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THE DRAMATIC WORK OF DAVID MALLET

by

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[Signature]

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PREFACE

In this study of Mallet's dramatic work, I have relied heavily on four collections of letters: the correspondence found in the first two volumes of Aaron Hill's *Works* (1753), George Sherburn's *Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, Alan D. McKillop's *Letters and Documents* of James Thomson, and David Mason Little's unpublished *Letters* of David Mallet. Unless otherwise indicated, references to these collections cite letters, not introductory material or annotations. But the summary of Mallet's life given in the first chapter is based mainly upon the introductory essays in Little's *Letters* and Frederick Dinsdale's edition of Mallet's *Ballads and Songs* (1857). Other sources used in the summary are specifically noted. The biographical material elaborated upon in succeeding chapters is built of information drawn from the correspondence indicated above.

In preparing this dissertation, I have had the aid of many generous people. The staff of the Fondren Library has courteously helped me through numerous difficulties, and I wish to thank Miss Pender Turnbull, in particular, whose cooperation has been invaluable. Although I am indebted, in one way or another, to all the members of the Department of English, I wish to thank specifically the following: Professor Alan D. McKillop, who suggested Mallet as a subject for study and who has generously placed his time, scholarship, and profound knowledge of the eighteenth century at my
disposal; Professor Wilfred S. Dowden, who allowed me to spend
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who introduced me to the drama and who directed this study--to whom
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Finally, I should like to express my gratitude to my wife,
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difference.
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CHAPTER I

PROLOGUE

I

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine in some detail the dramatic accomplishments of David Mallet. The following chapters pay attention to the genesis of Mallet's plays and masques, in so far as such information can be deduced from letters and documents; they examine the works from the point of view of his intention, as evidenced by declarations made by both Mallet and his contemporaries; and they give some account of the circumstances surrounding each stage production and its succeeding revivals, should such have occurred. The dramatic career of Mallet spans slightly more than a generation, from the appearance of Eurydice in 1731 to the production of Elvira in 1763. During this time Mallet composed three tragedies, the two named above and Mustapha, which was staged in 1739. In addition, he wrote two masques: Alfred, produced privately in 1740, was the result of a collaboration with the poet James Thomson; after Thomson's death in 1748, Mallet altered the masque and it appeared at Drury Lane in 1751; the other masque was Britannia, staged in 1755.

Mallet's work began at the time when the stage was dominated by neo-classic precepts, but it must be remembered that the year in which Eurydice appeared was also the year in which Lillo introduced a new note into English tragedy—a note resurrected from Elizabethan tradition—with his middle-class, prose tragedy The London
Merchant. Wattle's work ended at the time when the drama, or at least tragedy, appeared to have swung into a direction heralding the approaching, yet distant, romantic period—a direction indicated by Wattle's Douglas in the late fifties.

The tragedy of the eighteenth century has been neatly categorized by such scholars as Allardyce Nicoll and George Wattleton. However, as Sherbo says, this procedure is convenient only for anthologists. Nicoll lists five categories for the tragedy of Wattle's century: (1) pseudo-classical, (2) pseudo-romantic, (3) Augustan, and (4) domestic tragedies, and (5) relics of the heroic drama of the Restoration. Differentiating among the first three of these categories is rather difficult. Pseudo-classical tragedies show a direct classical influence, mainly that of Seneca, and an indirect influence from the French tradition. Pseudo-romantic tragedies are marked principally by an appreciation of "that vague something which we call romantic." Augustan tragedies are "an amalgam of diverse forces," which means that this category is a catchall for those dramas not readily fitted into one of the other categories. The last two groups are more easily recognized: domestic tragedies have a middle-class background; heroic dramas basically retain the love and honor theme and are often identifiable by their bombastic language.

The use of categories such as these is indispensable for the survey of a particular period or, indeed, of the whole sweep of dramatic history. But for the close examination of an individual au-
thor they are, by and large, meaningless. To say of Lallet's Mustafpha, for example, that it shows evidence of having been written in the tradition of the heroic drama tells little about what Mustafpha means, or why it was written. When he came to write Mustafpha, Lallet needed a plot which presented a king destroying his son because of the malignant influence of the court. He needed this plot because Mustafpha is a political play, designed to portray dramatically the conflict between Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, and George II. Therefore, Lallet chose a situation in history which could be presented as a dramatic analogy for a contemporary situation. This rather obvious point is being elaborated in order to show that the customary distinctions—which are certainly valid and important in other studies—have little bearing on the immediate purposes of this dissertation.

The most important aspect of Lallet's dramatic work is its intimate coupling with the politics of the period. With the exception of Eurydice, his first play, all of Lallet's dramas have a political intent and were written for the express purpose of championing a political cause. In this respect, Lallet was utilizing the stage in exactly the same way that dramatists had been using it ever since the Elizabethan period. Indeed, the practice of using the stage as an arena for political debate was widely recognized. In 1739, in a discussion of the Licensing Act, the Craftsman went so far as to say that tragedies were good only when they were political. "One of the celebrated Authors of the Tatler hath remark'd,
that our best Comedies are good Representations of the manners of the Age, in which they were written. To this Observation I will add, that in our best Tragedies we may trace the Politicks of the publick Administration, at the time, when they were brought upon the Stage." 5 The writer then shows political intent in Shakespeare's Henry V and Julius Caesar, Rowe's Tamerlane and The Royal Convert, Otway's The Orphan and Venice Preserved, Addison's Cato, Dryden's The Spanish Frier, and Rochester's Valentinius.

Lallet's dramatic work after the mid-thirties is intelligible only in the light of contemporary politics, and much of the criticism directed against his productions was meaningless because it failed to take into consideration the political circumstances which alone give his dramatic work any meaning and validity. For example, the Alfred that Lallet and Thomson collaborated upon was severely criticized because the character of the king is a static figure. Hesiod Cooke satirically called Alfred "King Log," by which he meant that the character is contemplative, meditative, and dramatically inactive. 5 This charge is correct, and because of its truth one might conclude that neither Thomson nor Lallet knew anything about the construction of dramatic character. But Alfred is an inactive character because of the political situation which brought the masque into existence. The dramatic presentation of Alfred on the isle of Athelney is an analogy of the situation of Frederick Louis at Claiefden; both Alfred and Frederick are waiting for that moment when power will come to them, and it is this parallel which makes
intelligible the use of a static character in the masque.

This insistence upon a comprehension of the political back-
ground as a prerequisite for understanding Mallet's plays should
not, however, be misconstrued as a pretext for asserting that his
tragedies and masques have a literary value beyond that heretofore
granted them. Mallet was a minor dramatist, and his works have
justly been relegated to the limbo for forgotten plays. It is not
the intention of this dissertation to argue that unsuspected excel-
lencies are to be found in his works. Indeed, the intention con-
cerns a much simpler matter. This dissertation tries (and not al-
ways with success) to answer one fundamental question about Mal-
let's plays: What purposes did he have in mind when he wrote them?

II

Although certain events in Mallet's life will be elaborated
upon in succeeding chapters, a brief summary of his career may pos-
sibly help the reader, for these facts have never been widely circu-
lated. Of course, Samuel Johnson included Mallet in the Lives, but
Johnson's account is factually unreliable and is colored far too
much by personal animosity toward the "beggarly Scotchman." Only
two men—Frederick Dinsdale and David Mason Little—have ever made a
systematic attempt to organize such biographical information about
Mallet as exists. Dinsdale made a determined effort to find as much
information as he could, and the substantial biography prefixed to
his edition of Mallet’s Ballads and Songs is a soundly documented performance. The best and most extensive study of Mallet is an unpublished dissertation by David Mason Little. Entitled The Letters of an Eighteenth Century Scotswoman, it is a remarkably well-annotated collection of Mallet’s letters.

Though both Dinsdale and Little took considerable pains to ascertain the correct date of Mallet’s birth, the matter has never been definitely settled. When Mallet died in 1765, his age was given as sixty-three by the Scots Magazine, a statement indicating that he was born about 1702. At any rate, he grew up in Scotland and attended the High School of Edinburgh. In 1717-1718 he worked as janitor for the school, a position then of more importance than the title now signifies. In 1720 he entered the University of Edinburgh and, at the same time, became tutor to the children of a Mr. Home, who lived in Dreghorne, near Edinburgh.

In 1723 Mallet, having been chosen as tutor for the sons of the Duke of Montrose, traveled to Shawford, near Winchester, where the Duke resided. He never returned to Scotland but spent the rest of his life either close to London or else abroad. In July, 1724, his best-known work, the ballad “William and Margaret,” appeared in Aaron Hill’s Plain Dealer. During the next few years, he became known in London as a promising young poet, and when his fellow countryman, James Thomson, came to the city, Mallet was in a posi-
tion to lend invaluable assistance in getting Winter published in 1726.

During the late 1720's, Lallet changed his name. Originally, his surname was Walloch, a Scottish name that the English found difficult to pronounce. He first considered the change in 1724, when his cousin suggested Mallet as an alternative, but he continued to use Walloch until 1726. This change in surnames was later employed as an instrument of ridicule by Mallet's enemies. When Johnson abridged his Dictionary, he defined alias as "a Latin word, signifying otherwise; as Mallet alias Walloch; that is otherwise Walloch." Since Mallet was suspected of being a deist, a pun was circulated which transformed Walloch to Woloch. His change of name from a Scottish to an English form, plus the fact that he cleared his tongue of any Scottish accent, led Scotsmen in general to look upon Mallet as a renegade who was ashamed of his native land.

Mallet's The Excursion, an imitation of Thomson's successful Winter, appeared in 1728, and three years later Surdusice was staged. At the end of 1731, Lallet left the Montrose family and became tutor to James Newsham, the stepson of John Knight. He published a satiric poem, Of Verbal Criticism, in 1733 and shortly thereafter went abroad with his pupil. Before embarking on the Grand Tour, Lallet married his first wife, by whom he had two children. When he returned from Europe, he became involved for the first time, as far as one can tell, in political activities, and his political play Mustapha was produced in 1739.
From this time on, Mallet's career was intimately connected with politics. In the 1730's, he attracted the attention of such figures as George Lyttelton, Chesterfield, and Bolingbroke. These men were at the heart of the opposition to Walpole, and Mallet's plays set forth dramatically their political position. When the Opposition was joined by Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, Lyttelton was made Secretary to the Prince, and Mallet, along with Thomson, became an undersecretary. Mallet's contribution to the literature of the Opposition, for which he received his pension, was the tragedy Mustapha and his share in the collaboration on Alfred. Mallet held the undersecretaryship for about six years, until 1746, when Lyttelton fell from the Prince's favor. At that time both Thomson and Mallet lost their positions; as Thomson expressed it, they "were all routed in one day."

During the 1740's, Mallet's reputation was sufficiently great for his being chosen as the biographer of the Duke of Marlborough. He had acquired a name as a biographer through the production of his The Life of Francis Bacon, which had been prefixed to a four-volume collection of Bacon's Works in 1740. When Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, died, she left a bequest of a thousand pounds to Mallet and Richard Glover for the purpose of getting them to write the biography of her late husband. Possibly because the will stipulated that no part of the history be written in verse, Glover declined the bequest and Mallet assumed the entire sum. For the next twenty years, until he died, Mallet pretended to be hard at work on the
biography, but to his shame he never wrote a word.

Mallet's wife died in 1742. Among their several children was a daughter, Dorothea, who became a writer. She married a Genoese gentleman named Celesia, who had formerly resided in London as Consul. As Dorothea Celesia, she wrote a tragedy called Almida, which was acted about ten nights during January, 1771. She also produced Indolence, a poem, in 1772.

Mallet remarried in 1742. His second wife was Lucy Elstob, the daughter of the steward of the Earl of Carlisle; she brought a dowry of ten thousand pounds, over which, however, Mallet had no control. The second Mrs. Mallet was apparently an odious person.

During the latter part of Mallet's life, Edward Gibbon was a family friend and he often visited the Mallers. Through Gibbon's letters a distasteful picture of Lucy Mallet emerges. When he was in Paris in 1763, Gibbon was chided by his father for not having written Mrs. Mallet. In his reply to the elder Gibbon, the son explains his reluctance to correspond with the lady. "I propose writing her tonight tho' with great repugnance and difficulty. I neither chuse to go to the Bastille for sending her observations upon the French government, nor to fill my letter full of romantick protestations of attachment and friendship, which I do not feel for her, and which she feels for nobody." Mrs. Mallet survived her husband by many years. After Mallet's death, she spent most of the remainder of her life in Paris, where she died in 1795.

After his second marriage, Mallet produced little literary
work for a number of years. Then, in 1747, he published *Amyntor and Theodora: or, the Hermit*, a long narrative poem dedicated to the Earl of Chesterfield. The poem has no recognizable political intent—an indication, perhaps, that his connections with the Prince of Wales were weakening.

By the time Mallet lost his undersecretaryship in 1748, he was in the very good graces of Bolingbroke, whom he had met through Pope. When Pope died, Bolingbroke discovered that the poet had clandestinely printed 1500 copies of Bolingbroke’s *Idea of a Patriot King*, which had been “revised, subdivided, altered, and, in short, remodelled according to the suggestions of his [Pope’s] own imagination.” Bolingbroke is supposed to have burned the copies. In 1749 a corrected edition was issued with a preface by Mallet, in which Pope’s “breach of trust” was severely censured. Since Pope had befriended him, Mallet’s action in this affair was considered unpardonable. Several writers attacked Bolingbroke and Mallet, among them William Warburton, to whom Mallet published a rejoinder entitled *A Familiar Epistle to the Most Impudent Man Living*.

Mallet’s devotion to Bolingbroke was rewarded upon the nobleman’s death in 1751 with the legacy of his works, from the publication of which Mallet expected to profit greatly. He was soon involved, however, in a lawsuit with the printer Richard Franklin, whose publication of some of Bolingbroke’s works in the 1720’s and 1730’s supposedly gave him a claim to part of the legacy. That the editorship of Bolingbroke’s works was considered financially impor-
tant can be seen from the fact that, shortly after the nobleman's death, Mallet turned down an offer of three thousand pounds for them, made by Andrew Millar, the bookseller. The lawsuit terminated in an agreement by Mallet to pay Franklin five hundred pounds for his claimed share, an agreement that Mallet never honored. In 1754 Mallet published a five-volume edition of Bolingbroke's Works. The edition was financially unsuccessful, and Mallet was attacked vigorously for having edited the deistical writings of the late nobleman.

After Bolingbroke died, Mallet began an assiduous and untiring search for patronage from other politicians. During the 1750’s and early 1760’s, Mallet courted Henry Pelham and his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, Philip Yorke, the Earl of Hardwicks, and John Stewart, the Earl of Bute. He wrote a panegyric to Charles Stanhope, and he dedicated his collected works in 1759 to Lord Mansfield, the Lord Chief Justice of England. For twelve long years, all of Mallet's activities were directed toward the acquisition of patronage, which he finally obtained in 1763 when he was made a minor governmental official. He was, however, able to enjoy his reward for only a short time; two years later, he died.

III

The reputation which Mallet gained during the last twenty-five years of his life is very unsavoury. His failure to write the
biography of the Duke of Marlborough, his attack upon Pope's memory after the poet's death, his defaulting of the settlement with Richard Franklin, his courting of politicians when they were in favor and his desertion of them when they were out of office, his change of name, his reputation as a deist, all of these facets of his career have created for him a character as an unprincipled and scoundrelly fellow—a reputation which one must admit Mallet has partially earned.

This reputation has, of course, had an effect upon the scholarly attention given Mallet. No better example of this effect can be found than the long controversy concerning the problem of the authorship of the ballad "William and Margaret," a controversy which spans almost two hundred years. Since Mallet appeared to be a thorough rascal, it was not difficult to believe him capable of plagiarism; and starting from almost the moment of his death, attempts have been made to take from him the authorship of the one poem for which he is remembered.

That Mallet stole the ballad was first charged by Edward Thompson, an author and a sailor, who brought out an edition of Marvell's works in 1776. Thompson claimed that he had a manuscript volume of Marvell's poems; some of the poems were in Marvell's hand and others were in the hand of a copyist Marvell had hired. "William and Margaret" was among these poems, and on the basis of this evidence Thompson concluded that the ballad was Marvell's. When Thompson's edition came out with the charge, Edward Gibbon
wrote the following to his stepmother. "Poor Mallet! I pity his misfortune and feel for him probably more than he does for himself at present. His William and Margaret his only good piece of poetry is torn from him, and by the evidence of old Manuscripts turns out to be the work of the celebrated Andrew Marvel composed in the year 1670." Although Gibbon was ready to believe the worst of his dead friend, most people did not accept Thompson's accusation, probably because Thompson had also charged Addison and Watts with plagiarism on the basis that a few of their poems were also found in the manuscript volume. This "slender proof," as Davies calls it, was largely disregarded; even Johnson considered the charge of Mallet's plagiarism improbable.

In the nineteenth century, however, Mallet faced a formidable opponent. The editor of the * Roxburghe Ballads, * William Chappell, possessed an almost psychotic hatred for the memory of Mallet, and he never missed an opportunity to speak bitterly and contemptuously of the poet. In 1871 Chappell discovered a Black Letter copy of the ballad in the British Museum. The copy had a revenue stamp on it; according to Chappell, this proved that the broadsheet had been published between 1711, when the Stamp Act went into effect, and a short time later, when ballads were exempted from the Act. The existence of the stamp upon the broadsheet meant, said Chappell, that the ballad had been in existence between 1711 and an indeterminate date shortly thereafter. Since Mallet would have been a mere boy during this time, he obviously could not have written
"William and Margaret," and he must have stolen the ballad from some anonymous author. 27

Toward the end of the century, Professor William Phelps discussed the authorship of "William and Margaret" in an appendix to his *The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement.* 28 When the ballad was first published in the *Plain Dealer*, Mallet's name was not affixed to it. In a later issue of the periodical, Hill stated that he had learned the name of the author, who was a North Briton, and he published a letter in which Mallet expressed pleasure at seeing his poem in print, though the letter did not bear Mallet's name. 29 Connecting this series of publication events with the damaging evidence of the stamp Chappell had found, Phelps created a highly improbable account of Mallet's theft of the ballad. Phelps said that Mallet waited a decent interval after the ballad had first appeared in the *Plain Dealer* and, when no one came forward to claim authorship, deliberately asserted he had written the poem.

As any researcher knows, however, truth is an elusive creature. In the early 1950's, Gordon Sleigh found a ballad called "The Fate of Courtesans and their Enamoratos" in the British Museum. Dated 1735, the ballad has a revenue stamp on it. Checking into the Stamp Act itself, Sleigh could find no reference or amendment concerning ballads. He then went through the newspapers in the Burney collection and examined the stamps. He found that the stamp numbers were roughly consecutive and that the number 400 does not appear on any newspaper before 1723. Since the stamp number on the
Black Letter copy of "William and Margaret" is 435, Sleigh assumes that the broadsheet was not published until 1724. On the basis of this evidence, Mallet regains his ballad.

This matter has been given more attention here than it probably deserves, but the history of "William and Margaret" is a good example of the way a man's reputation leaves him open to misconstruction. The fantastic story that Phelps evolved concerning Mallet's method of theft is only possible in view of Mallet's discredited name. There is perhaps a moral in this history of the ballad. The scholar's courtship of truth is a long and too often vain search for a glimpse of her visage in the brief letters and documents of the past. And, like William, he may come upon that moment when he betrays her:

This is the dumb and dreary hour,
When injur'd ghosts complain;
When yawning graves give up their dead,
To haunt the faithless swain.
NOTES


3 Nicoll, III, 91.

4 Nicoll, II, 96.

5 London Magazine, VIII (1739), 221. The number of the Craftsman is 668, dated April 8, 1739.

6 Gentleman’s Magazine, LXI (1791), 1180.


9 Harvard University, 1935.

10 XXVII (1765), 224.

11 See Douglas Grant, James Thomson Poet of "The Seasons" (London, 1951), Chap. III.

12 Dinsdale, p. 21, quotes the following excerpt from Mallet’s letter to Mr. Ker, dated Shrewsbury, September 15, 1724. "P.S. My cousin Mr. Paton would have me write my name Mallet, for there is not one Englishman that can pronounce it."
The following reference to Bolingbroke and Lyttelton occurs in Of Verbal Criticism.

First in the friendships of the Great enroll'd,
The ST. JOHNS, BOYLES, and LYTTELTONS, of old.


The will is reproduced in Mrs. A. T. Thomson, Memoirs of Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, and of the Court of Queen Anne (London, 1839), II, 362-573. The Codicil mentioning the bequest to Mallet and Glover is on p. 572.


