colors, reflecting the heat of Leontes' passion and creating a fairy-tale atmosphere. The King
Figure 23. Photograph of Jacques Noel's setting for the Dion and Cleomenes scene in Peter Wood's production of The Winter's Tale. Courtesy of Thomas Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
Figure 24. Photograph of Jacques Noel's scarecrow setting (IV,iii) in Peter Wood's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Courtesy of Thomas Holte Camera Shop, Stratford-upon-Avon.
wore a bright crimson velvet cape in Act I, and, as an added storybook touch, Noel dressed Hamillius like his father. To complement the boldness of the colors, Noel exaggerated the cut of the costumes to achieve, as one critic described:

... a barbaric magnificence ... with shoulders a yard wide, swirling cloaks of crimson velvet, grotesquely armoured soldiery, savagely grinning masks, all the grim pomp and tawdry splendour of Medievalism gone mad.

In Act IV, Noel's costumes had a more frivolous flavor with Father Time in his black silk cape, beige waistcoat, and plumed hat, setting the tone. In the final scene, the costumes became more sedate in color and line, as, for example, Paulina's finely folded robe of royal purple and Perdita's silk dress of pale blue. By exaggeration of line and bold use of color, Noel succeeded in creating a fairyland atmosphere with the costumes in the entire production, while, at the same time, he emphasized the play's contrasts by a vivid variation of the color scheme.

Conclusions

Peter Wood's governing principle in producing The Winter's Tale was to create a fairy-story atmosphere in which the play's unusual people and extraordinary events might come to life. To achieve this he invented business which illustrated all the events of the story
rather than merely relating them. This world of make-believe also demanded powerful but believable performances from his actors, which, for the most part, they accomplished. The imaginative contribution of the visual arts was also required, and Jacques Noel's settings and costumes did much to establish a mythical atmosphere.

Eric Porter's performance in the role of Leontes was the most outstanding piece of acting in the production and was the main reason why the first three acts played very effectively. Act IV was somewhat less satisfying because the acting was less so. Because of their inability to speak Shakespeare's poetry effectively, Florizel and Perdita absorbed most of the negative criticism, but even the pastoral-scene revellers were accused of self-consciousness, and the reaction to Jack MacGowran's Autolycus was mixed.

A preoccupation with the play's obvious contrasts and the problem of achieving unity in producing it were obvious in the work of the production's artists and in the words of their critics. Peter Wood sought unity in the intensity of the acting and the style of the settings and costumes, and he emphasized the contrasts between the natures of characters within acts as well as stressing dissimilarity of moods between the acts of the play.

Unanimous critical praise for any production of *The Winter's Tale* hardly exists. But this production
seems to have drawn more unqualified positive praise than any production since some of Charles Kean's close friends reviewed his production in 1856. J.C. Trewin, reviewing for *Lady* magazine stated a viewpoint which is echoed in many other reviews of Wood's production:

There has been no better revival at Stratford-upon-Avon this year than Peter Wood's production of *The Winter's Tale*. It is extraordinarily hard to get this play right in the theatre. In effect, Shakespeare looks us straight in the eye and says: "You'll have to believe me; I know it's a tall story."53
Footnotes Chapter VI


2. Ibid., p. 43.

3. Ibid., pp. 41-42.


8. Ibid.


11. All references to promptbook directions are from a facsimile copy of Wood's 1960 promptbook in this author's personal collection. The original is in the Shakespeare Center, Stratford-upon-Avon.


13. Wood Promptbook, IV, iii.


17. Morning Advertiser, September 12, 1960, p. 3.

Footnotes Chapter VI cont.


Footnotes Chapter VI cont.

