

**THE EARLY ROMANTIC DRAMA AT THE
ENGLISH COURT. A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND
LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649510412

The Early Romantic Drama at the English Court. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Literature in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Lee Monroe Ellison

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

LEE MONROE ELLISON

**THE EARLY ROMANTIC DRAMA AT THE
ENGLISH COURT. A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND
LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

The University of Chicago

**THE EARLY ROMANTIC DRAMA
AT THE ENGLISH COURT**

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND
LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH)

BY

LEE MONROE ELLISON

A Private Edition

Distributed by

The University of Chicago Libraries

A Trade Edition is Published by

The Collegiate Press

GEORGE BANTA PUBLISHING COMPANY

MENASHA, WISCONSIN

1917

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	iii
CHAPTER I	
Romantic Elements in the Early English Mask.....	1
CHAPTER II	
The Influence of the Mask on the Early English Court Drama.....	39
CHAPTER III	
The Early Romantic Drama of the Court.....	48
CHAPTER IV	
Early Surviving Romantic Plays.....	87
CHAPTER V	
The Early Romantic Drama in Contemporary Criticism.....	130
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	141



PREFACE

Early in the course of my studies in Elizabethan drama I undertook, at the suggestion of Professor Manly, to prepare a bibliographical compilation of the sources of all romantic plays produced in England before the close of the sixteenth century, in so far as these sources had been determined by previous research. Though designed merely as a preliminary exercise in the methods of graduate work, this survey proved both interesting and suggestive. It revealed the precise limits which had been fixed by the combined labors of former students in determining the source relations of Elizabethan drama, and it suggested a comparative analysis of the plays of the period with a view to determining the relative importance of particular types of romantic literature in providing plot material for Elizabethan playwrights.

Out of these rather general considerations came the suggestion for the present study. The attempt to reduce the varied forms of romantic appeal to something approximating regular classification served, of course, to emphasize the obvious conventionality in motive and incident which many plays of the period exhibit, and to demonstrate the fact that much of the plot material had been standardized, so to speak, and needed only to be assembled and adjusted. It soon became apparent, also, that the romantic devices and conventions which I had designated as "mediaeval," in contrast to those of Renaissance origin and affiliation, were overwhelmingly predominant during the early period of Elizabethan drama. Thus the contact of mediaeval literature with the later romantic secular drama seemed to constitute a logical topic for investigation. But owing to the particularly fugitive character of all evidence bearing upon the history of the popular stage in England prior to the last quarter of the sixteenth century, it seemed advisable to rest my study upon the more stable foundation of the court performance. Here, at least, we are dealing with a demonstrable matter. The appropriation of the materials of mediaeval romantic literature by the purveyors of royal entertainment is proved by contemporary records to have begun at an early date; and the sudden emergence of this form of

quasi-dramatic activity into real drama at the court of Elizabeth had been provided for by many years of practically unbroken tradition.

The period during which I have attempted to trace the development of the romantic drama is terminated naturally by the inauguration of new fashions and the popularizing of more novel themes by the promoters of dramatic innovation. The passing of the mediaeval vogue, in all but plebeian circles, may be thought of as complete by the year 1585. Its recrudescence upon the popular stage during the last decade of the century does not, of course, come within the scope of the present study.

Perhaps it would not be out of place to add a word in explanation of the reasons that led me to include a discussion of the play *Common Conditions* in a dissertation which purports to deal with the survival of mediaeval literary conventions in the sixteenth century court drama. If my conjecture be correct, the story upon which that play is based reached the dramatist not through mediaeval channels, but in the form of an Italian novella. Nevertheless, the story is characteristically mediaeval. The affiliation with the legend of St. Eustace and its analogues is sufficient proof of this. Furthermore, there could be no more striking indication of the strength of the heroic tradition in Elizabethan drama at this period than the care of the dramatist to supply whatever conventions were lacking in the narrative version. There is, to be sure, no direct evidence that *Common Conditions* was ever presented at Court; but in view of the extraordinary demand for acceptable drama, the assumption that so good a play was not overlooked by the Master of the Revels can hardly seem wholly unwarranted. Besides, I should like to repeat that I make no claim for the court play as a distinct genre. It is the character of the drama during an important period in its history that we are interested in tracing; and, since *Common Conditions* is one of the few surviving representatives of the kind of dramatic activity with which this dissertation is concerned, its exclusion could hardly be demanded on strictly logical grounds.

In the pursuance of this study I have received indispensable assistance from certain members of the Faculty of the University of Chicago, which I take pleasure in acknowledging. To Professor Manly I am indebted for the original suggestion, as well as for invaluable counsel upon matters of detail while the work was

in progress. My obligations to Professor C. R. Baskervill are no less great. The results of my labors have in every instance passed under his immediate inspection, and whatever of merit this treatise possesses is due in no small measure to his influence. Finally, I have to thank Professor Karl Pietsch, of the Romance Department, for the generous interest which he has shown in my studies, and to express my gratitude for the valuable assistance which he has rendered me in getting together a working bibliography of the older romantic literature of Europe.

L. M. E.

Chicago, June 3, 1916.