Monthly Review, I (1749), 52.


An example of these attacks is the pamphlet Critical Remarks upon the Late Lord Viscount Bolingbroke's Letters on the Study and Use of History (London, 1754). The pamphlet is dedicated to Mallet, and the attack upon him in that dedication is reprinted in the Monthly Review, X (1754), 388. "These annotations can justly be addressed to no man beside you: it is you that have troubled the world with these letters and fragments of lord Bolingbroke: it is you that (in defiance of all kind of laws) boldly endeavour, for the sake of truth, and, no doubt, not for filthy lucre, to spread the Bolingbrokeana around the land. As you have therefore fostered these posthumous abortions of his lordship's brain, the mischief done by such infant Maxims, lies at your door. You might possibly
think it a pity to stifle or destroy such Ceasarian foetuses, and the requested, as it is said, to stop your hand, have, most obstetrically, helped them into all the light which they are capable of. We may now wish you joy of the brats, and when mons. Voltaire departs he knows not whither, he may intrust his esoterics to the same impartial hand. I am equally, with the rest of the Christian world, Your obliged, humble servant."


23 A discussion of Thompson's charge can be found in Dinsdale, pp. 75-78.  

24 Norton, II, 110.


26 Johnson, III, 401.

27 This discussion by Chappell is in the Roxburghe Ballads, III, 667-676.

28 (New York, 1893), pp. 177-182.

29 A complete discussion of the publication of "William and Margaret" can be found in Dinsdale, pp. 71-74.

30 Gordon F. Sleigh, "The Authorship of William and Margaret," The Library, VIII (1953), 121-123.
CHAPTER II

EURYDICE: JEALOUSY AND AMBITION

Mallet's first dramatic offering, *Eurydice*, was initially performed on February 22, 1730/31. It appeared, as did all Mallet's plays, at Drury Lane, which at that time was operating under the joint administration of Wilks, Cibber, and Booth. The title role was played by the celebrated Mrs. Porter, and the two leading male roles, Periander and Procles, were taken by John Mills and James Marshall. Twelve days after *Eurydice* first appeared, an edition of the play inscribed to the Duke of Montrose was published, as indicated by the following announcement placed in the March 4, 1731, issue of the *Grub-Street Journal*: "This Day is Published EURYDICE: A Tragedy, as it is acting at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. Printed for A MILLAR, at Buchanan's-Head against St. Clement's Church in the Strand. Pr. ls. 6d."

Contemporary accounts of the play are limited to a single letter by Aaron Hill, which will be discussed later. Therefore, indications of the success or failure of the tragedy have to be taken from accounts given by historians of the drama. According to Whincop, the play was a success, an opinion echoed by Nicoll. Baker, however, claims that its success was never great, not even when it was revived some twenty-eight years later, with the leading roles taken by Garrick and Mrs. Cibber. Doran compares its reception to that of Charles Johnson's *Medea*, which was performed and hissed two
months before, claiming that "the town was weary of classical pieces." 4

Actually, the success of the play was moderate. It was not a failure; no play that was performed thirteen times in one year during the eighteenth century can be called that. Its reception was certainly better than that of any other new play performed at Drury Lane during that season, excepting, of course, Lillo's phenomenal The London Merchant, which played to packed houses night after night during the summer season. An indication of the relative success or failure of Mallet's play can perhaps be better gained by comparing it with some of the other plays during those months. Johnson's Medea, which has already been mentioned, ran only three nights. Highland Fair, Joseph Mitchell's ballad opera, ran only four nights in March; and in January, Theophilus Cibber's comedy The Lover appeared for nine performances. 5 Besides Mallet's tragedy and Lillo's domestic drama, no other new play during this season at Drury Lane managed to last as long as thirteen nights.

Aaron Hill was present at the first night, and his letter of February 23, 1731, indicates that the actors were negligent in their performances, and that only Messrs. Bridgewater and Hallam, in the parts of Leonidas and Polydore, did full justice to their roles in Eurydice: "They were touch'd, and touch'd their hearers; for they spoke feelingly, that is, naturally, and without that stage vice, their eternal affectation of forced tone, with which they cover and efface the passions, they are endeavouring to heighten." 6 Hill goes
on to speak disparagingly of the other actors, even of Mrs. Porter—
that renowned tragedienne—whom he accuses of whining her speeches.

It is unfortunate that Mrs. Porter's acting was not better, for she would have certainly enhanced the play had she performed adequately. She had served a long apprenticeship under Mrs. Barry, among whose famous roles was that of Belvidera in Otway's Venice Preserved, and for years Mrs. Porter had played the parts of confidantes to Mrs. Barry's tragic heroines. Later, Mrs. Porter also successfully played Belvidera, a role that in its demand for the portrayal of extreme grief and sorrow resembles the part of Eurydice. For whatever reason, however, Mrs. Porter was remiss in her performance, and Hill says that her intonation was so monotonous that the audience lost "two words in five of everything." 7

The public reaction to Eurydice is difficult to judge—all of the praise comes from staunch friends of Mallet's. Commentators in succeeding generations have not been so kind; the play has been referred to as "hard and as dry as granite," 8 and Johnson, admitting that he knew nothing about its reception or its merit, says that he has "heard it mentioned as a mean performance." 9 Genest merely remarks that on the whole it is an indifferent tragedy which excites no interest, 10 a judgment he passes on many tragedies.

From his friends, Mallet's play received praise ranging from Hill's reverential remark that Mallet must have "had the help of some bosom angel" in creating the tragedy, 11 to Pope's rather restrained commendation: "As to the Particular Conduct, the Incidents, the
working up of those Incidents, & the Gradation of the Scenes to that
day, as far as I can judge by the course of these first Acts, you
proceed judiciously & regularly. The Single Sentiments & Expressions
are surely generally correct, & where I can fancy otherwise, I will
mark, & tell you my doubts."\(^{12}\) Even these comments were hedged, for
Pope warns Mallet that it would be "no more than honesty" to admit
that in judging drama he is less capable than in any other literary
area. It is impossible to say whether Pope was at the first perform-
ance or not. There is a letter to Mallet in which Pope, after com-
plaining of a "violent fit of the Headake," adds a postscript: "I
will try to determine to morrow in what manner to go to the Play, if
my health permits it, I fain would."\(^{13}\) On the "possibly wild assump-
tion" that the play mentioned is Eurydice, Sherburn dates the letter
18 February 1730/31.\(^{14}\) But there is no direct evidence that Pope did
attend the performance.

II

The history of the writing of Mallet's first dramatic endeavor
can be reconstructed to a certain extent. That he was interested in
writing a play some five years before the appearance of Eurydice can
be ascertained from a letter to Professor Ker, dated February 21,
1725/6. Mallet tells Ker that "the tragedy which I am writing is
built on a story in the ninth book of Herodotus, concerning Xerxes,
and his brother Masistes."\(^{15}\) Four months later, in June, 1726, Mallet
again refers to his proposed tragedy: "I cannot yet tell whether my Tragedy will be finished against next winter."\textsuperscript{16} At this point, reference to a drama about Xerxes ceases, and about a year later the first reference to \textit{Eurydice} appears.

From this rather spotty information, it is clear that, several years before \textit{Eurydice}, Mallet had considered writing a tragedy, although whether or not he actually wrote the proposed drama is not clear. What is interesting about these slight references in the Ker correspondence is that they indicate that Mallet was contemplating a classical tragedy like \textit{Eurydice}. The proposed play was—in theme, setting, and source—akin to those classical pieces of the eighteenth century which were the degenerate progeny of the tradition in heroic drama established during the Restoration.

The story to which Mallet refers in the ninth book of Herodotus certainly has all of the elements which appealed to the neo-classic writer of tragedy. Herodotus relates a tale of kingly lust that borders on the incestuous. In addition, the story furnishes the opportunity for portrayal of the pathetic—the injured, innocent wife and the victimized brother; thus could unfold those scenes of woe that would draw forth the tears of the gentler half of the audience. Had the play been written and produced, it certainly should have been able to fulfill that function of tragedy which the prologue of Young's \textit{Busiris} (1719) sets forth:

\begin{quote}
To touch the Soul is our peculiar Care; 
By just Distress soft Pity to impart, 
And mend your Nature, while we move your heart.
\end{quote}
There is no evidence as to why Mallet did not pursue his proposed tragedy. But for whatever reasons, within something less than a year, he was contemplating another tragedy. On May 25, 1727, he wrote to Ker of the impending publication of The Excursion, giving an account of the various gentlemen who have been kind enough to "peruse" it, among whom were Hill, Young, and Dennis. He concludes the letter with his first remark concerning Eurydice: "I will try the Town with this [The Excursion] before I venture out a tragedy that I have been long meditating."\(^{17}\)

It is my assumption here, as it is Little's, that this tragedy to which Mallet refers is Eurydice. This assumption is based upon his previous statements—as early as February, 1725/6—that he was actually writing on the Xerxes play. Now he is "meditating" another, and if his first statement is to be trusted, this tragedy is a different one. However, Mallet's besetting sin was procrastination; he often claimed to be writing, when in actuality he had not put pen to paper: the most notable example of this weakness is, of course, the case of the projected biography of the Duke of Marlborough.

In 1729, the name Eurydice first appears; a letter from James Thompson begins: "Dear Mallet, by this Time I suppose You are returned from London to the Downs of Hampshire, and Eurydice."\(^{18}\) Several months later, William Aikman wrote to Sir John Clerk: "Mr. Malloch's Periander is much approv'd of by Mr. Pope, Dr. Arbuthnot and most that have seen it, but am afraid that it will be too late to act it this winter as there are two already accepted before it."\(^{19}\)
This remark by Aikman raises two problems in connection with the play: the matter of its name and the matter of its route from Mallet’s manuscript to its performance on the stage.

Ordinarily, the appearance of the name Eurydice in Thompson’s letter, followed by Aikman’s use of Periander as the title, suggests that Mallet’s first projected title for the play was Eurydice; then he changed it to Periander; then, because of the appearance of John Tracy’s Periander at Lincoln’s Inn Fields on January 13, 1731, he changed the title back to Eurydice. Why he should have changed the title from Eurydice to Periander originally is difficult to understand at first, but after an analysis of the play has been completed in this chapter, it will be possible to submit a conjecture as to Mallet’s reason for the change.

III

It was through the assistance of Pope that Eurydice was finally brought to the stage. In November of 1729, Mallet had given the manuscript to Pope, whose reaction has already been discussed. At the same time, Pope points out that it is more difficult to write a good play than to get it produced. He agrees to assist Mallet in getting Eurydice on the stage, though "I . . . have no great influence over Cibber"; however, he continues: " . . . if any person of distinction that is in the compass of my acquaintance, or that I can come at by any other means Influence . . . I will do my best to have
him engaged in it: For it would really be a great pleasure to me, to contribute any way to increase your friendship for me." Then Pope adds a postscript in which he says that he is giving the manuscript to Dr. Arbuthnot.20

A month later, Pope wrote two letters to Mallet, giving him further information about the progress of his play. In the first, dated December 12, 1729, he tells Mallet that the play has been delivered to Lady Burlington, who is to give it to the Lord Chamberlain, the Duke of Grafton. Evidently Mallet had also been trying to get the Duke of Montrose to use his influence, for Pope mentions that he has also sent the Duke's letter.21 A letter later that month indicates that the play was finally in the hands of the Lord Chamberlain.22

By January, however, Mallet had still not heard from the Duke of Grafton, and he wrote Pope: "As for my little Affair, I only wish that my Lord Chamberlain would recommend it to the Players, Wilks and Cibber to appoint me a Meeting, where my play may be read over, and at once either rejected or received."23 This reminder forced Pope, when writing to the Earl of Burlington about his own matters, to mention, among other things, Mallet's concern. Referring to him as "a Poet (generally an Impatient race of men)," he tells Burlington that he would like an audience in behalf of Mallet, "whom I keep in suspense as to his Play."24 Evidently the audience was successful, for about January 27, 1729/30, Pope extended an invitation to Mallet to dine with Lord Burlington.25 Mallet, however, had to wait much longer
to see his play performed. It was almost another year before it was
accepted.\(^26\)

Shortly before the performance of *Eurydice*, Hill read the play,
and this experience brought forth an effusion of praise in a letter
to Mallet, dated February 6, 1731. If Hill is to be believed, he
read the play to his family, which formed "a little audience" about
him and wept copiously during his performance.\(^27\) In praising the
play, Hill reached a kind of climax in dramatic metaphor as he
employed Aristotle's *Poetics* with ringing rhetoric: "You move all
the passions very strongly in their turns; I experienced the force
of three of them, in a very new and extraordinary manner. The first,
I felt, was admiration, at your noble and solemn opening;--The
second was terror, lest you should find it impossible, after so pro-
digious a first act, not to slacken your energy, in the progress;
but my third passion was pity, at my own mistake of your greatness,
who could excel all the world in the first acts, and those first in
the following."\(^28\)

Having been exposed to such exclamatory heights, Mallet
certainly could not be, as Johnson puts it, "too high to accept a
Prologue and Epilogue"\(^29\) from Hill, for Hill then goes on to say that
he will send the prologue, though (lapsing into architectural meta-
phor) "the porch, I think, and the building, ought to have been the
work of the same skilful architect."\(^30\) In subsequent letters, Hill
has much criticism of *Eurydice*, but for the moment he is satisfied
merely to suggest changing the name of Periander's son to Zenophon,
because it was more musical. Mallet had used the name Lycophron, the one given in his source, Ramsay's Travels of Cyrus. He accepted Hill's suggestion, though not the suggested name, and in the final version Lycophron appears as Polydore.31

One good turn deserves another, and on February 8, 1731, Mallet answered Hill's eulogy by praising "the superior fineness of your taste." The prologue had also reached him and, after speaking highly of it, he relays the request of Wilks' (who was to speak it) that the final four lines be dropped, "for his sake as an Actor."32 The lines to which Wilks objected were retained in the printed edition:

Then, when soft sorrow swells the fair one's breast;
And sad impressions mix with nightly rest,
Pleasing remembrance shall our scene supply,
And the sweet saddening influence never die.

In his reply, Hill was agreeable to "Mr. Wilks' sentiments," although he had included the lines in the prologue because of Wilks' "peculiar art . . . of enforcing a tender meaning, by his soft and dewy manner of shedding it into the ear";33 a statement that appears to be supported by Cibber's comment: "In sorrow, Tenderness, or Resignation, Wilks plainly had the advantage, and seem'd more pathetically to feel, look, and express his Calamity."34 By the diction of the lines, one can immediately recognize that Hill certainly did write them with this characteristic of Wilks' in mind.

Despite Mallet's high praise of Hill's prologue, it seems to the modern reader neither particularly better nor particularly worse than most of the other prologues of the period. Like so many of them,
it appealed primarily to the sentiments of women, probably because, as Swift had declared, "it is observable that the ladies frequent tragedies more than comedies"; and the prologue directly petitions the attentions of the ladies:

Ladies! -- to you he makes his chief address;
Form'd, to be pray'd to, and even born to bless!
He feels your power, himself, and makes it felt;
His scenes will teach each stubborn heart to melt:
And each fair eye, that now shines softly here,
Anon shall shine, still softer, thro' a tear.

In this connection, it might be well to mention that among the rather obscure charms of the prologue, Mallet chose to single out that which contrasts tragedy with comedy, remarking: "The thought, in which you give the preference to Tragedy over the Comic Muse, is equally new and, with a delicacy of insinuation, adapted to the purpose." The following lines are those to which Mallet refers:

Less polish'd, and more bold, the Comic Muse
Unkings your Cupid, or obstructs his views;
Upholds presuming wit's familiar claim,
And blots out awe from Love's diminish'd flame.
Finds, or makes faults, and sets 'em strong in sight,
And dares draw Woman false, or vain, or light.
While Tragedy--your servant, try'd, and true,
Still to your fame devoted, and to YOU!
Enslav'd to Love, subdued ambition brings,
Firms Beauty's power, and crowns it king of kings.

However, Mallet's observation that this "thought" was "new" can perhaps be merely the symptom of gratitude, for Swift in 1706 had pointed out "that in tragedy their sex is deified and adored, in comedy exposed and ridiculed."
Hill also wrote the epilogue, which Mallet evidently had to request at the very last moment. Mallet sent word of his need by Hill's brother, and Hill obliged him. The epilogue, however, must have been hastily written and not at all to Cibber's liking, for Hill later complained bitterly of the "chequer-work" which that "Merry-andrew had dressed it in." 38

Having the prologue out of the way and having dismissed Wilks by agreeing with him, Hill evidently felt that he could express himself somewhat more freely to Mallet, for he then embarked upon a lengthy critical judgment of Eurydice and of the moral in particular. Although Hill was very tactful in mentioning the faults of the play, his letters evidence a compulsion in the man for rearranging the work of another. This fact is not too surprising, for, though he appears as a humorless and tiresome man through his letters and his work, he was possessed of a passionate concern for the drama; with a kind of grim busybodiness, he interested himself in every aspect of the theatre. No one but Hill could have written The Fatal Vision, that fantastic attempt to express the vivacious ebulliency of the Elizabethan stage with its complete disregard for classical niceties, within the rigorous demands of the French model. But fantastic as The Fatal Vision may be, it does indicate that Hill felt acutely the weakness of current drama. The degree to which he invaded every province of the stage has been well summed up by Dorothy Brewster: 39

He wrote plays that were successful, a play that failed, and a play that no manager would produce; he elaborated a theory on the art of acting and practised it on several pupils, one of
whom did him much credit; he wrote innumerable letters of advice to young actors and actresses; he had ideas about national theatres and schools of dramatic art, and several schemes for theatrical management that almost came to something; he took an active part in the discussion over the regulation of the stage; and he published a periodical, the Prompter, in which all his schemes, ideas, and criticism found expression. Though in many ways he reflected current ideas, the keenness of his comment in some respects has not had the justice done it that it deserves.

In criticizing Eurydice, Hill's main point was that critics might attack the play upon the ground that the moral implies "an accusation of providence," because the suffering of Periander and Eurydice may appear unjust. The discussion that ensued concerning the moral of the play affords an excellent vehicle for analyzing the work, since the pertinency of Hill's remarks, though he insisted upon emphasizing aspects that were not central to the meaning, will greatly help in determining Mallet's intent and subsequent accomplishment.

The most peculiar point about Hill's criticism is that, whether or not he knew it, he kept insisting that Mallet build the play more closely in line with the source, Ramsay's Cyrus. In addition, he also insisted that Mallet write a play that was closer to the traditional concept of tragedy: a play that had civil and religious significance rather than a play designed to appeal to the emotions of the audience. Hill had a much firmer knowledge of classical dramatic theory than Mallet, but Mallet knew what the audience wanted and he did his best to provide for their appetites in his play. Having pointed out the danger that the moral might be misunderstood, Hill proceeded to rewrite the conclusion of Eurydice.
But in order that the reader may follow this discussion of *Eurydice* with better understanding, a synopsis of the plot of the play follows.

As in so many plays of the period, the first act is devoted chiefly to exposition, although Mallet must be credited with having considerably more dramatic skill than most of the other minor dramatists of his time. He momentarily delays the exposition, and the opening scene presents Eurydice and her "confidente," Melissa, as from the castle tower they watch the destruction of a fleet of four ships during a "tempest wild and loud," unknowing that the fleet is Periander's, who has sailed to regain his lost Corinth. If this opening is compared with that of the play's rival, Tracy's *Periander*, one can easily see that Mallet's dramatic sense and structural ability is much better developed than Tracy's. For Tracy, obsessed by the necessary demands of exposition (the nightmare of all poor playwrights), has to get that material out of the way before he can comfortably proceed; his initial scene presents Zeno and Alcanor discussing the state of affairs in Corinth. The difference between the two scenes is meaningful, for it points up that Mallet had definite command of his material, and he proceeds throughout the remaining scenes of the act with an adroitness that indicates he was knowledgeable in his craft. The destruction of the foremost vessel—related, true, in the ornate diction of the time—leads Eurydice to dwell upon the "ill-fated men" who sailed her, and then to speak of the wives they have left behind, who, ignorant of their fate, pray for their return:
Even now, perhaps,  
In some far-distant land, a faithful wife,  
Or tender parent, offers vows to heaven  
For their return; and fondly numbers up  
The lingering months of absence. Fruitless love!  
They never more shall meet! (I. i.)