40. Liverpool Post, August 31, 1960, p. 9.


42. The Times, (London), August 31, 1960, p. 10.

43. Robert Speaight, p. 452.


47. Liverpool Post, August 31, 1960, p. 9.


CONCLUSIONS

Unfortunately, no one knows today whether or not Shakespeare's company felt greatly challenged when he first presented them with the script of *The Winter's Tale*. But producers since that time have puzzled over the play's disparate elements with its tragedy divided by a gulf of sixteen years from its comedy. In the latter half of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, producers such as David Garrick resolved the problem of the play's complexities by presenting only half of it. Producers who staged the play in the nineteenth century were usually praised for their courage in presenting such a difficult, misshapen play. Critics commonly judged the work to be two plays which had been crudely welded into one.¹

Twentieth-century literary critics, examining the play for unifying thematic statements, decided that it was a superb artistic achievement.² Basing their judgments upon probably allegorical patterns, Christian symbolism, or art-versus-nature themes, critics found an attractive unity of thought in the play. But discovering a literary unity and staging an integrated production are two entirely different accomplishments. Theatre critics, now convinced of the play's artistic merits, challenged producers to find ways of unifying its unwieldy
elements.³

Specifically, producers of The Winter's Tale are faced with the problem of establishing a unified production for the tragedy of Acts I, II, and III, and the comedy of Acts IV and V. In practical terms, the audience becomes involved with the mournful situation of Leontes and Hermione for three acts, when suddenly, a brief speech by Time thrusts them into the happy land of Bohemia where a brand new set of characters and events confronts them. The break is abrupt; the time-gap is wide; the mood is totally reversed. J.H.P. Pafford comments that the difficulty about the sixteen-year gap is only theoretical, and that "there is no difficulty when the play is seen or read."⁴ Unfortunately this view is not always borne out in theatrical experience.⁵

Charles Kean's concern with unity in The Winter's Tale was directed not at the play's tragic-comic divisions, but at its anachronisms. His solution was to correct the script so that an historically accurate time and place could be assigned to it, a task which he eagerly performed. In this way he provided the play with a unity which he believed it required as well as providing himself with an excuse to introduce elaborate spectacle. Kean, perhaps inadvertently, brought his own type of unity to the play's generic problems. First, by putting into practice his theories concerning historical accuracy and spectacle in a manner to which his audiences had become accustomed,
he put his own bold and peculiar stamp upon the production. The magnificence of his settings, the immensity of his stage crowds, and the flaunted historical base of every aspect of his production served as hallmarks and expedient unifying devices.

Second, by beginning Act IV with Antigonus on the Bohemian seacoast (III,iii) and following that scene with a magnificent allegorical sequence, he actually emphasized the progress of time. Although it was done for theatrical effect, the elaborate device of dissolving sixteen years in a grand spectacle gave epic proportions to the romance and produced a fascinating link from the tragedy of Act III to the comedy of Act IV. In addition, the elaborate spectacle subordinated the play to the production, and the audience, faced with such a dazzling scenic display, could hardly have been concerned with the mixture of genre in the play.

Tree, like Kean, appears to have been less concerned with reconciling the tragic and comic elements of the text as Shakespeare wrote it than with finding and exploiting the theatrical potential in the play as he wished to produce it. To this end he divided the play into a more popular three-act structure, concluding his Act I with the trial scene, his Act II with the pastoral scene, with his Act III comprising Shakespeare's Act V. Such a division would seem to have emphasized the tragic and comic differences especially in view of
the fact that Tree exploited superfluous theatrical devices in each section: Ellen Terry's star quality in the first, musical comedy verve and sentiment plus naturalistic detail in the second, and an elaborate, crowded statue scene in the third.

Again, following the path laid down by Kean, Tree managed to overpower the play with production techniques peculiarly his own, and, in effect, imposed a "stage" unity on the play. He cut the text severely to allow time for his own theatrical effects. His ostentatious directorial business, the ornate display and naturalistic touches of his settings, and his thrilling use of large crowds, gave his productions an individuality unmistakably his own. If the parts of the text were not drawn together into a meaningful whole, at least the elements of the production had the appearance of unification.

Unlike Kean and Tree, Granville-Barker was highly concerned with the genre of *The Winter's Tale* and praised its tragicomic structure as the work of a mature artist. Trusting in the author's intent, Barker believed that Shakespeare introduced the character, Time, to jar the audience from one mood to another. The artifice of the device, to Barker's mind, attuned the audience to the artifice of the story and was a simple way to dramatically bridge the sixteen years.
In his production of *The Winter's Tale* Barker allowed but one intermission, that occurring between Shakespeare's Act III and Act IV. Barker's Act II, then, began with the address of Time, a bizarre creature somewhat reminiscent of *commedia dell'arte* characters and an obviously theatrical personage. In this fictional character Barker had found the artificial device he sought in order to shift the direction of the story.