This concern suggests to Eurydice her personal plight:

By my own ills  
Severly taught, I pity them; yet think  
Their fate, all full of horror as it seems,  
Is rather to be envy'd. (I. i.)

Melissa wonders if this sight is not a message sent by the gods to

Eurydice to bear her fate stoically:

Ah, EURYDICE,  
My royal Mistress, rather think the Gods  
Would teach you, by this sight of mournful ruine,  
Patience and gentler thought. (I. i.)

Now, by degrees, Mallet has reached a stage where exposition
can have a valid dramatic quality, as Eurydice begins her recital of
woe:

MELISSA, no.  
I tell thee, no ill fate, no face of death  
Can be so dreadful as a life like mine.  
Call to thy thoughts what I have been; how great,  
How happy in a husband, and a son  
The rising boast of Greece. Behold me now  
Cast down to lowest infamy; the slave,  
The sport of a foul Tyrant, who betray'd me,  
And would destroy my honour.—Gracious heaven!  
And shall this bold offender, who has broke  
All bonds of holy faith, yet bids his soul  
Rejoyce and take her ease; shall he long triumph  
Here in the throne of Corinth, while its lord,  
The injur'd PERIANDER, roams a fugitive,  
Far, far from bliss and me! (I. i.)
All of this is certainly not great theatre, but it is competent and it does show that Mallet had a dramatic facility. What betrayed him, and betrays most minor playwrights, was his language, not his conception of dramatic movement.

The remainder of the act develops the exposition that is necessary for an immediate understanding of the play. While Periander, the king of Corinth, was absent, "involv'd in unsuccessful war" (I. ii.), the Corinthians seized the opportunity for revolting. Eurydice and her few faithful followers were besieged in a fortress. Procles, the king of Epidaurus, offered her aid; although his reputation stamped him as untrustworthy, Eurydice accepted his offer. After quelling the revolt, Procles seized the city and isolated Eurydice in the tower of the castle. Among her followers is Ariston, who is imprisoned. Procles placed Medon, his favorite, in prison with Ariston, to whom the favorite told a false tale of Eurydice's unfaithfulness (I. vi.). Allowed to escape, Ariston carried the lie to Periander, who now was consumed with jealousy. At the conclusion of the act, it is disclosed that the ships destroyed in the storm are those of Periander, who had set sail to free his city.

The second act reveals that Periander did not drown in the shipwreck but was cast upon the shore. He bewails his fate, and though he has lost his kingdom, he is most disturbed by what he believes is Eurydice's betrayal of her marriage vows. Leonidas, "a Nobleman, secretly in the Queen's interest," finds Periander and aids him in stealing into the city. There Periander is captured and
brought before Procles at the moment the tyrant is alternatingly importuning and threatening Eurydice (II. vii.). Seeing the two together fans Periander's jealousy and convinces him of his wife's betrayal. After Periander has been sent to the dungeon, Procles tells Eurydice that he will free her husband if she submits to his passion. She agrees, though—as she confides to Melissa—she intends to kill herself after Periander has quitted the kingdom (III. i.). Procles, however, plans to have Periander killed as he crosses the frontier (III. iii.).

All of these plans come to naught because in the fourth act Polydore, the son of Eurydice and Periander, arrives in force, defeats Procles, and delivers the kingdom back into his father's hands. Periander and Eurydice are brought face to face, but he will not believe her protestations of innocence. In the final act, Eurydice kills herself in despair. Medon is captured, and he relates to Periander his part in creating the lie concerning Eurydice's adultery. In remorse, Periander takes his own life.

This background will suffice for an understanding of Hill's criticism of the tragedy and for the subsequent discussion in this chapter. As has been stated, Hill felt that the moral might be misunderstood, that being "so charmingly recommended to pity and esteem of the audience," Periander and Eurydice may appear to suffer unjustly. This injustice would "imply an accusation of providence, for neglect of a virtue so amiable, and yet so unhappy." At this point, Hill cannot resist rewriting the end of Eurydice:  

1
Suppose, to prevent this malevolence, Leonidas, upon sight of the expiring queen, should burst into a complaint, tending to such distrust of the justice of heaven?—It would be in character, and suited to the warmth of his honest heart. And this might naturally awaken Periander into an exclamatory and pathetic answer.—A confession, in justification of providence, drawn from conscious remembrance of his own breach of oath, in prolonging his father’s usurpation, and withholding the Corinthian liberty: A guilt, which makes just his own sufferings, in the loss of all, that was dear to his wishes, and the total destruction of his own family. And under this agony and consternation of soul, he might solemnly swear to die, after performing his vow, as disdaining to live himself, after being deprived of her life, which was dearer to him than his own, and who had died but for his offences.

In this suggestion, Hill is attempting to bring the meaning of the play closer to that aspect emphasized in Ramsay’s Cyrus. The episode in Ramsay upon which both Eurydice and Periander are based is Englished "by a Gentleman of Cambridge" in the edition of Tracy’s play. The source unmistakably discloses that Periander’s fate is the result of a broken vow. His father, Cypselus, was the usurper of Corinth. After he had reigned for thirty years, and "satiated his Passions," he began to be troubled by remorse and, resolving to free the Corinthians from their slavery, upon his death bed he made Periander swear to restore to them their liberties. However, blinded by ambition, the young prince forgets his oath, "and this was the source of all his misfortunes." In Ramsay, Periander’s entire house is destroyed because of his unfulfilled vow: he murders his wife, his son is killed, and he commits suicide.

Hill’s desire to stress that Periander’s fate is brought about by his broken vow is dictated by an insistence upon the necessity for poetic justice. At this point, Hill touches upon what is a
crucial matter of concern for eighteenth century drama: back of that century lies the great body of traditional tragedy, those dramas in which the destruction of character is brought about by a weakness—a flaw of serious proportions; but the audience wants something else, the portrayal of "soft sorrow" and "mourn'd afflictions." The playwright, his memory echoing with the regal tones of Elizabethan tragedy, must, however, portray the piteous distresses of injured innocence rather than the majestic turmoil of a great soul struggling with itself. To use Aristotle rather cavalierly, one might say that whereas the Elizabethans wrote plays of terror, the eighteenth century wrote plays of pity. Hounded by these irreconcilables, the playwright often tried to present the unfortunate in the guise of the tragic.

Of course, the neo-classic playwright was not completely en-slaved by the memory of Elizabethan drama. It is certainly a commonplace, but nevertheless a truth, to point out that he considered Shakespeare a "child of nature" unfettered by rules, possessing a freedom that unfortunately lends itself to excess and an uncontrolled dramatic license. Mallet took the typical eighteenth century attitude toward Shakespeare in his Of Verbal Criticism:

Pride of his own, and wonder of this age,
Who first created, and yet rules, the stage,
Bold to design, all-powerful to express,
SHAKESPEAR each passion drew in every dress:
Great above rule, and imitating none;
Rich without borrowing, nature was his own.
Yet is his sense debas'd by gross allay:
As gold in mines lies mix'd with dirt and clay.
Now, eagle-wing'd, his heavenward flight he takes;
The big stage thunders, and the soul awakes:
Now, low on earth, a kindred reptile creeps;
Sad HAMLET quibbles, and the hearer sleeps. (ll. 46-58)
In essence, Hill is asking Mallet to make his play more of a tragedy. He wants Mallet to emphasize the implications of the play by holding firm to the civil significance present in the source. He really wishes Mallet to write Tracy's play, Periander, whose theme concerns the "Successful Robber of a People's Rights." His proposed ending, Hill says, "would add great terror to that pity, you have so finely moved in your catastrophe, and send us away full of thoughts on the awful judgment, that must always follow guilt, however mitigated by our virtues." 

Hill's position is one that he consistently held. In the 1740's when Mallet consulted him about writing a tragedy based upon the story of Socrates, his reaction was much the same. He compared Mallet and Thomson's proposed play to Addison's Cato and objected to both on the grounds of poetic justice:

There occurs, this moment, a new difficulty; and that is, what the critics call poetic justice. This (with Mr. Addison's good leave) is no such silly notion, as he strove, in his partiality to his own Tragedy, to make it be reputed; He would have found it a much easier task, to represent the obstinacy and persisting pride of Cato, and his distrust of the Gods future help, as CRIMES that justified his fate, (too insolent, and voluntary,) than to persuade men to look pleas'd, upon the miseries of a faultless sufferer; and thereby, leave a blot upon the equity of providence, to take it off from the example in his Tragedy.

Without the manuscript of Eurydice that Mallet sent Hill, one cannot be definite about the extent to which Mallet accepted or rejected Hill's advice. In his answer to Hill, dated February 11, 1731, and after giving the required compliment--"Your remark concerning
the moral of my Play is as solid as it is fine"--Mallet says of the
"hint you have given me" that it is "a strong aid to the Terror I
wish to raise in the Catastrophe." That Mallet perhaps added lines
to make more explicit the matter of the broken vow and to justify
Periander's fate is suggested by the presence of a number of passages
whose possible insertion conceivably could have been prompted by Hill.
When Periander first appears in the play, soliloquizing after being
cast ashore by the storm, he recalls:

I broke
The sacred oath sworn to a dying father,
To free my country from her chains. My soul
Shakes, as I roll this thought. O Providence!
Awfully just, tho' Guilt may shut her eye,
Thine ever wakes to mark, to trace, to punish:
(II. i.)

In the final act, Periander refers twice to his broken vow. When
Leonidas tries to reason with him about the possibility of Eurydice's
innocence, Periander can only view her betrayal as just retribution
from the gods. Leonidas' single line answer may very well be the
result of Hill's suggestion about the old man's "complaint" in dis-
trust of heaven: "Oh heaven, and is this retribution thine?" (V. i.)

For Periander then replies:

Forbear, fond man. That heaven thou dar'st accuse,
Just, tho' mysterious, leads us on unerring,
Thro' ways unmark'd, from Guilt to Punishment.
I vow'd, alas! and with strong adjurations
Bound that just vow, to set my country free.
This, to my Father on his bed of death,
Solemn I swore--But, O blind lust of greatness!
Thro' wantonness of will I lightly weigh'd it,
Nor fear'd the hour of terrible account!
That hour is come: and what avails it now
That I, with equal hand and gentle rule,
Have sway'd my people? I am punish'd most,
Where I had bid my soul be most secure
Of happiness for years--
(V. i.)

And finally, just before his suicide, Periander returns again to his vow:

These righteous Gods have cast me off for ever.
My broken vow!--O terrible! it hangs,
A bursting thunder, o'er my head. I see--
And tremble at the sight, th' inquiring Judge,
Beyond these heavens, high on his throne of terrors;
His fix'd and dread regard turn'd full upon me!
(V. ix.)

These passages hint very strongly that Mallet acted, in part, upon his friend's advice. But after he makes the commendatory remarks about Hill's "hint," Mallet has certain interesting comments which point up the fact that fundamentally the men viewed tragedy in different ways. Mallet takes issue with Hill upon the matter of the moral, stating: "You will forgive me, if I express a doubt, whether I can reckon it the moral of this Tragedy." He then admits that the moral is neither striking nor strongly enforced, simply because he really was not interested in instructing the audience; rather he wished to amuse and move it "by the incidents and sentiments." Further, Mallet's intent in the play is then revealed in a letter dated February 11, 1731: "This play is founded upon jealousy; but the particular moral I would have drawn from it is, to show the fatal effects of sudden and precipitate Resolutions into which we are often hurried
by the influence of a predominant passion. To this both Eurydice and Periander owe their unhappiness, as I might shew by Induction.\textsuperscript{49}

Perhaps smarting under the implied accusation that he had not understood the play he had praised so highly, in his reply Hill attempted to justify his critical strictures. He began by making a reasonable distinction "between the moral which enforces itself, and that which might have been forced from your Tragedy." Insisting that he had not misunderstood the meaning, Hill tried to make clear that he was not attempting to change the moral, but rather attempting to prevent a misreading by others. He makes the point that the oath is necessary and must be made explicit, otherwise, although it is permissible for Periander to come to misfortune due to private guilt (his jealousy), it would not be proper for Eurydice to share his fate when she did not share his guilt. The oath involves her, however, in Periander's misfortune, since she cannot be supposed ignorant of a public vow publicly broken. Even if Periander's oath-breaking had occurred before their marriage, she joined his guilt when she joined "his person," a union "which makes her a partner in his destruction."\textsuperscript{50}

Hill's position is a well-reasoned one, though he is on shakier ground when he proceeds to question the validity of the Corinthian revolution if the moral takes "its turn from the jealousy alone."\textsuperscript{51} In an extraordinarily deft and tactful maneuver, he claims that Mallet was "inspired" when, only designing to move and amuse, he yet delivered a moral "designed in the most divine and exalted manner," whereby "you raise the importance of your Story, attach the general to the particular
sufferings; augment the terror, refine the pity, vindicate the punishment, and exalt the moral of your subject."^52 For Hill, the civil and religious significance of the play is essential, and at the end he returns to that insistence which he voiced in the first letter: "If you reflect on the spring of all that passionate enthusiasm, which moves your readers so strongly, in the frequent invocations and appeals to heaven, throughout your Tragedy, you will be tempted still to heighten it, by sprinkling a hint, here and there, in a single line, just to awaken, in the proper places, an apprehension of impending providence, and excite this religious terror in the minds of the audience."^53

Mallet's answer to this letter is not in existence, but that he did answer Hill can be ascertained by Hill's letter to Mallet, dated February 18, 1731. From certain phrasings in Hill's letter, it can be deduced that Mallet, in his answer, quite possibly acquiesced in Hill's suggestions. From the following quotation, it seems apparent that Mallet acknowledged that his failure to stress the matter of the broken vow was a fault and, further, that he agreed to remedy the fault. The "excellence" to which Hill refers suggests that he had in mind the moral he had pointed out to Mallet: "If even I dissent from Mr. Mallet's opinion, it must be only when he speaks of himself: and, for this reason, I cannot allow you to apply the word fault, as you do, in your last; but it would, indeed, be a fault, in me, not to be charmed with an excellence, in your mind, which it has given you the occasion of discovering."^55
Although Hill appears to have been victorious in the controversy, if it can be called that, a close look at Eurydice indicates that Mallet achieved, within limits, what he set out to do. He had told Hill that the play was founded on jealousy and that his purpose was to show the fatal effects of rash resolutions brought about by predominant passion. Mallet also pointed out, rather carefully, that both Eurydice and Periander owed their misfortune to such passion. He really had made an attempt to justify Eurydice's unfortunate end—an attempt that Hill was never able to recognize.

The apostrophes to jealousy are numerous throughout the play. The destructive actions of Periander are constantly attributed to this passion, and Procles consciously plays upon his weakness. Mallet's moral is pointed up explicitly after the catastrophe when Leonidas ends the play with these words:

Was ever sight like this?—O Jealousy!
This is thy dreadful work. May future times
Learn here thy power, and mark with heedful eyes,
From thy blind rage what mighty mischiefs rise.
(V. ix.)

Jealousy, of course, was not an uncommon theme in eighteenth century drama; it was, indeed, the sort of passion that a young playwright would choose in that period which was so concerned with ruling passions. Ramsay's Cyrus also speaks of the jealousy that afflicted Periander, and thus it can be seen that Mallet did not graft upon his hero a characteristic that was not given him by the source. Perhaps
he chose that source because the central figure was adaptable for a
play concerning a ruling passion.

Although they both suffer from excessive passion, the two
opposing kings, Procles and Periander, are developed differently.
Procles is the most interesting character in the play because he
possesses *uniqueness*, which none of the others do. His overriding
passion is ambition, but he is also unashamedly a hedonist and a sen-
sualist, characteristics which make his lust for Eurydice realistic.
His devotion to pleasures of the flesh are enforced by sneering
remarks about

... the cold sons
Of Temperance, the fools of thought and care. (II. v.)

His favorite, Medon, panders to his master in this respect, speaking
contemptuously of "lean-look'd Temperance, and his peevish train"
(I. vi.). In addition, Procles is suspiciously presented as an athe-
ist, one who believes only in the present and who believes the future is
dark and endless:

Life is vainly short;
A very dream of being; and when death
Has quench'd this finer flame that moves the heart,
Beyond is all oblivion, and waste night
That knows no following dawn, where we shall be
As we had never been. The Present then
Is only ours: and shall we let it pass,
Untasted, unenjoyed? No; let us on,
Hail we the rising shade: and now while night
Leads on the secret hour of free delight,
With wanton gayety, in naked state,
Let Music, Mirth, and Love around us wait. (I. vi.)
That Procles recognizes Periander's susceptibility to jealousy is mentioned slightly in the source, but Mallet makes this recognition a very definite part of Procles' character. In addition to having Ariston bear the false tale of Eurydice's adultery to Periander, Procles deliberately taunts the deposed king with this knowledge when Periander is captured. And in a soliloquy, he calls upon jealousy to aid him in destroying his rival:

Thou Jealousy!
Almighty tyrant of the human mind,
Who canst at will unsettle the calm brain,
O'erturn the seated heart, and shake the man
Thro' all his frame with tempest and distraction;
Rise to my present aid: call up thy Powers,
Thy furious fears, thy blasts of dreadful passion,
Thy whips, snakes, mortal stings, thy host of horrors;
Rouse thy whole war against him, and compleat
My purpos'd vengeance. (III. iv.)

That Procles' "purpos'd vengeance" is certainly "compleated" is evidenced by the similarity of language in a passage in the last scene of the play immediately before Periander's death. As he raises his body after having stabbed himself, he sees the "King of terrors," who drags him down a path crowded with "shivering Forms" and "Furies arm'd," whose "fell serpents . . . rouse themselves to sting me" (V. ix.).

As presented by Mallet, Periander is very conscious of his jealousy. In his speeches, he portrays the struggle between reason and passion, a rather ordinary figure during the eighteenth century: 57

Away: can reason
Arrest the whirlwind's wing? or quench the forest,
Struck by the hand of Jove, when all its woods
In one broad conflagration blaze to heaven?
'Tis reason makes me wretched; for it tells me
How shameful this mad conflict of my passions;
But does that still their uproar? Here, Ariston,
Works the wild storm that reason cannot calm.
I must, I will have ease. (IV. vii.)

Leonidas is often used as a foil for Periander, and his speeches frequently are comments on the king's jealous state:

Alas! Alas! all waves, all storms are calms
To Jealousy. 0 my lov'd Lord, beware
Of that destroyer, that self-torturing fiend,
Who loves his pain, and feeds the cruel cares
That prey upon his life; whose frantic eye
Is ever open, ever prying round
For what he dreads to find. (II. ii.)

Eventually, Periander comes to embrace his passion and to revel in it.

The ruling passions of Periander and Procles are clearly drawn; Eurydice, however, is a different matter. It is difficult to understand what Mallet meant concerning her passion, unless he referred to her cowardice, for her fear of death is the only aspect that can be found in the play which justifies her fate. However, this fear is very explicit as the emotion that forced her into her fatal error. It is to this fear that she refers when she reproaches herself during the exposition in the first act:

No; 'twas the coward woman in my soul,
Th' inglorious fear of dying, that betray'd
My vertue into the Deceiver's power.
For this my heart, each conscious hour upbraids me,
As faithless to my trust. (I. iii.)
And she admits that, rather than having admitted Procles through the gates of Corinth, "I should have dy'd."

It has now become possible to suggest why Mallet originally changed the name of his play from *Eurydice* to *Periander*. From his letter to Hill, it is known that he considered the play built upon the ruling passion of jealousy. Whether or not he actually started with this idea in mind is not known, but it is obvious that sometime during the play's composition he came to recognize his principal motif. Since the play was first called *Eurydice* and since jealousy is not characteristic of her, it is quite possible that he began to realize that Periander's passion was really the foundation of his drama and that, as a result, he changed the title to suit the passion dominating the play. Certainly this explanation is the only one available in view of what is known--and that is very little--about the history of the growth of this drama.

It is fairly clear from this discussion that Mallet, within the bounds of his talent, knew what he was doing. He had also told Hill that, rather than instructing the audience, he wished to move and amuse it by the incidents and sentiments. In this connection, it is interesting to note some of the elements which he introduced for this purpose. The opening scene involving the shipwreck observed by Eurydice and Melissa from the Castle tower during a violent tempest is a good example of what he meant. Actually, he took the entire setting--storm, shipwreck, and castle tower--from Ramsay, but he had the dramatic sense to recognize that it was good theatre for the
period. It was also the sort of setting that appealed to him always, as witness the tempest in *The Excursion*:

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Hark! thro' aereal vault, the storm inflam'd
Comes nearer, hoarsely loud, abrupt and fierce,
Peal hurl'd on peal incessant, burst on burst:
Torn from its base, as if the general frame
Were tumbling into chaos--
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Another incident which he took from Ramsay, but enlarged considerably and employed for the purpose of amusing the audience, was the final vision that Periander has as he dies. In Ramsay, after learning of his wife's innocence, Periander stabs himself and throws his body across hers, crying to Jupiter to strike him with the god's thunderbolt. The thunderbolt can be found in *Eurydice*, for just before he throws himself beside the Queen's body, he calls upon "the minister of vengeance . . . to strike me thro' the centre" (V. ix.). Then, as he dies, he experiences a vision in which he sees Eurydice sitting among the gods and smiling down upon him. Since we know that Mallet had once considered using Herodotus as a source for a projected play, it is quite possible that the vision of Eurydice was suggested by Herodotus' description of her ghost, who appeared twice to Periander.

Mallet uses the vision on another occasion in the play. Eurydice's death is foreshadowed when she relates to Melissa a dream in which her mother appeared to her:

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My much-lov'd mother, stood confess'd before me,
Pale as the shroud that wound her clay-cold limbs;
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Her eyes fix'd on me, still and motionless,
Streaming unreal tears. She groan'd, and thrice
In low, sad murmurs bade me to her tomb,
To meet her there--and there, in death alone,
In the dark grave, can poor EURYDICE
Expect repose. (IV. i.)

These few examples indicate that Mallet accomplished what he set out to do--move and amuse the audience--at least to the extent that he earned his thirteen nights. He wrote a play grounded upon the passions, and he gave the audience what it expected in the way of incidents and sentiments. From the available evidence, there seems little else that he intended. Although Eurydice was charged with being a partisan political play, there is little indication in the text itself of such intent. A pamphlet appeared which attacked Mallet's drama as a vehicle serving the interests of the Pretender, but without additional information it is difficult to attribute such a purpose to Mallet. It is true that he was a Scot and that he dedicated the play to the Duke of Montrose, who had been suspected of Jacobite leanings, but, after all, he was tutor to the sons of the Duke, and he did not leave that family's service until after the play was produced. One has to be rather agile in order to make the play political: Eurydice has to become England; the sensual Procles to become the fleshly George; Medon to become a Walpole catering to the king's unsatiated appetites; and the restive Corinthian crowd to represent the English populace casting off Stuart rule. It is difficult to see the play's text supporting such a reading without better evidence. In fact, even the anonymous author of the pamphlet thought that Mallet did not
recognize the political intent of *Eurydice*.

I own this Design is covered with so delicate an artfulness, and we are diverted from observing it by an intermixture of so many unremarkable Circumstances, that an ordinary Eye may not easily trace it. And for that Reason I am inclined to give into a Report I have heard, that the Plan of this Play was drawn for the Writer of it, by an eminent Hand, remarkable for great Parts and great ones, who made use of the other as a Tool in the Matter, without letting him into any part of his Intention. And to me this is far from being an improbable Suspicion, while I reflect how contemptible an Opinion I have of the Author in his poetical Capacity.

*Eurydice* is usually mentioned in connection with Tracy's *Periander*, and the fact that they are based upon the same source and appeared within six weeks of each other is often taken to indicate that they were written in conscious rivalry with each other. That position is difficult to hold in the light of evidence that Mallet was contemplating, if not actually writing, his tragedy nearly four years before it was finally produced. Beyond being derived from Ramsay, the two plays have little in common. Tracy followed his source much more closely than Mallet, but his failure to manipulate his material more dramatically justifies Nicoll's contemptuous remark that it is "execrable in construction." *Periander* ran for four nights and then was revived for a single performance ten days later. Genest calls it a "poor tragedy," and he seems most troubled by the "unpardonable fault" of Tracy's having given Melissa's confidante a name that was not Greek. Tracy called her Clarinda. Baker was kinder to *Periander* than to *Eurydice*; he says that Tracy's tragedy is "very far from contemptible."
After the thirteenth performance, Eurydice disappeared from the stage for twenty-seven years. It was revived in March, 1759, when it was played for four performances. Garrick and Havard took the roles of Periander and Procles, and Mrs. Cibber played Eurydice. The play was advertised as having been revised and corrected by the author, but only a few insignificant changes were made in several of the speeches. In the book listing receipts of the plays by the treasurer at Drury Lane, there is a single dry notation beside the name of Eurydice—"Dull." The final performance of this revival was given on March 17, by command of the Prince of Wales, to whom, when he ascended the throne as George III, Mallet was to pay tribute in his Truth in Rhyme in 1761. According to Davies (who is not always trustworthy), although all of the fire of Garrick and all of the pathos of Mrs. Cibber could not extort a tear from the audience, Mallet did not consider his play at fault. He sat in the orchestra and complained throughout the play of the poor performances given by the actors.

Eurydice differs from the rest of Mallet's dramatic work primarily because it does not possess the obvious political implications found in the other plays and masques. At this stage in his life, Mallet evidently had not made those intimate connections that necessarily drew him into the political arena. Although he probably knew Lyttelton, evidence indicates that he did not meet Bolingbroke until after the production of Eurydice. His acquaintance with that nobleman
is extremely important in examining his plays, for Bolingbroke's ideas appear to have shaped Mallet's writing from 1739 to 1751.

Eurydice, therefore, does not have the historical interest of the later work. The play was written by an ambitious and not too talented young man who wished to make a name for himself. He wrote a play built upon a ruling passion—a common practice at that time. He was not interested in getting across any particular political message or in instructing the audience. As he frankly admits, he was interested only "in amusing and moving them by the incidents and sentiments." Being ambitious, he hoped to gain attention, and perhaps, patronage. The following chapters will show that he succeeded.
NOTES


5. John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830 (Bath, 1832), III, 284, 287, 290. Genest says that Highland Fair was acted only three times, but Nicoll, II, 345, gives four performance dates.


8. Doran, II, 23.


Sherburn, III, 177. Sherburn says Pope's "Headache" is possibly against the dating of the letter, since he often complained of rheumatism during this time. However, Pope was also complaining of the "Headache" when he twice wrote Mallet thirteen months before. See the letters of December 12 and December 21, 1729, Sherburn, III, 82–83. One cannot help noticing the frequency of Pope's headaches in connection with Mallet.


Little, p. 216.


McKillop, pp. 68–69.

Sherburn, III, 66. Pope wryly says that he has been careful to keep the sheets out of Arbuthnot's hands until that gentleman was ready to read them, because too often the Doctor forgets where he lays his papers.

Sherburn, III, 82.

Sherburn, III, 82–83.

McKillop, pp. 67–68.

Sherburn, III, 86.

Sherburn, III, 87. Letter of January 20 or 27, 1729/30. Sherburn says that his dating of this letter is "mere guess-work."
See Aikman's letter to Sir John Clerk, November 18, 1730, in McKillop, p. 77. "Mr Malloch has got his Tragedy presented and accepted in the old house it is to be acted about the middle of January I wish he may have as good success as Thomson . . . ."

27 Hill, I, 29.

28 Hill, I, 30.

29 Johnson, III, 402.

30 Hill, I, 30-31.

31 The other major change in names that Mallet made was calling his heroine Eurydice. In all sources discussing Periander, the queen is named Melissa, and John Tracy retains that name for his heroine in Periander.

32 Little, p. 226.

33 Hill, I, 32.


35 Nicoll, II, 24.

36 Little, p. 226.

37 Nicoll, II, 24.

38 Hill, I, 48.

Hill, I, 33.

Hill, I, 33.

See John Tracy, Periander (London, 1731), pp. v-viii. In addition to Ramsay, other sources given in this foreword are Diogenes Laertius, pp. ii, ix, Herodotus, pp. ii-v, and Plutarch, p. x.

Periander, p. v.

See the Prologue to Periander, p. xi.

Hill, I, 34.

Hill, II, 18-19.

Little, p. 227.

Little, p. 227.

Little, p. 232.

Hill, I, 40.

Hill, I, 41.

Hill, I, 41-42.

Hill, I, 42.

Hill, I, 43-45.

Hill, I, 43-44.
One of the best examples of the jealousy plays is Edward Young's *The Revenge* (1721), which has certain affinities with *Othello*.

The image of the "whirlwind's wing" is one that Mallet particularly liked. Cf. the description of lightning during the thunderstorm in the first canto of *The Excursion*.

There it fell,

With whirlwind-wing, in red diffusion flash'd.

See *Periander*, p. vi.


*Periander*, p. vii.


"Clay-cold" is another of those images Mallet used often. It appears in the second stanza of "William and Margaret."

"And clay-cold was her lilly hands." Periander also uses the image in the final act of *Eurydice*. "Thus let me press her clay-cold lips" (V. ix.).

Remarks on the Tragedy of Eurydice. In which it is endeavoured to prove the said Tragedy is wrote in favour of the Pretender, and is a scurrilous libel against the present Establishment (London, 1731).


For example, see *Nicolli*, II, 32.

*Nicolli*, II, 111.

Genest, III, 309.
68 Baker, III, 135.


70 Little, p. 586.

CHAPTER III

MUSTAPHA: ENTER A PATRON

Eight years elapsed before Mallet's next play, Mustapha, was produced. Although this period was not particularly rich for Mallet as far as literary accomplishment was concerned, it was a busy time, insofar as it can be reconstructed from the scanty information available. Few letters, either by Mallet or to him, are at present known concerning his activities during the mid 1730's, and the relatively small number of accounts of his life are forced to skip hurriedly over these years. Yet, in order to understand the context of Mustapha and the masque which followed, Alfred, it is necessary to make some attempt to reconstruct the pattern of his affairs and associates prior to 1739.

Toward the end of 1731, Mallet left the service of the Duke of Montrose and became tutor to James Newsham, the stepson of John Knight.¹ He acquired the position through the influence of Pope, who had known the boy's mother when she was Mrs. John Newsham.² Pope spoke highly of Mallet to Mr. Knight, a recommendation which probably helped him secure the position: "there lives not a more moral, laborious, nor (I believe) one more proper to educate youth."³ For the next few years Mallet fulfilled his duties adequately. He and James Newsham went to Oxford in late 1733 and remained there for nearly a year. In the spring of 1735, Mallet took degrees from the University of Oxford and the University of Edin-
About 1734 he married for the first time, and the following year his son, Charles, was born.

During the period of these events, Mallet published *On Verbal Criticism*, which has been judged as "a trite satire on pedants and pedantry, composed of such commonplace raillery as that with which small wits usually attack great and eminent scholars." The piece has little to recommend it, and in publishing it Mallet probably felt that he was discharging a debt to Pope. Pope first heard of the poem possibly through Savage during the time he was aiding Mallet in getting *Eurydice* upon the stage. There was a lapse of several years before the poem was published, in 1733, inscribed as "An Epistle to Mr. Pope; occasion'd by Bentley's MILTON and Theobald's SHAKESPEARE." Despite the statement in the Advertisement, "that this poem was undertaken and written entirely without the knowledge of the Gentleman to whom it is addressed," Pope was aware of what was going on. Before the poem came out, Pope wrote Jonathan Richardson of his surprise that the piece was inscribed to him, but Mallet's course seems to have had his approval. He read the poem over "with great & just Delight" and expressed his gratitude: "I am too much pleased with the favor you have done me in this Epistle, to be willing to part with it, till you absolutely require it." Pope had also given the poem to Bolingbroke, who read it and expressed a desire to meet Mallet—the first evidence of an acquaintance that was later to be important to the young poet.

The publication of the poem was delayed slightly, however, at Pope's
request until after Theobald had had a benefit night for his play \textit{Fatal Secret}, which was scheduled for April 6, 1733. Pope was fearful that \textit{Of Verbal Criticism} might hurt the box office receipts on Theobald's benefit night.

After their year at Oxford, Mallet and his young pupil went on the Grand Tour in 1735, leaving probably during the summer. Little is known of Mallet's activities during this time; he wrote twice to Pope while he was on the continent (the only letters in the Little collection between 1734 and 1739), and he returned sometime after the early part of September, 1736.

Although Mallet's activities during these years are largely beyond our knowledge, the fact that by 1738 he emerges as a figure associated with the Opposition to Walpole is not too surprising. Not only had he attracted Bolingbroke's attention with \textit{Of Verbal Criticism}, but there is evidence that he saw the nobleman on several occasions prior to his Grand Tour with Newsham. In addition, his relation with the Knight family would have kept him on the fringes of Bolingbroke's circle since Knight was the father-in-law of Bolingbroke's half-sister, Henrietta, who later became Lady Lut-eborough.

The general election of 1734 had thoroughly discomfited the Opposition, and Bolingbroke retired to France the following year, not to return until 1738. He had been denounced as a Jacobite by Walpole, and he had quarreled with Pulteney, one of the leaders of the Opposition. What remained of the Opposition gradually
coalesced about the figure of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, who was in conflict with his father and with Walpole. The Prince, who had flirted with the Opposition as early as 1729, openly joined it in 1737, an action that delivered the group from the stigma of Jacobitism. As the conflict deepened, Frederick became the hope for all the disaffected, and when Bolingbroke came back to England for a short time in 1738, the circulation of his Idea of a Patriot King indicated the ambitious plans which many were laying for the prince.

Mallet's next dramatic venture, Mustapha, must be viewed against this political background. Because evidence is lacking, it is difficult to be certain of the extent of Mallet's involvement with the Opposition prior to late 1738, but if his relations with the group parallel those of his friend, James Thomson, then his association existed over a period of years before the appearance of Mustapha. Although Thomson did not commit himself wholly to the group until the late 1730's, his attitudes were in agreement with those of the Opposition in many instances. As early as 1729, his poem Britannia, written upon the occasion of Prince Frederick's arrival in England, evidenced hostility toward Walpole, and the dedication of his Liberty to the Prince in 1735 firmly established his partisanship. Thomson's avowal was not openly made, however, until after he was granted a pension by the Prince, when he addressed lines to Frederick in the Gentleman's Magazine for September, 1737.
During the years he was employed as a tutor by the Knight family, Mallet had not lost interest in the theatre. Seven months after the production of Eurydice, he was discussing with Hill the possibility of writing a Roman tragedy about Gracchus. Probably because Hill was then fully engaged with Athelwold, he suggested to Mallet an English story based on Piers Gaveston. Nothing came of either of these proposed dramas, however, and the correspondence, before it ceased for several years, ended with a discussion of titles. Hill was worried about the simplicity of the name Athelwold and wondered whether his play should be called The Generous Traitor. Mallet attempted to quiet Hill's fears with a reasonable statement about titles. "The Name, you have chosen, means very fully what you intend by the play; but as I think there is often something like affectation, or at least too much Search, in such titles, I would prefer the simple name of Athelwold to any other." 24 Pope also gave Hill the same advice. 25 The title Athelwold had originally been suggested by Cibber, whom Hill had forgiven for the "murder he committed on my Epilogue to Eurydice." 26 But despite his friends' advice Hill was still concerned because the simple Saxon name did not have the connotations which the great names of history possessed. In a letter dated October 2, 1731, he explained his fears in detail to Mallet. 27
Your observation, on the complex names of Tragedies, is, I think, a very just one; and ought to determine me in restoring that of Athelwold, to mine. But the Caesar, Alexanders, Timoleon, Cato, are names, so noted, in history, that they awaken expectation, as the Eurydice and Sophonisbas are so musical, in their sounds, that they seem to bespeak our parti-
ality, in their favour: and are, therefore, the properest titles for Plays, for which they are the subjects; whereas Athelwold, being neither noted, nor sounding enough, to carry such a weight of distinction, I was afraid, it might be necessary, to point at some meaning, in the title.

There is no further reference to Mallet's dramatic ambitions until the latter part of 1738. In September of that year, Pope wrote Hill that he had already read the first act of Mallet's play and that he was impressed by it. The news of Mallet's new tragedy startled Hill; he did not even know that Mallet had returned from abroad, a definite indication that contact between the two men had lapsed for some time.

At this point, as evidence concerning Mallet becomes more plentiful, a curious situation seems to have occurred in which four tragedies were involved: Thomson's Edward and Eleonora, Hill's Caesar (printed as The Roman's Revenge in 1754), Henry Brooke's Gustavus Vasa, and Mallet's Mustapha. These dramas belong to the literature of the Opposition, and the plays of Brooke, Thomson, and Mallet have relevance to the political situation at that time because each dramatically presents the conflict between the Prince on the one hand, and Walpole on the other. Actually, it appears that Hill's Caesar was never really in the running, although for a while he had high hopes that his Roman would finally appear on the boards. The extent of the political aspects of these plays can be
gauged by the fact that Frederick directly intervened, and his choice of Mallet's Mustapha as the first play to be performed was apparently dictated by the play's political implications. Boling-broke, having returned from France in the summer, seems to have spent most of his time at Twickenham with Pope, a vantage point from which he could probably indulge in behind-the-scenes intrigue. His influence is suggested by the fact that Mustapha, Edward and Eleonora, and Gustavus Vasa incorporate, to some extent, the ideology of the Idea of a Patriot King. Until mid-January, however, all four playwrights were vying for production, and the correspondence concerning the plays during the autumn and winter of 1738-1739 presents a perplexing situation finally solved by the Prince's command and by the censor, who banned the plays of Thomson and Brooke. Hill's play was never produced, although he continued trying to get it on the stage for ten years.

When Hill heard of the tragedies of his two friends, Mallet and Thomson, he begged Pope for further information about their plans, so that "I will regulate my own conduct accordingly." A month later, however, Pope was still unable to give him particulars. Although Pope had written to both Mallet and Thomson, he had not heard from them, nor even learned of their whereabouts. Through a friend, Pope learned that neither playwright was in any special hurry and that their plays could not possibly be brought on until nearly the end of the winter. He advised Hill to attempt getting Caesar produced early: "I wish from my Soul you may get yours
first, as well acted as it deserves. 31

Upon receiving this information, Hill promptly acted and dispatched his manuscript to Charles Fleetwood, the Patentee of Drury Lane. Hill hoped that his play might be brought on in January. To occupy Pope's time until that happy event should occur, Hill sent him a nine page analysis of Thomson's *Agamemnon* and suggested that he hint of these matters to Thomson in some conversation "at your leisure." 32 Perhaps in order to insure that Thomson would learn of his helpful remarks, Hill also sent a copy of the criticism to Mallet. 33

Despite the fact that Hill had been termed one who cared little for political controversy, 34 there is no doubt that he was certainly willing to be engaged by the Opposition in this instance, if for no other reason than to get his beloved Caesar on the stage. His hopes for his play were probably encouraged because he had learned through Thomson that the Prince of Wales considered Caesar as the noblest among the characters of antiquity. Hill even had a special copy of the play transcribed for the Prince. To make certain that Frederick would have no trouble in following the action, the names of the speakers and the breaks in the scenes were indicated in red ink. 35

A month later Pope still had not seen Thomson; or so he told Hill, perhaps to avoid explaining why he had not given Hill's "Plan of an Alteration of his Tragedy" to Thomson. The composition of Thomson's *Edward and Eleonora* had been delayed considerably, only
two acts having been written. However, Mallet had completed *Mustapha* and it was ready for the stage. In December, 1738, Mallet told Pope that he was agreeable to any sort of arrangement with Hill about the scheduling of the plays. He was willing for Hill's to be brought on in January, ahead of his, or in February, after his. Since Hill was absent from London during the period of these negotiations, Mallet offered to act as agent for him in his dealings with Fleetwood and to attend, in his behalf, all of the rehearsals of *Caesar*, should that play be produced. Mallet also offered to use his influence with the actor James Quin, who had been refusing to accept the leading role in Hill's play.36

Mallet's offer of assistance was eagerly accepted by Hill. Fleetwood had had the manuscript of *Caesar* for a month, but Hill could get little information from him concerning its production. Through Hill's friend, Chetwood, the manager sent word that he was ready to put on the play, but Hill had not received a letter verifying this fact, and he begged Mallet to learn Fleetwood's "design from himself."37 He also accepted Mallet's aid in the matter of the Quin, the actor.

Several years before, Hill had made some severe comments in the Prompter about Quin's acting abilities, remarks which Quin unfortunately remembered. In his charmingly obtuse way, Hill simply could not understand Quin's anger and resentment at "some remarks having been made on the Theatres, with a view to have argued the Players into a more general exertion of that sensibility in the
expression of passions." Even though the playwright and the actor scuffled over the matter one night, exchanging several blows, Hill always looked upon Quin's attitude with an aggrieved bewilderment that the actor should have taken the criticism personally. Ignoring the history of Quin's antagonism toward him, Hill adapted the character of Caesar to Quin's talents, fully expecting the actor to be delighted. When Quin refused the role, Hill was genuinely baffled by what he considered the actor's astonishing behavior; as he told Mallet, Quin "must, since then, have had leisure enough for reflection, to find and confess the good purpose of such friendly reproaches." Mallet looked into the matter with only moderate success, for later he hesitantly wrote to Hill: "that Player, you mention, will behave, I am told, reasonably."