In Barker's attempt to emulate Elizabethan stagecraft, he employed certain basic theatrical techniques which tended to have a unifying effect on his production. His actors, for example, spoke at a uniformly rapid rate of speed and stressed the rhythmic nature of Shakespeare's poetry. They also attempted to play more directly to the audience after the manner of the Elizabethan actors. In the visual arts, too, Barker strove for a special unity of effect, choosing, for example, the Renaissance classical style of Julio Romano as the pattern for costumes. So Barker achieved a uniformity in acting style and in the visual elements of his production which, when extended to all parts of the play, tended to give it an unusual integrity.

Peter Wood probably achieved a more complete unity in his production of *The Winter's Tale* than did the other three producers under consideration. Deciding to approach the play as a fairy-tale, he found in the text a unifying concept by which he could integrate stylistically
all of the elements of his production. In a mythical atmosphere anything could happen, a king's tyranny and a peddler's roguery, a baby's salvation and a wife's resurrection, death and laughter.

One of the ways in which Wood was able to bring harmony to his productions was through the unified style of his settings and costumes. Spaciousness and simplicity were the two most outstanding qualities of the settings while the costumes were typified and vivified by bold colors. Wood's own inventiveness contributed many storybook touches such as illustrative business which was added to the strictly narrative passages.

In the atmosphere that he had established for the production, Wood was able to explore the play's contrasts without endangering its integrity. He emphasized the differences in mood between the first and second halves of the play by bold changes in lighting intensity and color, and consequently the play actually passed from darkness to light. Wood was also able to contrast the emotional control of the royal personages with the uninhibited passions of the rustics in the pastoral scene. But he managed to unify all these contrasts in an atmosphere of make-believe.

Although The Winter's Tale has structural problems which have continually challenged theatrical producers, it has, at the same time, positive dramatic values which entice producers to look beyond its
drawbacks to its potential assets. Although the generic mixture, the anachronisms, and the apparent absurdities of its structure tend to frighten producers, the trial scene, the sheep-shearing, and the living statue attract them to the histrionic possibilities of the play in production.

Kenneth Muir believes that the statue scene is one of the most moving moments in all dramatic literature. Its theatrical effectiveness can be traced back to the Hermione of Mrs. Siddons in John Philip Kemble's 1802 production of the play when "she acted the painted statue to life with monumental dignity and noble passion." In 1837 William Macready and Mrs. Helen Faucit won much admiration in their portrayals of the final scene. In Kean's production the statue scene began with a spectacular torchlight procession and continued with the huge stage crowd reacting in wonderment at the moving statue. Tree, like Kean, employed many extras for the statue scene, which concluded with a hymn of praise to Apollo.

Barker, on the other hand, staged the scene quite simply, playing it downstage with very few characters on stage. As a result, he emphasized the human relationships rather than exploiting the spectacular possibilities. Peter Wood, who believed that Shakespeare's main purpose in writing the play was to put the statue scene on stage, played it on a practically bare stage, using only statues and candelabras in the background to draw out the religious theme of the play. But in every
production under consideration here the producer was aware of the dramatic potential of the statue scene, and, within the framework and style of his presentation, gave it full theatrical emphasis.

The sheep-shearing is another histrionic high spot in *The Winter's Tale*, and, indeed, is considered by some critics to be the highest point of interest in the play. David Garrick thought so highly of it that he presented only the fourth and fifth acts of the play. When Mary Anderson doubled in the roles of Hermione and Perdita in 1887, her singing and dancing in the pastoral scene captivated critics and drew full houses at the Lyceum Theatre for 164 performances. Kean, in his desire to lay a classical base for the play, eliminated the suggestion of English country life in the scene by converting it into a Dionysian revel with hundreds of Bithynian peasants singing and dancing in a synchronized spectacle.

Tree sought romantic rural values in his pastoral scene by adding sentimental business for Florizel and Perdita to perform throughout the scene. He also strove for musical comedy effects in the scene by giving additional songs to Perdita and by emphasizing her dancing. Barker believed that Bohemia was in reality the Warwickshire of Shakespeare's youth, and so the barefooted peasants in his production were spirited Elizabethans who whooped up a lively country dance.
Wood's pastoral scene, set at night, was described as a full-blooded fertility rite, similar in tone to Barker's. Each producer recognized the potential theatrical values in the sheep-shearing scene, and made special efforts to draw out all of the theatrical possibilities afforded them.

Kean and Tree mined dramatic gold out of the Hermione trial scene. As part of his plan to reset the play in a classical setting, Kean set the trial in the theatre of Syracuse, a location which afforded him scenic splendor as well as accommodation for a large crowd. As a result an overwhelming sympathy was generated for Hermione, not only for her unjust condemnation, but for the indignity she was made to suffer through this public humiliation. Tree, setting his trial in a huge foreboding hall in the palace, employed a large crowd whose reactions accentuated the pathetic plight of Hermione. Barker believed that Shakespeare wrote the play because of his fascination with the character of Leontes. In his production, the focus of the first three acts, (even in the trial scene) was on the mania of Leontes. As a result, Hermione's importance was reduced, and this, coupled with her apparent passivity and unwillingness to fight vigorously for her own cause, made her appear unfeeling and cold. In Wood's production, too, Leontes' madness dominated the first half of the play, and so unlike Kean and Tree, Barker and Wood found
the primary dramatic strength of the first three acts to be in the character of Leontes rather than in the situation of Hermione's trial.

If the peculiarities of The Winter's Tale have challenged producers for centuries, the simplicities and complexities of its characters have waged war with the many actors who have attempted to play its difficult roles. Shakespeare's romances would seem to make very different demands upon actors than do, say, his tragedies. In a tragedy with its focus upon the individual, character backgrounds are frequently sketched in and motivations laid out in a logical sequence. In a romance with its broad narrative sweep, the author seems to rely more heavily upon the actor to supply his own details of character background and motivations. The obvious example in The Winter's Tale, of course, is the source of Leontes' jealousy. Barker and Shaw believed that Leontes, unlike Othello, was a truly jealous husband because, they contended, jealousy resting upon any apparent foundation is less than jealousy. While this notion may be true in theory, in practice the actor must determine in his own mind what the source of the jealousy will be. It need not arise from logical motivation, but if it is to be a fault of character, the actor must be able to blend the defect in with a myriad of other character qualities which the role demands. In the four productions under consideration here, three different
approaches were taken by the actors who played Leontes. Kean, who was perhaps influenced by those critics who bemoaned Leontes' motiveless passion, tried to give reason to the outpouring of jealousy at the very beginning of the scene by furtive glances at Hermione and Polixenes. Charles Warner who acted Leontes in Tree's production and Henry Ainley who played the role for Barker, both portrayed the character as a man who had acute psychological problems. Influenced probably by a growing interest in abnormal psychology, their approach made Leontes appear to be a neurasthenic, a hystero-epileptic, or an otherwise mentally sick king. In Peter Wood's production Eric Porter played Leontes as a man who had been in the grip of jealousy before the action of the play began. He, like John Gielgud before him, was evidently influenced by the criticisms of men like Nevill Coghill who believed Leontes had been jealous for a long time and was, in the play's second scene, trying to trap Polixenes into remaining in Sicily so Leontes could get revenge. The variations in approach to the same problem illustrate the need for the actor and director to determine the source of Leontes' jealousy if he is to play the role truthfully and believably.

Just as Leontes dominates the first three acts of The Winter's Tale so Perdita commands the greatest focus of attention in the play's pastoral scene (IV, iv). Pafford believes that the beautiful shepherdess is "at
least as much a striking personality as a conventional character." Production results seem to bear out this judgment for few actresses have been able to supply the personal magnetism that the role requires. Mary Anderson, who was undoubtedly the most successful Perdita on the English stage, brought a captivating personality, an earthy beauty, and a talent for enchanting singing and dancing to the role. In all four productions under consideration here, not one actress who played Perdita managed to be any more than adequate. Carlotta Leclercq in Kean's production was attractive; Viola Tree was self-conscious; Cathleen Nesbit in Barker's production and Susan Maryott in Wood's projected the peasant qualities successfully without being able to suggest those of the princess.