Mallet had less success with Fleetwood, however, than he did with Quin. Upon Hill's acceptance of his offer of assistance, Mallet attempted to approach Fleetwood through an unknown third party who had read and appreciated Caesar. Using the power of the names of Pope and Bolingbroke in an endeavor to effect an audience with the manager, he waited ten days in late December without a reply concerning either his own or Hill's play. Disgusted with his failure, Mallet spoke contemptuously of the Patentee. "We have both to deal with a man, who seems to me not to act on any principles of common sense, or common honour, that I am acquainted with."

Although Mallet was unable to get satisfaction from the manager of Drury Lane, powerful forces were beginning to intercede
in the playwright's behalf. A few days after Mallet had written
Hill on January 6, 1739, about his inability to see Fleetwood, the
manager sent word to Hill that a decision had been reached and that,
because of the insistence of the Prince of Wales, Mallet's Mustapha
was to be produced first. The delay in deciding which play to
bring on had been apparently occasioned by uncertainty concerning
Thomson's Edward and Eleonora. When George Lyttelton informed the
Prince that Thomson's play would not be ready in time, Frederick
Louis gave his command that Mallet's be acted first. During all
this maneuvering, it appears that Fleetwood had been more interested
in Henry Brooke's Gustavus Vasa than in any of the other plays and
that, despite his early promise to Mallet, he had attempted to delay
Mustapha. But the Prince's command finally ended the controversy.

Hill was deeply stung by this unfavorable turn of events,
which led him to announce in a letter to Pope: "I bid a hearty
farewell to the stage." Although he insisted that the news of
Mallet's success "has pleased me sincerely," he could not resist
implying in the same letter that Mallet's fortune was the result of
the influence of persons of high station, to whom he did not have
access. "And, may what I write be never read, but by the Fleetwoods
and Lums of futurity, if I would not rather burn it, with my own
hand, than oppose it to the interest of a man of genius and worth—
though a stranger." Then his bitterness got the better of him.
"But to see the management of our Theatres reduced to such an
unfathomable descent, in profundity, that a Tragedy, writ with the
care that has been bestowed upon Caesar, should be driveled, hum'd, and hesitated over—should be complimented with the dull mysteriousness of apology, to cover but neglect and irresolution—is a nettling alarm to the patience of a writer, and, indeed, a trial, to the quick, of his vanity." Hill's humiliation, however, was not yet complete. Months later, after Mustapha had been performed and Edward and Eleonora had been banned, Hill was still pleading with Fleetwood—not to produce Caesar, but merely to return the manuscript.

Hill's pique at having lost out to Mallet may solve Johnson's enigmatical statement that "the Epilogue, said to be written by a friend, was composed in haste by Mallet, in the place of one promised, which was never given." In a letter dated February 3, 1739, Mallet apologizes to Hill for not being able to send a copy of Mustapha to him and says: "could I have sent the copy now, I own, tho not without some confusion, that I designed to have begged an epilogue of you." Since Mallet indicates in the same letter that he intends to send a copy later, he may have requested an epilogue when he did so. The prologue was written by James Thomson, and Johnson's judgment that it is "not mean, but far inferior to that which he had received from Mallet for Agamemnon," is fair enough.

III

Mustapha appeared on Tuesday, February 13, 1738/39, and ran for fourteen nights. Mallet had been apprehensive about the
production of his play because Fleetwood was neglectful and careless about both the costuming and acting. The playwright complained of the manager's penuriousness, stating that Fleetwood would not spend a shilling "towards the dressing or decorating of it." He was further angered because Fleetwood preferred officiating at boxing matches to directing Mustapha. The manager often broke off rehearsals and carried the actors away to Tottenham Court where he umpired the bouts. Although the play was a success, Mallet's fears were partially justified. Pope was present for the first night and he wrote Hill that the play was well received, though "acted vilely," particularly in the women's parts. In light of Mallet's complaint about Fleetwood's carrying the actors off to the boxing matches, one suspects that Mrs. Butler and Mrs. Giffard were more taken by the fisticuffs at Tottenham Court than were Quin and Milward. Despite his disapproval of the acting, Pope went backstage after the performance, something he had not done for years, presumably to congratulate the actors. He paid much attention to Quin, who had taken the role of Solyman. The actor was so delighted with the great man's notice that, when Pope prepared to leave, Quin insisted upon having the honor of holding his scarlet cloak.

Besides Quin, the play also featured Milward as Mustapha and Mrs. Butler as Roxolana. This was Mrs. Butler's second appearance in a play by Mallet, for she had taken the minor role of Melissa in Eurydice. William Hills, who had played Medon in Mallet's first tragedy, was Rustan in Mustapha. When Alfred was produced at
Cliefden Gardens in 1740, Quin, Mills, and Milward performed in the masque.

**Mustapha** was given considerable space in the periodicals. In its February, 1739, issue, the *Gentleman's Magazine* printed a short letter signed "W. Q.," which requested that the Prologue, Epilogue, and Dedication of the tragedy be printed since **Mustapha** "has been so well received." In addition to these, the magazine also printed part of scene seven, act three, in which Mustapha delivers a speech embodying the principles set forth in Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King.* In the same month, the magazine also printed two poems entitled "To Mr. Mallet," both celebrating his tragedy. In November, 1739, the *London Magazine* printed a lengthy poem called "To a Young Lady with Mustapha," in which the play is described as "the noblest pattern of a heav'n-born mind." The *Scotts Magazine,* in February, 1739, reproduced one of the poems to Mallet that appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine.* The same issue also carried a letter describing the first performance of **Mustapha.** According to the writer, a clique was present, armed with "cat-calls, and other instruments of theatrical damnation," but the play was so successful that it "was acted without one hiss or other mark of dislike." The writer complained that "the best descriptions, and the most moving distress passed in silence, while any casual expression which was capable of being interpreted into a meaning unintended (I believe) by the author, met with the loudest applauds." Despite this immediate acclaim, however, **Mustapha** was never revived.
Commentators have treated Mustapha with more kindness than Eurydice received. Genest admits that "it is not badly written" and finds fault only with the last act, because Rustan's "voluntary confession of guilt is unnatural." Johnson merely says that it "was well received"; Whincop grants that it had "some applause." The Earl of Egmont was present for the third night and, perhaps because of his political leanings, greatly enjoyed the evening's experience. "In the evening I went to the new play called Mustapha, wrote by Mr. Mallet; the language of it is lofty but not bombast, the sentiments fine and justly expressed, the characters kept up to, and the principles of honour and virtue inculcated; in a word, to one of our best modern tragedies." The reputation of the play was sufficiently great after the first two nights for Lady Francis, Countess of Hertford, to speak of it in a letter to the Countess of Pomfret. "Mr. Mallet's new tragedy of Mustapha has been twice acted with great applause. I have neither seen nor read it, but I hear it so much commended, that, as soon as it is printed, I will endeavor to find some means of conveying it to you, as also that of Gustavus Vasa, which I find now is to come next upon the stage." Davies deals kindly with Mustapha and particularly likes the language, which "differs widely from that of Eurydice, which abounds in turgid expression; the former is more flowing and genuine, as well as more easy and natural."

The reputation of the play soon began to suffer in one important respect, however: in title and general outline, it
resembled the Mustapha of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, produced in 1665; and many of Mallet's contemporaries, recognizing the similarity, began to hint that he had done nothing more than rework Orrery's play. This accusation was first set forth by Robert Dodsley, who brought out a two-volume edition of Orrery's dramatic work shortly after the production of Mallet's Mustapha. In speaking of Orrery's oriental drama in the preface, Dodsley claims that "a late Author has with great Sagacity taken away the Rhyme, and has made his Play (by the Help of a first Minister, and some other lucky Incidents) as fashionable now, as my Lord Orrery's was heretofore: The impartial Reader will distinguish the Merit of each." The reference was obviously to Mallet, who was angered by the implied charge of plagiarism. Pope attempted to smooth over the matter by telling Mallet that undoubtedly it was all the fault of some unknown "Affirming Criticks." But others also noticed the similarity of the two plays. When the Countess of Pomfret received the copy of Mustapha which Lady Francis promised her, she replied with her thanks and the following judgment: "I remember a play, written by Roger earl of Orrery, on the same subject, in rhyme, that pleased me much better."

In succeeding years, the belief that Mallet had built upon Orrery became permanently imprisoned in print. Baker's judgment is more judicious than most: Mustapha, he says, is "upon the same general plan" as Orrery's play, "but the language being more modern and poetical, and the conduct of the plot more adapted to the
present taste, it may justly be called the author's own. He also points out that Mallet's tragedy has a certain resemblance to Fulk Greville's Mustapha (1633). Genest omits Greville, but he indicates that Mallet used Orrery, and to Dodsley's charge he adds "that Mallet's play was more correct and Lord Orrery's more affecting."

The interesting point about Genest's necessarily brief discussion is that he compares the two plays with the story of Mustapha as it is presented in Robertson's History of Charles the Fifth, and then he shows how Orrery and Mallet present identical incidents—the friendship of Mustapha and Zanger and Solyman's eventual conviction that Mustapha was innocent—which are not contained in Robertson's account.

Modern scholars have clung to the notion that Mallet based his play upon Orrery's. A study of oriental influence on eighteenth century literature mentions that Mallet's Mustapha "caused discussion because it was an imitation of Orrery's Mustapha written in the previous century." Even Nicoll claims that Mallet "is indebted to Orrery." There has been only one dissenting voice; Herbert W. Starr presented strong evidence in 1941 showing that Mallet, although he undoubtedly was aware of Orrery's play, primarily used The Generall Historie of the Turkes, by Richard Knolles, a seventeenth century history.

There is no need to repeat Starr's argument completely, but it will help to give his main points. To dispense with Fulk Greville, Starr shows that Mallet's play resembles the 1633 Mustapha
only in the construction of the character of Achmet. In Knolles, Achmet is a Bassa friendly to Mustapha; in both Greville and Mallet, his friendship with Mustapha is an important element in the story; in Orrery he is a tool of Solyman, and he aids the king in luring Mustapha to his death.

Mallet's debt to Orrery, if indeed it be that, resides principally in the characterization of Zanger. In Knolles, Tszihanger is merely one of the four sons of Roxolana. Overcome by his mother's treacherous behavior toward Mustapha, he stabs himself. Knolles gives no indication that Tszihanger's suicide is a result of his friendship with Mustapha, an attachment which is not even hinted at. But in Orrery and Mallet, the friendship between the two men is very definite and provides a reason for Zanger's action. Mallet's play, however, differs greatly from the others in several important respects. The evil minister, Rustan, is allied to Roxolana because of his marriage to her daughter. This is a point made clear by Knolles, but it is absent in the plays of Greville and Orrery.

Another basic difference is the use of Mustapha's secret marriage to the daughter of the Persian king. In Knolles and Mallet, knowledge of this marriage causes Solyman to acquiesce in his son's death. Starr's argument is a strong one, and his conclusion that Mallet "for the most part worked directly from the story as told by Knolles" appears to have the necessary documentary proof. 7u

Although Starr's position really requires no additional support, his case can be further enlarged by reference to one of
Mallet's letters. During the negotiations of the winter of 1738-1739, Hill had requested that Mallet send a copy of Mustapha to him for perusal. In a letter dated February 3, 1739, Mallet apologizes for not being able to do so and explains that he had the play transcribed, but the copier did such a wretched job that it had to be done over. In lieu of a transcription, Mallet included the following synopsis of his play in the letter.

The story I have chosen is the fate of Mustapha, eldest son of Solyman the magnificent, who caused him to be strangled at the Instigation of Roxolana, Step-mother to Mustapha, in conjunction with the Mufti and Prime Vizier. The friendship betwixt Mustapha and Zanger, whom I suppose the favourite son of Roxolana, serves to heighten the distress in the end of it. I have likewise married Mustapha to the Sophy of Persia's daughter (for which there is a foundation in history) and, as Solyman mortally hated that Prince, I have made the discovery of this marriage, improved by Roxolana's management, confirm the emperor in his design of putting Mustapha immediately to death.

Two passages in this quotation give further indication that Knolles was Mallet's source. That Mallet had to "suppose" Zanger the favorite son of Roxolana suggests that he has Knolles in mind, for Knolles does not indicate that Zanger had more of his mother's affection than did her other three sons. Then there is Mallet's parenthetical remark about there being a foundation in history for Mustapha's marriage to the daughter of the Sophy of Persia, a foundation that definitely exists in Knolles.

One other point strengthens the argument that Knolles was Mallet's source. The historian devotes considerable space to the machinations Roxolana employed to trick Solyman into marrying her. In these she
was aided by Mufti, the chief Muslim priest. She announced that she wanted to build an abbey, a hospital, and a church for her soul's sake; however, these acts of religious fervor would be credited to the Sultan's account in heaven since she was a bondwoman, his property. On Mufti's counsel, Solyman gave her freedom so that she could benefit by these religious acts. Once she was free, she refused to bed with her master on the grounds that a freed woman's giving her body outside marriage to a man constituted an offence against God. Again Solyman consulted Mufti, who told the king that he must marry Roxolana if he wished to possess her. Thus Solyman agreed to break the ancient custom and marry. In agreement with the story, Mallet's tragedy points out both facts.

Concerning the unusual occurrence of the Sultan's marriage to Roxolana, Rustan relates these facts:

E'er since the time inhuman TAMERLANE,
In BAJAZET'S insulted Queen, dishonor'd
The majesty of empire, future Sultans
Have shunn'd the marriage-tie. (I. iii.)

Roxolana's letter-like devotion to religious law is mentioned when Rustan speaks to Mufti:

Indeed you owe,
And I no less, all duty to her Highness.
I need not to your grateful thought recall,
How warm her love for our unerring law:
How liberal to its sages! Prie'd herself
With zeal for holy things, that zeal in others
Is title to her favour: and inspir'd
Her powerful mediation with the Sultan,
Great SOLUM, who rais'd your worth on high
To that prime station where it shines unenvy'd.

(I. i.)
From all of this evidence, it appears fairly certain that Mallet depended largely upon Knolles. He was probably aware of Orrery's play and of Greville's, since both were fairly well known, but it can hardly be claimed that his play is an "imitation" of either of those tragedies. That Mallet had a considerable knowledge of Near Eastern history is suggested by the account of his library which Dinsdale gives in *Ballads and Songs*. Dinsdale notes the existence in the library of a number of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic manuscripts. The persistent belief that Mallet copied Orrery can, to a large extent, be attributed to his unsavoury reputation; everyone was willing to believe the worst of him.

IV

The handsome reception afforded *Mustapha* was certainly due, in part, to the political implications with which the play is studded. For the first performance, the audience was packed with members of the Opposition and they wildly applauded scenes and speeches which could be applied meaningfully to contemporary grievances. The existence of these scenes and speeches is pointed up by the Countess of Hertford. When she sent a copy of *Mustapha* to the Countess of Pomfret, she said that she had not had time to read the play, but "I hear other people say it has many party strokes." After she had apparently read the play, she wrote: "By an odd caprice of Fortune, I am afraid Gustavus Vasa will not be licensed
at last: though I own there does not appear to me to be half so
much in it liable to objection, as in Mustapha; and, however strange
it may appear, it is said that the very people commend it that
refuse it their suffrage to be brought upon the stage. When the
Countess of Pomfret had received and read Mustapha, she quickly
passed a similar judgment upon it. "I think the malice it contains
is more visible than its wit."

The overall structure of the situation in Mustapha has a
rough correspondence to the political conflict which existed during
the 1730's. Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, was in opposition to
Walpole, and the theatre-goer of the period could easily see that
struggle paralleled by the conflict between Mustapha, son of
Solyman the Magnificent, and Rustan, the Grand Vizier of the Turkish
kingdom. Rustan was generally accepted as a dramatic portrait of
Walpole. Baker declares that "in the characters of Solyman the
Magnificent, and Rustan his Vizier, the author is said to have
glanced at the king and Sir Robert Walpole." Davies uses almost
the same words in connection with the play.

A modern reader is separated by more than two centuries from
the intangible climate of the play, but he can still grasp some of
the thrusts at Walpole. One can guess with some sense of certainty
that applause and cries of agreement must have greeted such dis-
guised references to Walpole as "this Villain—statesman" (III. vii.),
and Zanger'sanguished cry: "Heaven! . . . Are such as he the men
whom princes trust?" (III. vii.). Walpole was an ambitious and
worldly man. For over twenty years he directed the affairs of the
British kingdom. He was a realistic man; he was never subtle.
Cynical and coarse in private life, he could be brutal and heavy
handed in public matters. The fact that he was a man of such
character permits the modern reader to comprehend some of the irony
of the strokes at Walpole in the play. For example, during the
third act, Rustan delivers a soliloquy upon ambition which reveals
the heavy price that such a passion extracts.

Ambition! deadly tyrant!
Inexorable master! what alarms,
What anxious hours, what agonies of heart,
Are the sure portion of thy gaudy slaves?
Cruel condition! Could the toiling hind,
The shivering beggar, whom no roof receives,
Wet with the mountain shower, and crouching low
Beneath the naked cliff, his only home;
Could he but read the statesman's secret breast,
But see the horrors there, the wounds, the stabs,
From furious passions and avenging guilt;
He would not change his rags and wretchedness,
For gilded domes and greatness!

(III, iv.)

The inappropriateness of attributing meditation of this sort to
Walpole could very well be the kind of "malice" to which the
Countess of Pomfret refers. The irony of the speech is pointed up by
the succeeding action. Zanger enters and comments: "You seem wrapt
up in meditation, Vizir." And Rustan wryly remarks:

I have been thinking what sweet peace attends
The homely shepherd's life.

(III, v.)
One of the many important elements that make up the political intent of the play may be the constant references to the intrigue infested court of Solyman. Mallet has liberally sprinkled his tragedy with remarks concerning the "infamy of courts" (II. i.), and these could very easily have been caught and appreciated by a partisan audience. This motif is announced at the very beginning of the play. When Mufti returns from the Porte to partake in Roxolana's scheme for destroying Mustapha, Rustan reveals to him the plot but warns:

And when your ear hath heard
Th' important tale, let caution lock it up
Deep in the darkest silence of your breast,
From all but heaven. (I. i.)

Mufti's answer is the first of many references to intrigue.

Have I not liv'd in courts?
Been present where I would not trust a thought,
In whisper, even to things inanimate?
(II. i.)

The treachery and intrigue of the court exist, however, not only to inspire applause from the audience but also to provide a fitting background against which Mustapha, the noble prince, may stand out. There is no mistaking the immorality of the court.

How low beneath all scorn
This court-dissimulation sinks mankind.
(II. iii.)

In determining the degree to which Mustapha is a representation of the Prince of Wales, several very apparent similarities may
be noted. One of the crucial points upon which George II and Frederick quarreled was the matter of Frederick’s marriage, and the Prince was not permitted to marry the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha until 1736. Mustapha’s marriage to the daughter of the Sophy of Persia is the event which leads to his destruction, and the applicability of this event to Frederick’s quarrel with his father and with the Prime Minister could not very well be missed by the audience. As has already been noted, Mallet deliberately emphasized this aspect in the synopsis which he sent to Hill; that he should do so, unconscious of its parallel with the life of Frederick, is difficult to believe. Indeed, Mallet is to be complimented on this issue; although he appears to be using the device of Mustapha’s marriage for its political implications, he is still able to make the device operable in a legitimate dramatic sense, since it serves as Mustapha’s fatal error.

In Knolles the marriage of Mustapha and the Persian princess is disclosed to Solyman by Rustan and Roxolana, who learn of it through spies they place in Mustapha’s retinue. The historian, however, suggests no reason for Mustapha’s having married the Persian, a union which leaves him open to the charge of treason. But Mallet provides a reason that is acceptable, if it is judged in terms of the dramatic practice of that period. In the play the disclosure is not made by Rustan and Roxolana but by Emira, the princess herself. Emira’s revelation of the secret that destroys Mustapha is an action involving not only herself but also Zanger—thus justifying his eventual fate, too. After Zanger has spoken to
Roxelana and learned that her ambition cannot be stopped; he goes
to Emira and pleads with her to see Solyman in hopes that the truth
from her lips will block his mother's plans for Mustapha's death.

Emira—on this moment hangs
Our last, our only hope—Fall at his knees,
Beseech, adjure him. Youth and grace like thine
May reach his soul, and melt him into nature.
Disclose thy story: tell him with thy tears,
With all the moving softness of distress,
The secret of your hearts. Who know but heaven
May greatly interpose its sovereign aid
For injur'd virtue and imploring love.
(IV. vi.)

But Solyman is not moved and he furiously faces Mustapha with this
knowledge.

Art thou not join'd in league?
In hellish compact with thy father's foes?
Art thou not—married? (IV. ix.)

Mustapha cannot deny the truth, a truth which he has fatally
kept hidden from his father. He does deny that he did not wish to
inform Solyman of the marriage, and he points out that in their
previous interview he had attempted to tell the king of the secret
but had been prevented by the sudden uprising of the troops, an
action which required his suddenly leaving Solyman so that he could
quiesce the soldiery (II. viii.). This situation has much dramatic
value: the commotion among the troops is caused by their fear for
the safety of the Prince, and this fear prevents Mustapha's telling
his father of his marriage—an ironic development that leads
eventually to Mustapha's death.
Mustapha claims that the marriage was the only means whereby he could protect himself from the treachery of the court.

My foes, I knew, my unrelenting foes,
Were high in your regard, trusted, belov'd;
Attach'd with no less faith to you, than fix'd
And in close league combin'd—to ruin me.
Their power in all its dark extent I saw;
Its baleful influence felt. The law of heaven,
The voice of reason, urg'd me to preserve
Myself from death, my father from a crime.
Against inveterate, unabating hate,
I sought protection, sought a sure retreat:
And found it in the Persian monarch's love.
(IV. ix.)

He also justifies the marriage on the grounds that it brings peace, in addition to reacquiring territory which Solyman had lost in previous wars.

Weary of war's fell ravage, wishing rest,
He gave his blooming daughter to my arms,
And with her those fair provinces your sword
Had won and lost by turns; to be annex'd
For ever to your empire, on such terms
Of peace, as you and justice might approve.
(IV. ix.)

Mallet's use of Mustapha's popularity is another instance of the play's resemblance to the actual political situation of the 1730's, for Frederick enjoyed rather widespread acclaim during this period. When he was married, London officials presented addresses of congratulations and good wishes to the Royal family, but the Prince reportedly received "peculiar Marks of Condescension and Goodness" above and beyond those extended to the King and the Queen. The good favor with which the Lord Mayor and Court of Alderman looked
upon him may be judged by their having presented him with the
Freedom of the City, an honor never before bestowed upon a Prince of
Wales. That he curried this favor is suggested by his having sent
a large sum to the Lord Mayor to be used for releasing poor Freemen
from prison. In 1737, when there was a great fire in the Inner
Temple, the Prince came upon the scene and directed the soldiers and
firemen in their fight against the conflagration. He also aided
with gifts of money. By June, 1738, seven months before the appear-
ce of Mustapha, the Prince was so popular that the city officials
paid their respects when his second child was born by going to
Norfolk House in a cavalcade consisting of no less than eighty-four
coaches. St. James unquestionably viewed this entourage as
evidence of "dangerous popularity" (II. vii.e).

Fear of Mustapha's public adulation is the emotion that
Roxolana employs in exciting Solyman against his son. Her motive is
the preservation of herself and Zanger. As Rustan says, "she must
destroy or perish"; for when Solyman dies, she "sinks from what she
is" and "sinks into a slave!" In addition, she fears that Zanger is
doomed when Mustapha ascends the throne, because as a younger
brother he is "th' unhappy victim" who falls

Of that dire policy, which founds the throne
Of each ascending Prince in brother's blood.
(I. i.)

In order to prevent such an end, she plots to destroy Mustapha. The
method she employs is outlined by Rustan:
But wouldst thou know,  
How she may drive him from his father's bosom?  
This boasted courage she adores! exalts!  
With all th' insidious artfulness of praise;  
And will applaud the stripling into ruin.  
(I. i.)

Mustapha is aware of the plot against him. When he first appears, accompanied by the shouts and applause of the soldiery, he reveals to Achmet his fear of such plaudits.

Oh Achmet!  
Faithful instructor of my youth in arms,  
These shouts, this honest transport of the army,  
That had been music in the front of battle,  
Is discord here! (II. i.)

When Achmet demurs, Mustapha's summation of the dangers of popularity may well have raised a cry of partisan agreement from the audience: "to be belov'd is to be guilty!"

Mallet skillfully develops Roxolana and Rustan's gradual excitation of fear in the King. Solyman is first presented in regal state, surrounded by officers whose task is to remind him of his greatness but also of his mortality. He is addressed as "King of Kings" and reminded that his is the task of chastizing vice and rewarding virtue. Immediately following this pronouncement, Rustan ironically arrives, the embodiment of vice. The Prime Minister prepares the king for distrusting his son by mentioning that Mustapha may not look with fondness on Solyman's recent "breach of ancient custom"—his marriage to Roxolana (I, iii.). With this suggestion of disloyalty given, Rustan retires and Roxolana enters.
She praises Mustapha's war-like deeds and gives credit to Solyman for allowing his son to conquer in his name while he remains "inactive in the shade." The king remembers that it has been long since he has taken the field: "The world has ceas'd to tremble at my name." His jealousy is aroused and he bitterly comments that "we may oblige our children into foes" (I. iv.). At this point, Rustan returns with news that Mustapha approaches the king's camp. "The troops," inquires Solyman, "how greet they his arrival?" The Vizier describes the mad haste with which they pour over the plains towards the young prince. Beside himself with jealousy and rage, Solyman cries out, "the traitors F (I. v.)

Skillfully done in the space of three scenes, the development of this situation is testimony that Mallet was a competent playwright for his time. Having established Solyman's jealousy of Mustapha's popularity, Mallet keeps this theme of parental distrust continually before the audience until Solyman is completely convinced by the evil schemes of Roxolana and the Prime Minister. The order to execute Mustapha is then given in language having significance for every member of the Opposition in the theatre: "Imperial justice knows no ties of blood" (IV. x.).

V

There is another way in which Mustapha bears a resemblance to the political situation of the 1730's. In order to develop this parallel, it is necessary to turn to Bolingbroke and his Idea of a
Patriot King, composed in 1738 as a letter to George Lyttelton. It is true that this work was not published until 1749, but Bolingbroke's return to England in the summer of 1738 lends credence to an assumption that the letter was readily available to those members of the Opposition who were associated with the nobleman. Whether or not Mallet read the letter is unknown at present, but Mustapha does present the picture of an ideal and patriotic king, a picture similar in certain respects to that presented in the Idea of a Patriot King. Of course, Mallet would not have had to read Bolingbroke's letter in order to acquire this concept. The ideas expressed in Bolingbroke's letter were in the political atmosphere of the Opposition, and they had been voiced in such periodicals as the Craftsman. It is certainly not the intent of the following argument to imply that Mallet read and then put into dramatic form Bolingbroke's Idea of a Patriot King. Rather the intent is to show that the presentation of Mustapha as a patriotic prince roughly corresponds to that idea sketched in more detail in Bolingbroke's work. This dramatic presentation would have been readily understood by those in the audience who were in any way familiar with the general lines of either Bolingbroke's letter, the views of the Opposition, or the image of Frederick which the Opposition wished to present.

The purpose of the Idea of a Patriot King, as Bolingbroke announces in the Introduction, is to delineate "the duties of a king to his country; of those kings particularly who are appointed by the people." It is not necessary to recapitulate all of Bolingbroke's
argument; it is only necessary to indicate his image of the Patriot King. He creates this image against the background of a nation torn by division and faction, a nation that has gradually surrendered its liberty and freedom into the hands of corrupt administrators. When such conditions come to pass, "old men will outlive the shame of losing liberty, and young men will arise who know not that it ever existed. A spirit of slavery will oppose and oppress the spirit of liberty, and seem at least to be the genius of the nation." 90

At this point of national crisis, a Patriot King must come into succession. "He, and he alone, can save a country whose ruin is so far advanced." 91 His coming would "be a blessing," and after using this term, Bolingbroke often presents the Patriot King in religious language. The Patriot King comes as "the most powerful of all reformers; for he is himself a sort of standing miracle." 92 He is the savior of his country, come "to deliver his subjects if not from the guilt, yet from the consequence, of their fall." 93 His most obvious trait is that he is not the king of a party, but of the country as a whole. Unlike those "silly kings" who "have resigned themselves to their ministers, have suffered these to stand between them and their people, and have formed no judgments, nor taken any measures on their own knowledge, but all implicitly on the repre-
sentations made to them by their ministers," 94 the Patriot King "will put himself at the head of his people in order to govern, or more properly to subdue, all parties." 95 The Patriot King does not restore a party. He restores good government, revives the spirit of
it, and maintains and confirms both, during the whole course of his reign.

In Mustapha the presentation of a Patriot King occurs against the background of a corruptly administered kingdom. Solyman is growing old,

Declining to th' infirmities of age,
Is lapsing to its vices; quick distrust,
Umbrage at rising excellence, but chief
At signal fame in arms. (I. i.)

He is no longer capable of leading his armies, for now he is "sunk, lost in sloth and silence!" (I. iv.) Besides his fear of Mustapha's popularity, his only concern is his love for Roxolana. He depends for advice upon Rustan, the master of "hell-born arts" (II. iv.).

Into this arena of political intrigue, where "virtues all are crimes" (II. vii.), Mustapha comes as a patriotic prince. He is devoted to his father, and, though aware of the plots against him, Mustapha has never swerved from the duty a son owes his parent. "You, Sir," he tells Solyman, "have been my study."

I have plac'd
Before mine eyes, in every light of life,
The Father and the King. (II. vii.)

Above all else, Mustapha's desire has been to serve his people and his Lord, the King.

My aim has been
To merit rather than to wear a crown (II. vii.).
His concept of a king's duty is best presented in the third act when Zanger, fearful that the plot against Mustapha's life will succeed, pleads with him "to encounter violence with force," for "self-preservation is heaven's eldest law" (III. vii.). But Mustapha refuses to involve the kingdom in war; the people are his first concern, and he will not

Rise to empire by ten thousand horrors,  
That subjects may, at last, have cause to bless  
A sovereign, thus exalted (III. vii.).

In the debate that follows between him and Zanger, Mustapha clearly outlines his concept of the king's duties. If Mustapha must die, then Zanger shall rule, and he advises his brother:

Shew wondering nations what a Monarch should be;  
Heaven's true viceregent, whose superior soul,  
Rais'd high above the tyrant's selfish poorness,  
Pants but for power of doing good, rejects  
All power of doing ill; who makes no war  
But to revenge his people's wrongs, no peace  
But what secures their safety; courts no fame  
But from their happiness (III. vii.).

He then concludes the description with an image common to the eighteenth century and earlier, but nevertheless one expressed at length in Bolingbroke's letter. The monarch is patriarchal, Mustapha states: "a parent he, the public parent" (III. vii.). Bolingbroke uses the same image. The duty of the Patriot King is "to govern like the common father of his people." If this relationship is maintained, then "the true image of a free people ... is that of a patriarchal family."97
From all of this evidence, it is clear that Mallet's Mustapha does have considerable political intent. The play presents a pleasing image of a noble prince, and this characterization was intended and accepted as a portrait of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales. There is a rough correspondence also between Mallet's Mustapha and the idealized vision of a savior-prince as depicted in Bolingbroke's Idea of a Patriot King. The malicious thrusts which the Countess of Pomfret mentioned are certainly present, and Mallet's fourteen nights were undoubtedly the result of these timely and contemporary strokes.

The success of Mustapha, so dependent upon partisan politics, probably prevented the production of Brooke's Gustavus Vasa and Thomson's Edward and Eleonora. Brooke's tragedy had been in rehearsal for five weeks and the day was set for its performance when it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain. According to Brooke, he had already disposed of "many hundred Tickets" when official approval was withheld. Brooke printed his tragedy by subscription, however, and the response was so overwhelming that he cleared a thousand pounds. Among the twelve pages listing the subscribers, there appears the name: "Mr. Mallet, 2 Books, a Guinea."

In the meanwhile, Thomson had trouble not only with the Lord Chamberlain but also with Fleetwood. The manager succeeded in so irritating the playwright that Thomson took his tragedy to Covent Garden Theatre, an action that Pope, recalling the vile performances of the women in Mustapha, thoroughly approved of. Rich accepted
Edward and Eleonora and put it into rehearsal. But on the final day of rehearsals, a message forbidding the performance was received from the Lord Chamberlain. Thomson then followed Brooke's example and printed his play by subscription. The response was so gratifying that 4500 copies were printed.
NOTES


2. Her maiden name was Anne Craggs. She was the sister of James Craggs, who had been one of the principal secretaries of state under Stanhope. Dr. George Sewell had dedicated his Sir Walter Raleigh (1719), a partisan political play, to Craggs.


4. DNB, XII, 870.

5. DNB, XII, 871.


8. Sherburn, III, 327 n. 4.


10. Sherburn, III, 327.

12. Sherburn, III, 357 and n. 3. Pope misnames Theobald's play as Secret Love. Theobald's reaction to Of Verbal Criticism is worth recording: "an anonymous writer, like a Scotch pedlar in with, had unbraced his pack on the subject; of whom I may fairly say, as Falstaff does of Poins, 'Hang him baboon! his wit is as thick as Tewksbury mustard; there is no more conceit in him than in a Mallet.'" See John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830 (Bath, 1832), V, 13.


14. Sherburn, III, 457, 484.

15. Sherburn, IV, 30-31. Letter from Pope to Mrs. Knight, September 6, 1736: "I forsee Mr. Newsham's return is approaching. I doubt not he will bring you back the completion of your happiness; and if he does, I must say you will owe something to Mr. Mallet, in not only restoring you a son as good as he carried him out (which few tutors do), but in a great degree making and building up, as well as strengthening and improving, what is the greatest work man or woman ought to be proud of, a worthy mind and sound body."


Frederick Louis has been called "Frederick the Little" to ironically distinguish him from the Prussian Frederick. In Sichel, p. 303, there is a vicious description of the Prince of Wales. "In Kensington Palace still hangs a picture of the scapegrace marmaline carousing among his parasites. A silly leer encircles his fatuous lips, while a debased parson lends profanation to the scene. It recalls the time when, with his graceless crew of men and women, he bombarded a confectioner's fortress with sugar-plums, and deemed it fame."

For a detailed discussion of Thomson's poem and political relationships, see Alan D. McKillop, "The Background of Thomson's Liberty," The Rice Institute Pamphlet, XXXVIII (July, 1951), 1-123, and particularly the section of "Political Intentions," 86-105.


Sherburn, III, 235.

Aaron Hill, The Works of the Late Aaron Hill, Esq. (London, 1753), I, 86.

Hill, I, 85.

Sherburn, IV, 132.

Hill, I, 306-307. Letter of October 4, 1738, to Pope: "Indeed, the first intimation I had of Mr. Mallet's being return'd from abroad, was by the above peice [sic] of news, in your letter."


Sherburn, IV, 146.

Hill, I, 318.


35. Hill, II, 56.

36. Sherburn, IV, 146.

37. Hill, I, 324. In this letter of December 9, 1738, Hill outlined to Mallet the terms which he offered Fleetwood. "I proposed, that Caesar should be brought on, in January, which, if it was, I would expect no consideration for it, at all, if the run should be short of nine nights.—If more, the three lowest receipts of the first nine, should be my claim, paying him his charges, as usual."

38. Hill, I, 325.


40. Little, p. 262. That Hill was probably just in his criticism can be gathered from the following contrast of Quin and Garrick's acting techniques. "In 1746 Garrick accepted an engagement to play at Covent Garden with Quin, against Quin, and in Quin's stronghold. It was in Rowe's Fair Penitent the battle of the schools was fought: the elder actor was Horatio, Garrick 'the gallant, gay Lothario.' It was a marvelous contrast, the monotonous cadences, the dreary pauses, the sawing of the air, the dignified indifference to the sentiments he was uttering, which marked Quin's style; and the passion, the impulse, the deep intensity of 'Little David'; and although the old school had still its adherents, the public verdict was not long in doubt." He, Barton Baker, The London Stage: Its History and Traditions from 1576 to 1888 (London, 1889), I, 136.

41. Little, p. 261.

42. Hill, I, 328.

44. See Sherburn, IV, 159, and McKillop's discussion in Thomson Letters, p. 127.


46. Hill, I, 328.

47. Hill, I, 328-329.


50. Little, p. 268.


52. Little, p. 267.

53. Sherburn, IV, 166.

54. Davies, II, 34.

55. Gentleman’s Magazine, IX (1739), 95.


60. Geest, III, 576.


64. Frances Hertford, Correspondence between Frances, Countess of Hartford, and Henrietta Louis, Countess of Pomfret (London, 1805), I, 69.

65. Davies, II, 35.

66. Sherburn, IV, 210 n. 1.


68. Hertford, Correspondence, I, 70-71.


73. Herbert W. Starr, "Sources of David Mallet's 'Mustapha, A Tragedy,'" Notes and Queries, CLXXI (November 22, 1941), 285-287.

74. Starr, p. 287.

75. Hill, I, 326.
Little, p. 268.

Richard Knolles, The Generall Historie of the Turkes, from the first beginning of that Nation to the rising of Othoman Famillie: with all the notable expeditions of the Christian Princes against them (London, 1631), pp. 758-759.


Davies, II, 34e.

Hertford, Correspondence, I, 71.

Hertford, Correspondence, I, 77-78.

Hertford, Correspondence, I, 79.

Baker, Biographica Dramatic, III, 64e.

Davies, II, 34e.

Knolles, p. 761.

Henderson, p. 174e.

Henderson, p. 175.

Henderson, pp. 175-176.


99 Sherburn, IV, 166. Also see McKillop, *Thomson Letters*, p. 128, where Mallet writes Hill that Fleetwood, "tho' he was engaged to Mr Thomson near nine months ago, he intends to bring another play (not that to which both of us would have given way with pleasure) on the stage before his. I send you enclosed a postscript from Mr Thomson's letter, by which I guess he intends to carry his tragedy to the other house."

CHAPTER IV

ALFRED, 1740: ENTER A PRINCE

I

The year 1740 represents Mallet's *annus mirabilis*, for he produced at that time *The Life of Francis Bacon* and, in collaboration with James Thomson, wrote *Alfred: a Masque*. Thus within a short space of two years, Mallet brought forth a biography, a masque, and a tragedy, *Mustapha*: a total output which he was never to equal again in a similar period and which indicated that in this time he was more active in literature than he was ever to be in the future. The two works appeared within three months of each other. *The Life of Francis Bacon* was recorded in "The Monthly Catalogue" in the May issue of the *London Magazine*,¹ and *Alfred* was performed on August 1, 1740, and published in that same month.² Before discussing *Alfred*, however, it would be well to glance briefly at Mallet's biography since there is serious reason for believing that the *Life* is as much a part of the literature of the Opposition as either *Alfred* or *Mustapha*.

*The Life of Francis Bacon* is Mallet's most noteworthy accomplishment, if for no other reason than that it is the only thing he ever did which has been called "a valuable piece of work" by a modern scholar.³ On several counts, Mallet is to be complimented for his biographical performance. For one thing, he attempted to present a judicious appraisal of Bacon's career, and the first paragraph of the work indicates that he was trying to write an account differing from those which
had been given in the past, accounts which were primarily eulogistic rather than scholarly:

The ancient Egyptians had a law, which ordained, that the actions and characters of their Dead should be solemnly canvassed before certain Judges; in order to regulate what was due to their memory. No quality, however exalted, no abilities, however eminent, could exempt the possessors from this last and impartial trial. To ingenuous minds this was a powerful incentive, in the pursuit of virtue; and a strong restraint on the most abandoned, in their career of vice. Whoever undertakes to write the life of any person, deserving to be remembered by posterity, ought to look upon this law as prescribed to him. He is fairly to record the faults as well as the good qualities, the failings as well as the perfections, of the Dead; with this great view, to warn and improve the Living. For this reason, tho I shall dwell with pleasure on the shining part of my Lord Bacon's character, as a writer; I shall not dare either to conceal or palliate his blemishes, as a man. It equally concerns the public to be made acquainted with both.