The demands on any actress playing this role are great indeed. Not only must she be able to portray a simple country girl, but audiences must be able to see regal qualities through her rural coquetry. She should also have a radiant beauty of mind and body as well as an ability to handle the marvelous poetry which Shakespeare has written for her. Rare, indeed, is the actress who possesses all of these virtues.

In the last 150 years of its production history, the most consistently outstanding element in presentations of The Winter's Tale has been its spectacle. Kemble's 1802 production of it featured all new settings
and costumes. When Macready produced it in 1837 he used Kemble's basic pattern of production but improved on the mise-en-scene. Kean, capitalizing on the scenic tradition of his predecessors, mounted a super spectacular production of the play in 1856. Audiences flocked to the Princess's Theatre to marvel at the magnificent scenery and costumes, all of which were based on true historical models. Tree, like Kean, exploited the popular pictorial realism and added naturalistic touches with the result that his scenery was as ostentatious as Kean's. Reacting against the pictorial tradition of Kean and Tree, Granville-Barker tried to put focus on the actors by using Elizabethan stage techniques and allowing imagination rather than historical accuracy to dictate the style of settings and costumes. The results were so startling that the attention of the audience was seized by the extremely unusual scenic decorations and costumes, the very elements which Barker wanted de-emphasized. In Peter Wood's production, however, the simple scenery and the vivid costumes harmonized with all the production details and made it appear to be one of the least fussy revivals of the play on the English stage.

The production history of The Winter's Tale reveals a tendency on the part of producers to allow ostentation in the design and execution of scenery and costumes. The result of such an error is that the work of the actors and the poetry of the play becomes subordinated
to the visual elements. Undoubtedly a romance such as The Winter's Tale depends to a certain extent upon the work of a fine designer to help create the proper atmosphere for its satisfactory enactment. But the scenic excesses of Kean and Tree indicate an attempt to reach for extra dramatic effects which are detrimental to the playwright's creation.

The Winter's Tale is quite obviously a play in which the elements of reality and fantasy are present in an extraordinary blend. Its characters are real people who perform real actions and who experience real emotions. On the other hand, the wife of a jealous husband disappears inexplicably for sixteen years, only to be restored to life—when her statue is animated. These disparate elements of reality and fantasy, juxtaposed in the same play as they are, must be reconciled in the theatre. Critic S.L. Bethell believes that Shakespeare took care of the problem by deliberately using antiquated stage techniques by which he constantly reminded the audience that what it was watching was, after all, only a tale. But most producers have been reluctant to put complete trust in their playwright's technique and, as a result of their distrust, extra motivational devices, elaborate scenery, or gimmickry of one kind or another have been added to make the play's irregularities palatable to audiences. For, after all, a living statue is not one of the most common stage
devices in dramatic literature.

The productions investigated in this study illustrate, I believe, some of the serious difficulties and challenges which await the producer who decides to stage *The Winter's Tale*. At the same time, the productions also reveal the tremendous theatrical possibilities which the play contains. The true challenge for the producer is, I think, to be able to capitalize on the histrionic potential of the play's seemingly individual elements (e.g., Leontes' strange mania, Autolycus' comedy and singing, Hermione's pathos, the shepherds' and shepherdesses dancing, the moving statue, Perdita's magnetism, etc.) and, at the same time, find a unifying production concept which, while not distorting any aspect of the play, will make its disparate elements seem interrelated. In *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare has not provided such an obvious unifying device as a tragic hero to act as a cohesive force in the play, but he has created a romantic work that requires a magical atmosphere in which its fanciful events might unfold. The producer who is able to create that atmosphere and once in it, capitalize on the play's dramatic strengths, will have provided his audience with the same rare and satisfying pleasure that comes from a tale well told before a winter's fire.
Footnotes Conclusion


3 See above, p. 35.

4 Pafford, p. lxi.

5 See above, p. 35.

6 Interview with Kenneth Muir at The Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon, August 6, 1969.


9 Sunday Times, September 4, 1960, p. 15.


12 Pafford, p. lxxvi.

13 S.L. Bethell, "Antiquated Technique and Planes of Reality," quoted in Muir, Casebook, p. 120.
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