Since a strong possibility exists that political intentions were also involved in writing the Life, Mallet's stated devotion to truth may be questioned. But when the Life is examined without taking politics into consideration, it can stand very well as a contribution to biography. Longaker judges Mallet's research methods as "fairly thorough" and recounts with approval the large number of sources he consulted: "not only the earlier narrative of Rawley and the notices in the biographical dictionaries, but ... also Bacon's Letters, Tennison's Baconiana, the Cabala, and all of those passages pertinent to his subject in the memoirs and collections of Melvil, Wilson, Stephens, Rushworth, Sir Anthony Welding, Osborne, Hacket, and others." Mallet also studied "with evident care" the papers of the State Trials "for his survey of the evidence in Bacon's deposition." Mallet
supported all of his statements with marginal notes, and at the end of the work he made "a praiseworthy effort to enumerate all of Bacon's works in a chronological catalogue." Longaker's conclusion is that the biography is a genuine scholarly effort which "indicated a step forward in the province of . . . biography." 5

Mallet's *The Life of Francis Bacon* has received more kindness from his critics than his other works have. Johnson admits that it is "written with elegance," although he tempers this tribute by also saying that it is written "perhaps with some affectation." 6 According to Boswell, Bacon was a "favourite authour" with Johnson, though he had never read Bacon until he began compiling the Dictionary, in which Bacon is often quoted. Johnson once had the intention of bringing out an edition of Bacon, and he expressed a desire to write "the Life of that great man." 7 Johnson thought well enough of Mallet's edition of Bacon's *Works* to rely very heavily on it for quotations for the Dictionary. 8 Boswell also thought fairly well of Mallet's work and permitted himself to go so far as to say that it had "no inconsiderable merit as an acute and elegant dissertation relative to its subject." 9 Both Boswell and Johnson, however, really felt that Mallet lacked sufficient mental stature for thoroughly understanding Bacon. Johnson said that Mallet lacked an adequate knowledge of science for the task, 10 and Boswell remarked that "Mallet's mind was not comprehensive enough to embrace the vast extent of Lord Verulam's genius and research." 11 Both quote with slight variance Warburton's remark: "He made Lord Bacon's life, and by ill-hap forgot he was a Philosopher;
he is now about making the Duke of Marlborough's. Be not surprised, therefore, gentle reader, if he should forget that his Grace was a General." 12 The ambivalent attitude Boswell and Johnson took toward  

The Life of Francis Bacon is paralleled by that taken by Gibbon. In 1762, in speaking of the Life, he commented on "the vigorous sense of Mallet." 13 Three decades later, however, Gibbon said that "the Life had rated above its value." 14

It is impossible to trace the history of The Life of Francis Bacon prior to its appearance in 1746. Longaker assumes that Mallet began working on the biography as early as 1734. "During his sojourn at Oxford in the early 30's, Mallet recognized the need for a trustworthy and exhaustive Life of Bacon. From 1734 until 1740, he worked slowly, although not assiduously, on the Life, investigating with considerable patience the sources of information that were available, and arranging his findings into a coherent narrative." 15 But there is no evidence to support this statement, and Longaker gives no source for his assumption. There are only two references to the Life in the correspondance that Little has managed to collect, and both of these were made after the Life had been published. Writing to Hill in October, 1741, Mallet offered to send him the Life, if a copy has not yet "fallen into your hands." 16 And in May, 1743, Mallet indirectly refers to the Life when, in decrying the fact that he has not seen Hill in a long time, he remarks: "As to yourself, I am almost tempted to make you the same complement a Frenchman formerly paid my Lord Bacon." 17

The compliment to which Mallet refers is made in the following episode
given in the Life. "When the Marquess D’Essair brought into England the Princess Henrietta-Marie, wife to Charles the First, he paid a visit to my Lord Bacon; who, being then sick in bed, received him with the curtains drawn. 'You resemble the angels, said that minister to him: we hear those beings continually talked of, we believe them superior to mankind, and we never have the consolation to see them.'"

But there is no evidence of any sort indicating that Mallet had planned the Life as early as 1734. Johnson's statement that Mallet was employed "to prefix a Life" for a new edition of the works of Bacon being prepared certainly suggests that the biography was not a work Mallet had meditated upon for years. Anderson, perhaps echoing Johnson, states that Mallet was employed by Millar, the bookseller, to write a biography of Bacon for a four-volume edition of the philosopher's works that he intended to issue—further evidence that the Life was not planned over a long period. The information which does exist concerning the biography suggests that Mallet wrote it during the two years when he was first attached to the Opposition.

The evidence for maintaining that The Life of Francis Bacon is designed as a political piece is certainly not so strong as to be conclusive, but it is sufficiently heavy to warrant consideration. That a contemporary reader could view the biography in such a light is shown by a judgment passed upon it by Frances, Countess of Hartford, who set forth its political qualifications. "Mr. Mallet has published a life of my lord chancellor Bacon: which is not ill-written, though with an apparent design to make the reign of queen Elizabeth..."
appear a contrast to the present; and, by every invidious method, endeavouring to represent that of James the First as its parallel. That the Countess of Hart ford was not alone in sensing a political intent is proved by a statement in the advertisement to the Life in the 1759 Works. The biography had been twice translated into French, and Mallet complains that "the first translator, by his art of political chemistry, extracted out of plain and literal history a libel on Sir Robert Walpole's administration." In addition, there is evidence that the leading members of the Opposition were aware that Mallet was writing a life of Bacon during the early months of 1740, for there is a letter from George Lyttelton to Mallet inviting him, "if you can leave My Lord Bacon for a night," to a rather full evening's entertainment of "Learning, Witt, Honest Politicks, and much Bawdy." Lyttelton's reference to the Life could, perhaps, be an indication that Mallet was writing the biography with the cognizance of the Opposition.

Even a cursory examination of the biography reveals aspects which could be taken as political parallels. In comparing James to George II, many "invidious" remarks can be quoted that would have delighted the Opposition. James "was absolutely in the power of favorites: and that some of the least valuable among his subjects were most in his favor." The power of favorites is remarked upon "to shew in what miserable subjection" they held "all those who were in public employments." Ancient liberties and northern manliness were endangered. "The ancient national simplicity of manners which
ever accompanies magnanimity, and manly freedom of speech the noble effect of both, were now in a great measure lost; altered and effeminate into prostitute adulation and servile homage." Examples such as these are numerous, and it is easy to see that they could be taken as parallels. In view of Mallet's association with the Opposition and, in particular, his growing attachment to Bolingbroke, it is not completely illogical to argue that he deliberately chose Bacon—a philosopher, writer, and politician—as a historical symbol of the political fate of his patron, even though the work is dedicated to Chesterfield rather than to St. John.

II

Whether or not the political intent of The Life of Francis Bacon is acknowledged, that Alfred is a partisan masque is universally admitted. The masque was written at the command of the Prince of Wales, who is supposed to have ordered its writing to celebrate the accession of the Hanoverian line and the birthday of his daughter, Princess Augusta, whose birthdate, however, was July 31. An entry in the London Magazine gives all the pertinent facts concerning its appearance on Friday, August 1, although only Thomson is designated as the author:

This Night was perform'd in the Gardens of Cliefden, (in Commemoration of the Accession of his late Majesty King George, and in Honour of the Birth of the Princess Augusta, who the Day before entered into the 14th year of her Age, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, with all their Court, being present) a new Masque of two Acts, taken from the various Fortunes of Alfred the Great, writ by Mr. Thomson; also a Mask of Musick, call'd The Judgment of Paris, writ by Mr. Dryden; and concluded with several scenes out of Mr. Rich's Pantomime Entertainments.
Clerken House was the country residence which the Prince of Wales had taken in 1737. It has been suggested that the masque was privately played at Clerken in order to evade the licensers, but this suggestion appears to be merely an assumption for which there is no proof. Indeed, a letter from James Hammond to Mallet, written in October, 1746, mentions that the Prince approves "mightily" of Thomson and Mallet's plans to bring Alfred upon the stage in the winter of 1746/7, a bit of information implying that no attempt had been made before August to put the masque on the stage.

In his biography of Thomson, Grant gives an account, taken from the London Daily-Post, of the first performance of Alfred at Clerken. A "Variety of Dancing" was introduced into the masque, and the spectators were quite delighted with the agility of a Signora Barbarini, "lately arriv'd from Paris." The pantomime entertainment was the scene of the skeleton in Merlin's cave, and was performed by Mr. Rich and Mr. Laluz. After the various performances, there were fireworks "made by Dr. Desaguliers." The Prince and Princess were so pleased by the whole entertainment that another performance was commanded on Saturday, but the second show was spoiled by rain. Davies reports, however, that "The accomodations for the company ... were but scanty and ill managed." On the whole, the actors were not treated well at all, only Quin and Mrs. Clive being received with any graciousness by the guests.

Most of the players in Alfred had performed the year before in Mustapha. Quin took the part of the Hermit, an indication of the
importance of that role in the masque; Milward played Alfred, and Mills was the Earl of Devon. Mrs. Clive, who was to play in the 1751 Alfred, was in the early stage of her long career and played the very minor role of Emma, the shepherd's wife. As Eltrude, Mrs. Horton appeared for the only time in one of Mallet's productions. She was a woman of great beauty, but now at forty, her career was beginning to decline. She first came into notice when, at fourteen, she played Marcia in the original production of Addison's Cato in 1713.32 For years she was considered in both tragedy and comedy as the successor to Mrs. Oldfield, and she took over most of that eminent actress' parts. She came to prominence in those early years of the century when a very unnatural manner of speaking was affected by the players, and as that fashion changed she gradually lost favor as an actress. Mrs. Horton was very vain because of her beauty, and at nearly sixty she still dressed like a girl of twenty and simpered and ogled. During the forties, she appeared less and less frequently, and her last recorded performance was that of Queen Elizabeth in John Banks' The Earl of Essex in 1752.33

Quin was a special favorite of the Prince's and an extremely good friend of Thomson's. When Coriolanus was performed in January, 1749, after Thomson's death, Quin gave the Prologue and moved the audience deeply with his weeping. The Prince usually attended all of Quin's benefits, and after Quin left Drury Lane in 1741, those plays that Frederick commanded were confined to Covent Garden. Quin practically owned the role of Brutus in Cato, and in 1749, when the Prince and his
immediate family put on a private performance of that play at Leicester House, Quin was selected to instruct Frederick's children for their roles. Prince George played Portius and delivered the Prologue. Years later when, as George III, he made his first speech to Parliament, Quin proudly remarked: "I knew he would do it well, for I taught the boy." 34

III

Since Alfred was a collaboration between Thomson and Mallet, discussion has resulted concerning the individual contributions of each author. As Grant points out, however, it is really impossible to decide with any certainty who was responsible for which parts, 35 since the language throughout the masque maintains, to a remarkable degree, the same level of quality. But considerable controversy has arisen over the question of who wrote the ode, "Rule, Britannia." Murdoch ascribes the ode to Mallet, 36 but scholars after him have usually thought Thomson to be the author. In the issues of Notes and Queries for 1886, a lively battle ensued between William Chappell and Julian Marshall over the authorship of the ode. 37 The controversy shed little light on the problem. Marshall's position was based on Mallet's statement in the Advertisement of his 1751 revision of Alfred: "I was obliged to reject a great deal of what I had written . . . neither could I retain, of my friend's part, more than three or four speeches, and a part of one song." Since, "Rule,
Britannia" is called an ode in the masque, Marshall reasons that it is not the "song" to which Mallet refers. Chappell argues that by using the word song Mallet was trying to mislead the reader so that he could claim the ode. Later, in the Aldine edition of Thomson's Works, D. C. Tovey ascribes the ode to Thomson because "the sentiments and imagery are Thomsonian." 38

The problem was not really settled until J. Churton Collins and Leon Morel turned their attention to it, and the similar detailed arguments they present certainly point to Thomson's authorship. 39 Neither Thomson nor Mallet ever actually claimed the ode as his own, but in 1752 it was printed in Edinburgh in The Charmer over Thomson's name. Neither Mallet nor his friends objected. Further, the ode never appeared in any of Mallet's collections, except as part of the 1740 version of Alfred. If these facts do not indicate Thomson as the author, then the arguments of internal evidence presented by Collins and Morel do serve to support strongly Thomson's claim, for they show that the ode is very similar to the fourth and fifth parts of Liberty and to Thomson's verses to the Prince of Wales. No such similarity between the ode and any of Mallet's poem can be shown. On this basis, Thomson must be recognised as the probable author.

Regardless of the authorship of the various parts of the masque, the collaboration of Thomson and Mallet was successful. If judged solely as political propaganda, Alfred is an excellent performance. Though it does not rate highly as literature (except
for the ode, "Rule, Britannia"), Alfred is no mean accomplishment: Thomson and Mallet skillfully handled their material so that every scene bears a political intent easily and immediately caught by the audience.

IV

Perhaps the best way to analyze the political content of Alfred is to attempt accounting for Mallet and Thomson's manipulations of source material. Their source was undoubtedly Rapin's The History of England,\(^4\) which Thomson relied upon very heavily for portions of Liberty.\(^5\) The Argument of Alfred gives the setting and the situation of the masque:

After the Danes had made themselves masters of Chippenham, the strongest city in the Kingdom of Wessex; Alfred was at once abandoned by all his subjects. In this universal defection, that Monarch found himself obliged to retire into the little isle of Athelney in Somerssethire; a place then rough with woods and of difficult access. There, habited like a peasant, he lived unknown, for some time, in a shepherd's cottage. He is supposed to be found in this retreat by the Earl of Devon; whose castle, upon the river Tau, was then besieged by the Danes.

According to Rapin, Alfred had been abandoned by all but a few "Domesticks," whom he dismissed after the fall of Chippenham. Thus the masque's presentation of Alfred deserted by all subjects (a fact not accepted by other historians) is explained by Mallet and Thomson's recourse to Rapin.\(^4\) The description of the little isle of Athelney given in Alfred is taken from Rapin, who pictures the
king's retreat as "surrounded with a large Morass, thro' which there was but one narrow Foot-Path leading to the Neatherd's cottage, that was hid by Briars and Thorns." In *Alfred*, that Neatherd becomes Corin, the shepherd, whose description of the isle of Athelney is built upon Rapin's but is considerably more detailed:

This island is of strength. Nature's own hand Hath planted round a deep defence of woods, The sounding ash, the mighty oak, each tree A sheltering grove; and choak'd up all between With wild encumbrance of perplexing thorns, And horrid brakes. Beyond this woody verge, Two rivers broad and rapid hem us in. Along their channel spreads the gulpy pool, And trembling quagmire, whose deceitful green Betrays the foot it tempts. One path alone Winds to this plain, so roughly difficult, This single arm, poor shepherd as I am, Could well dispute it with twice twenty Danes.  

(I. i.)

Those two rivers that Corin mentions are taken from Rapin's footnote which says that Athelney "lies near Taunton, where the Thone and Parret join."  

From this point on, the masque diverges from the history in several important respects, all giving significant clues to the authors' political intent. In Rapin's version *Alfred* stays in this retreat for six months. During this time he has a vision from St. Cuthbert in which happier future times are revealed to him: a story Rapin does not believe. Then Hubba, the commander of one portion of the Danish troops, invades Wessex and besieges the Earl of Devon at Kinwith Castle. Knowing that they heavily outnumber the Earl's forces, the Danes become negligent. The Earl's men surprise them
with a sudden attack, kill Hubba, capture the famous Raven—the Danish standard—and slaughter great multitudes of the enemy. Alfred learns of the victory and sends notice to his friends to gather with him. He steals disguised into the main Danish camp, which is under the command of Ivar, and observes that the Danes have failed to guard the entrances against attack. Returning to the English forces, which have now gathered, Alfred leads them in an assault upon the Danish camp and entirely routs the enemy. 45

One basic difference between the masque and the history is that Mallet and Thomson closed their story with the defeat of the Danes at Kinwith Castle. Alfred, therefore, does not lead his troops at any time in the masque. Indeed, the Earl of Devon is the military hero, to whom the authors transferred Alfred’s stratagem of stealing disguised into the Danish camp. Since Alfred is not a victorious figure, the masque was criticised because it lacked a leading character—a charge Mallet acknowledged in his 1751 rewriting of Alfred. Hesiod Cooke’s complaint is a typical example of this criticism. "1740, I read a dramatic piece, entitled 'Alfred, a masque.'—A more stupid piece cannot well be. It might, with as much propriety, be called King Log; for there is no distinguishing part of Alfred’s character in it, he is inactive quite thro’." 46

But the situation in 1740, which called forth the masque, necessitated this structure. The masque was presented at Cleefton, a country retreat for the Prince of Wales. Athelney was Alfred’s retreat. The Prince was waiting for developments that would put him
in power. Alfred is also waiting, biding his time for that propitious moment when he can bring freedom and liberty back to his country. The masque had to present a parallel, and Mallet and Thomson recognized that the parallel should intimate future action, not present. When Mallet rewrote the masque in 1751, the political situation had changed. Frederick was near death and Walpole was gone. Alfred could be made the hero simply because the masque was only a performance for Drury Lane, all of the aspirations and dreams of Cliefden having vanished forever.

Alfred is inactive because the masque's purpose is to give a message of caution and patience to the Prince. This advice occurs several times during the piece. When Devon suggests that he steal into the Danish camp, Alfred prepares to go also, but Devon counsels the king to guard his safety for England's sake.

Ah, good my Liege,
What fits a private valor, and might grace
The simple soldier's venture, would proclaim
His general's rashness. You are England's king:
Your infant children, and your much-lov'd queen;
Nay more, the public weal, ten thousand souls,
Whose hope you are, whose all depends on you,
Forbid this enterprise. 'Tis nobler courage
To cheque this ardor, to reserve your sword
For some great day of known and high import;
That to your country, to the judging world
Shall justify all hazards you may run.
(I. ii.)

The mention of Alfred's infant children and much-loved queen introduces another difference between the masque and the history—a minor but interesting difference. In Rapin no account is given of
Eltruda and her children during this time of trouble. It seems logical to assume that Thomson and Mallet put mother and infants in Athelney for the purpose of exaggerating the parallel they wished to draw between Athelney and Cliefden, since the Princess was present at the performance and the masque was written to celebrate the birthday of the Prince and Princess' oldest child.

The theme of patience is maintained in *Alfred* after Devon leaves for Kinwith Castle. Two aerial spirits sing a song which appeals to Alfred to bid his time and not despair:

Hear, *ALFRED*, father of the state,
Thy Genius heaven's high will declare:
What proves the hero truly great,
Is never, never to despair:
Is never to despair.
(I. iii.)

*Alfred* accepts the advice:

All hail, ye gentle ministers of heaven!
Your song inspires new patience thro' my breast,
And generous hope; it wings my mounting soul
Above th' entangling mass of earthly passions,
That keep frail man, tho' struggling to be free,
Still fluttering in the dust.
(I. iv.)

In a similar vein the Hermit advises Alfred to accept affliction patiently and to await the turn of fortune:

But, Prince, remember, then,
The vows, the noble uses, of affliction.
Preserve the quick humanity it gives,
The pitying, social sense of human weakness;
Yet keep thy stubborn fortitude entire,
The manly heart that to another's woe
Is tender, but superior to its own.
Learn to submit; yet learn to conquer fortune.
(I. v.)
Thus one important difference between the masque and the history can be explained. But others remain. Although the Earl of Devon is the military hero, the central figure is really the Hermit, and the core of the masque is his vision of the future of England rather than any military exploit. The rout of the Danes is actually a peripheral occurrence; the real meaning of Alfred lies in the Hermit's prophetic speeches. Here a peculiar similarity emerges: the Hermit brings the future to Alfred just as the masque brings the past to Frederick Louis—a situation which the Hermit presents in a closing speech:

O ALFRED! should thy fate, long ages hence,  
In meaning scenes recall'd, exalt the joy  
Of some glad festal day, before a prince  
Sprung from that king belov'd—Hear, gracious heaven!  
Thy soft humanity, thy patriot heart,  
Thy manly virtue, steddy, great, resolv'd,  
Be his supreme ambition! and with these  
The happiness, the glory, that await  
Thy better days—be shower'd upon his head!  

(II. iii.)

The prophetic visions which the Hermit calls up before Alfred's eyes involve four future rulers of England: Edward III, Elizabeth, William III, and George I. The presence of George in this array can be accounted for because the masque celebrates the accession of the Hanoverian line. William is necessary since he replaced the hated and feared Stuart house. He is the destroyer of superstition and the ruler who brings right and law back to England.
Immortal William! from before his face,
Flees Superstition, flies oppressive Power,
With vile Servility that crouched and kiss'd
The whip he trembled at. From this great hour
Shall Britain date her rights and laws restored.

(II. iii.)

It seems unnecessary to account for the presence of "the great
Eliza," but it is interesting that among her virtues is one that
especially contrasts her with George II, whom every member of the
Opposition considered to be the tool of the vicious Walpole;

Yet she,
Amid the various worthies glowing around her,
Still shines the first; the central sun that wakes,
That rules their every motion; not the slave,
And passive property of her own creatures.

(II. iii.)

Thus far, the presence of three of the monarchs in the
pageant-like vision of the Hermit have been accounted for. Each
ruled at a crucial point in English history when a significant
change in governmental structure was involved. This fact, however,
is not necessarily true of Edward III. His presence seems arbitrary;
why Edward rather than some other notable ruler? Before answering
this question, it may be enlightening to turn to the correspondence
of the Countess of Hertford. As usual, she had read the masque and
immediately recognized all the malice in it.47

As to books, I have met with nothing new lately, except a
Masque which was written by the prince of Wales's command and
represented at Cliefden. The subject of it is the history of
Alfred; and the scene is laid in the isle of Athelney in
Somersetshire, where he was at the neatherd's house. The clown
and his wife are made to speak the dialect of a hero and heroine
in a court. The whole conduct of the piece is incorrect. There are two or three fine speeches, several party hints, and one invidious reflexion—which did not need the pains that have been taken (by presenting it in a different character) to make it absolutely unpardonable. This fine performance is the joint work of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet.

As nearly as one can tell, that "invidious reflexion" comes with the presentation of Edward III and indicates why that particular king was chosen as one of the four rulers represented. Edward III is accompanied by his son, the Black Prince. The presence of the Black Prince is important, for Edward III is pictured "as father blest." The Black Prince is given considerable attention when the Hermit advises Alfred:

That god-like Youth remark, his eldest hope,  
Who gives new luster to the name he bears;  
A hero ere a man.—I see him now  
On Cressy's glorious plain! (II. iii.)

Edward III is characterized in lines whose meaning could not possibly be misunderstood by the partisan audience:

The father's heart,  
With anxious love and wonder at his daring,  
Beats high in mingled transport. Great himself,  
Great above jealousy, the guilty mark  
That brands all meaner minds, see, he applauds  
The filial excellence, and gives him scope  
To blaze in his full brightness! (II. iii.)

These lines indicate that Edward III apparently was represented in this progress of kings to make as explicit as possible a contrast between his treatment of the Black Prince and George II's treatment of Frederick Louis.
These parallels bring up an interesting question: exactly why did Thomson and Mallet choose Alfred as the personage about whom to write the masque? Whether Thomson or Mallet, or both, chose Alfred, or whether the subject was suggested to them is relatively unimportant. The crux of the question is the choice of Alfred. A hint at the answer may be found in a letter which appeared in the August issue of the London Magazine, the same month during which the masque was performed. The letter begins with a reference associating Frederick with ancient British liberties. "There was never any Thing gave me greater Pleasure, than to hear, that the Heir Apparent to our crown was entertaining himself with a Masque, wherein our great King Alfred was represented, as rising from the utmost Drought, to redeem and establish the Liberties of his Country,—It is to that great and wise King we owe that Spirit of Liberty, which has for so many Ages animated the Breast of every true Briton, and still makes this glorious Country the Dread of its Enemies, and the Envy of the World.—May that Spirit ever prevail."

Then the writer brings up the appropriateness of the subject of Alfred for the masque. "I have often wondered, that the History of Alfred's Reign has not been more studied, and more warmly recommended by true Patriots, than it has been hitherto; and therefore I was glad to find some Parts of that Reign so fully explained in a Debate upon the Original and true Nature of our Constitution, which was published in your Magazine, for the Months of January.
February, March, and April, 1739."

The debate to which the letter refers is a curiously one-sided debate, but it appears important for the political context of Alfred. Three fictitious personages engage in the controversy: Solon, whose argument is continued over three issues; Pisistratus, who presents a short five-page rebuttal; and Pericles, who gives a final support of Solon's position. None of these names is identified in the key for pseudonyms in the 1742 volume of the London Magazine. The position which Solon sets forth concerning the constitution can be briefly stated. He sees the present form of government as one founded upon the plan of government brought to England by the Saxons and then regulated and established by Alfred. The success of the Danes temporarily disrupted this governmental form, but it was revised by Edward the Confessor. The "antient Saxon Constitution" was subverted by the arrival of William the Conqueror, who introduced "a Sort of Aristocratical Monarchy, without the least Mixture of a Democracy." As a result, for four hundred years the "Constitution was all the While struggling to recover from that Convulsion." The final point of Solon's speech is that the governmental form Alfred established has only been recovered in part, "rather by Chance than by Design." In the answer to the rebuttal, Pericles' concluding words are sufficient to show the full intent of the argument. "As our antient Constitution had been entirely overturned by the Conquest, and from that Time never resettled upon any certain Plan . . . we must have recourse to the Saxon Times."50

Within the framework of this theory of constitutional history,
the choice of Alfred as the subject for the Prince of Wales' celebration becomes understandable because it presents a historical interpretation giving validity to the aspirations of those who placed their hopes in Frederick. These aspirations are summed up by the letter to the *London Magazine*: "A Prince of Wales's pleasing himself with such a Representation, is a Sort of Pledge, that he will join sincerely in Alfred's Prayer in the fifth Scene of the first Act; that he will endeavour to build the publick Weal, on Liberty and Laws; and that he will disdain to think of establishing his Throne upon the Tongues or Swords of those, who count for Gain, what they villainously earn by sacrificing the Constitution and Liberties of their Country." 51

The prayer, given below, to which the writer refers resembles Mustapha's exhortation of Zanger; both delineate the aims of the patriotic prince:

Witness, thou dread power! who seest my heart; That if not to perform my regal task, To be the common father of my people, Patron of honor, virtue and religion; If not to shelter industry, to guard His honest portion from oppressive pride, From wasteful riot, and the sons of rapine, Who basely ravish what they dare not earn; If not to deal out justice, like the sun, With equal light; if not to spread thy bounty, The treasures trusted to me, not my own, On all the smiling ranks of nourish'd life; If not to raise our drooping English name, To clothe it yet with terror; make this land Renown'd for peaceful arts to bless mankind, And generous war to humble proud oppressors: If not to build on an eternal base, On liberty and laws, the public weal; If not for these great ends I am ordain'd, May I ne'er idly fill the throne of England! (I, v.4)
If this debate on the historical significance of Alfred's reign is used as a background for the masque Alfred, one can see that the performance in the garden of Cliefden has a calculated political intent. In effect, the masque appeals to the Prince to re-establish the ancient and historically correct English form of government. The fact that the debate preceded the masque by eighteen months and attention was then called to the debate by the letter mentioned suggests a deliberate connection between debate and masque. Information concerning the intrigue, the ambitions, and the plans surrounding Frederick Louis in those conspiratorial days is all too scanty, and the student of the literature of the Opposition has to conjecture and build rather wildly on mere hints and inferences. He has no obliging Hermit (played by a Quin) to reveal the past in sing-song, droning lines. He has only a bewildering sense that something exciting was going on, that days and nights were being spent contriving evanescent schemes and mercurial designs. Indeed, he has little that he can footnote.

For instance, there is the puzzling question of the debate's authorship. Most of those who presented their views in the "Journal of the Political Club" in the pages of the London Magazine are identifiable by the key published in the 1742 volume. Pulteney, Talbot, Chesterfield, and even Walpole himself are represented. But Solon, whoever he is, is not. This anonymity indicates the possibility that revelation of Solon's identity would have been unfortunate, perhaps even injurious, to the Prince's cause. If this assumption is
correct, one man fits this situation perfectly—Bolingbroke, who had been ostensibly retired from active political life since 1736. Certainly there is no documentary basis for stating that Bolingbroke wrote, or at least inspired, this theory of British constitutional development; but it is possible that he was responsible and that he suggested the choice of Alfred to Thomson and Mallet. It must be admitted, however, that there is no evidence of Thomson's ever having had any close connection with Bolingbroke, although Mallet had had numerous contacts with the nobleman since the early 1730's.

But evidence exists that some of Bolingbroke's writings were printed in the London Magazine. When Idea of a Patriot King was published in 1749 with Mallet's Preface attacking Pope, the dead poet was accused of having used "scrapes and fragments of the papers . . . to swell a monthly magazine." The Monthly Review identifies the periodical as the London Magazine. The notion that the British constitution, though corrupted, extends backward continuously to Saxon times can be found repeatedly in Bolingbroke's historical work. In fact, throughout his political and historical tracts runs the conviction that English liberty (which the constitution insures) is a Saxon virtue that successive monarchs have tried to destroy or subvert.

A spirit of liberty, transmitted down from our Saxon ancestors, and the unknown ages of our government, preserved itself through one almost continual struggle, against the usurpations of our princes, and the vices of our people; and they, whom neither the PLANTAGENETS, nor the TUDORS could enslave, were incapable of suffering their rights and privileges to be ravished from them.
by the STUARTS. They bore with the last king of this unhappy race, till it was shameful, as it must have been fatal, to bear any longer; and whilst they asserted their liberties, they refuted and anticipated, by their temper and their patience, all the objections, which foreign and domestic abettors of tyranny are apt to make against the conduct of our nation towards their kings. Let us justify this conduct, by persisting in it, and continue to ourselves the peculiar honour of maintaining the freedom of our Gothic institution of government, when so many other nations, who enjoy'd the same, have lost theirs.

One obstacle, and a fairly large one, confronts this theory of Bolingbroke's masterminding the Alfred affair. Frederick's name had been linked with Alfred's long before. As early as 1723, Sir Richard Blackmore had dedicated his Alfred, An Epick Poem to Frederick. The poem concerns the mythical adventures of Alfred and his preceptor, Guithin, as they take a ninth century "Grand Tour" throughout Europe and Africa in order to observe various forms of government about the world. The purpose of the poem, therefore, is to instruct Frederick for the important task of ruling Britain. In the Dedication, Blackmore explains why he chose Alfred as Frederick's princely example: Alfred is "a Prince sprung from the Ancient Saxon Race of your own native land (Saxony)." Thus Thomson and Mallet could have been directed in their choice of a subject by Blackmore's poem.

As has been stated, the private performance of the masque at Cliefden might be construed as an attempt to evade the licensors, who supposedly would have suspected anything that Thomson had a hand in because of his Edward and Eleonora. Reference has already been made to plans, approved by the Prince, to bring Alfred upon the stage
in the winter of 1740/41. However, these plans came to nothing; the masque did not appear at Drury Lane until 1745. But the delay in bringing Alfred to the stage was not due to the reluctance of the Lord Chamberlain. Fleetwood—that "Surry-Street Proteus," as Mallet once called him—was the cause of all the delay and difficulty. In December, 1741, Hill sent a criticism of the masque to Mallet and concluded his letter by remarking: "I could have much enlarged upon this head, but that I see it is too late for you, to think of altering your plan, because the Masque is with the Licensor." Later in the same month, Hill again refers to "the Masque's being so near its appearance." In March, 1742, Mallet informed Hill that Alfred had "been long licensed," but production had been held up by Fleetwood. Exactly what problem Thomson and Mallet faced with Fleetwood is unknown; Mallet would not tell Hill because to do so "I must descend into some wretched detail of Mr. Fleetwood's management: a task that I must beg leave to decline, as much for your sake as my own." This correspondence shows that Alfred was licensed and that whatever delay Mallet and Thomson suffered was not the result of political antagonism.

VI

After the two performances at Cliefden, Alfred was not acted again in England until 1745. But it was performed several times in Dublin during this period. Dr. Arne, who had composed the music for Alfred, and his wife, who had sung the part of the Spirit at Clief-
den, went to Ireland in July, 1742. On the 21st of that month, Mrs. Arne sang one of the songs from the masque, "O Peace, thou fairest child of Heaven," at a concert in Dublin. In 1744 the masque, in conjunction with The Judgment of Paris, was performed a number of times at the Theatre-Royal in Smock Alley in Dublin.

When the Arnes returned to England, Alfred was staged as an opera at Drury Lane on March 20, 1745, for the benefit of Mrs. Arne. Then in her thirty-fourth year, she was Cecilia Young before marrying Dr. Arne. A pupil of the famous Geminiani, she made her first stage appearance at Drury Lane on November 26, 1733, when she sang the role of Amphitrite in Dryden's adaptation of The Tempest. For a number of years she was one of the favorite singers in London. In 1740 she sang the lead in a minor piece by a "Mr. Lockman," which was performed at Hickford's great room in Brewer Street. This appearance called forth a poetic effusion by an unidentified admirer, which was published in the London Magazine.

Proceed, sweet warbler, to enchant the age; 
Rise the fam'd rival of th' Italian stage; 
Till each fair bosom catch thy fond alarms, 
And Rosalind, like Rosamonda charms.

The benefit for Mrs. Arne was advertised as "an Historical Musical Drama, call'd Alfred the Great, King of England." The masque had been altered by Dr. Arne: some of the speeches were omitted and a number of songs (possibly Mallet's words) were introduced. Mrs. Arne took the part of Eltruda, and the other roles were
also taken by singers rather than by actors: Mr. Lowe, the tenor, was Alfred; Connel played Edward, Baildon was Devon, and Baker was Corin; Miss Young took the role of the Shepherdess, the wife of Corin. The production was evidently elaborate; the advertisement that appeared in the *General Advertiser* of March 20, 1745, apologized for an increase in admission price: "Mr. Arne humbly hopes the Town will not be offended at the small advance of the Price, this Performance being exhibited at an Extra Expenge, with regard to the Number of Hands, Chorus Singers, building the stage, and erecting an Organ, besides all other incidents as usual." The masque was performed once more that year; on April 3, it was played as an oratorio.
NOTES

1 IX (1740), 252. "4. The Life of Francis Lord Bacon. By Mr. Mallet. Printed for A. Millar, pr. 3s. 6d." 


8 BJL, III, 510. "Page 194, lines 3 ff. Bacon is very freely quoted in the Dictionary from the beginning of the alphabet. Mr. Byrne Hackett of New York tells me that Johnson took a large number of his quotations from the third volume of David Mallet’s folio edition of Bacon’s Works (A. Millar, 1740); on one page (p. 247) alone, of which Mr. Hackett has courteously sent me a photostat, 19 words are marked for extraction and of these 12 are quoted by Johnson."

9 BJL, III, 194.

10 Johnson, III, 404.

11 BJL, III, 194.

12 Quoted in Johnson, III, 404 n. 2.
13 Quoted in Johnson, III, 404 n. 1.


15 Longaker, p. 216


17 Little, p. 290.

18 Mallet, III, 222.

19 Johnson, III, 403-404.


22 Mallet, III, 79.


25 Mallet, III, 185.

26 Mallet, III, 161.

27 IX (1740), 402. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, X (1740), 411, gives both Thomson and Mallet as the authors.

29. McKillop, p. 131.


33. John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830* (Bath, 1832), IV, 310-311.

34. The Thespi an Dictionary. See under "Quin."

35. Grant, p. 194.


37. Notes and Queries, 7th ser., II (1886), 4, 132-133, 410-411, 490.

38. D. C. Tovey, *The Poetical Works of James Thomson* (London, 1897), I, lxviii.


41. Alan D. McKillop, "The Background of Thomson's Liberty," Rice Institute Pamphlet, XXXVIII (July, 1951), 1-123.

Rapin, I, 330-331.

Rapin, I, 330.

Rapin, I, 330-334.

*Gentleman's Magazine*, LXI (1791), 1180.

Hertford, II, 125-126.

*London Magazine*, IX (1740), 393.


*London Magazine*, VIII (1739), 171.

*London Magazine*, IX (1740), 393.


56. Little, p. 303.

57. Hill, II, 166. This letter is undated. For the correct dates of the letters in the Mallet-Hill correspondence at this time, see Alan D. McIllop, "Thomson and the Licensers of the Stage," Modern Philology, XXXVII (October, 1958), 453.


59. Little, p. 280.

60. Hubert Langley, Doctor Arne (Cambridge, 1938), p. 35.


62. The Thespian Dictionary. See under "Arne (Dr. Thomas Augustine)."


64. London Magazine, IX (1740), 188.

65. Cummings, p. 126.

66. Cummings, p. 128.


68. Quoted in Cummings, p. 126.

69. Genest, IV, 150. Also see Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama 1660-1900 (Cambridge, 1952), II, 343.
CHAPTER V

MISCELLANY: PROLOGUE AND EPILLOGUE, TRAGEDIES AND THEATRES

I

More than a decade separates the \textit{Alfred} of 1740 from Mallet's alteration of that masque in 1751. During this time Mallet's dramatic composition was limited to the production of a Prologue and an Epilogue. The Prologue was written for a private performance of John Hughes' \textit{The Siege of Damascus}, which had first appeared at Drury Lane in February, 1719/20. A group of fashionable people, among them the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Sandwich, and Sir Francis Dashwood, played the tragedy in an amateur staging during May, 1743, at Bedford's country seat, Woburn Abbey.\footnote{Mallet provided the Prologue at the request of the Earl of Sandwich.} The Prologue is not an inspired performance, although it probably does not deserve the term "trifling" which Hesiod Cooke bestows upon it.\footnote{Judging by the tone of the Prologue, the private performance of \textit{The Siege of Damascus} was a political affair. The Duke of Bedford was a member of the "anti-ministerial" cabinet of 1743. Walpole had resigned in 1742, and Carteret, who had been one of the Whig members of the Opposition, was in power although the Earl of Wilmington was the nominal head of the cabinet. Conspiring against Carteret were Henry Pelham and his brother, the Duke of Newcastle; Lyttelton, to whom Mallet owed his Pension, and Chesterfield, to whom Mallet had dedicated his \textit{The Life of Francis Bacon}, were aiding the Pelham interests. According to Richard Glover, Bolingbroke was also behind}
this opposition to Carteret. Behind the Opposition, there also appears to have been a design of separating Hanover from Great Britain, a design which, of course, the Prince opposed vigorously and which seems to have originated with Bolingbroke. Since Bolingbroke, Lyttelton, and Chesterfield were aligned with the Opposition, Mallet was also involved, at least to the extent of writing the Prologue for the piece performed at Bedford's Woburn Abbey.

The Siege of Damascus was an appropriate play for this background of intrigue. It concerns the plight of the Christians in Damascus under Saracen siege. Their situation is rendered doubly dangerous because they are torn by faction and dispute. The original Prologue, written by Hughes for the 1720 production, makes the fate of the Christians a moral for Englishmen, who in those years were at war with Spain. "Britons, be warn'd," he explains, "unite at home--forgo intestine jars."

In 1743 England was in the midst of the War of the Austrian Succession, and there was intense concern that Britain's interests were being sacrificed for the sake of Hanover. In The Siege of Damascus, the hero, Procyas, is torn between his loyalty to the Christian cause and his passion for Eudocia, the daughter of the governor of Damascus. Eudocia is promised to the son of one of her father's friends. Phocyas wins several victories for the Christians, but the governor refuses to give him Eudocia as a reward for his services. When the Saracens besiege Damascus, the two lovers decide to elope from the beleaguered city. But Phocyas is captured and, perceiving the enormous power of the Saracens during his captivity, he
comes to realize that Damascus is doomed. In return for a pledge
from his captors to spare the inhabitants, he agrees to show them a
secret entrance to the city that will allow Damascus to be taken with
a minimum of bloodshed. His principal concern, of course, is to save
the life of his beloved Eudocia. Thus Phocyas comes to betray Damascus
because of his love for Eudocia; and the audience at Woburn could
easily draw a parallel between the action on the amateur stage and
George II's endangering England for the sake of his beloved Hanover.

The opening of Mallet's Prologue bears a curious resemblance to
his Life of Francis Bacon. In the biography, he drew a contrast between
Elizabeth's reign and Walpole's administration; in the latter, in the
Prologue he contrasts Elizabeth's reign with Carteret's administration:

When arts and arms, beneath ELIZA's smile,
Spread wide their influence o'er this happy isle;
A golden reign, uncurs'd with party-rage,
That foe to taste, and tyrant of the age;
Ere all our learning in a libel lay,
And all our talk, in politics, or play:
The Patriot then would soothe his toils with wit,
What SPENCER sung, and nature's SHAKESPEAR writ.

Having established this parallel, Mallet speaks of the audience's
present retirement from

... yon rude Scene of party din,
Of open baseness, and of secret sin,
And safe embowr'd in WOBURN's airy groves.

Then he addresses the muse and pays his host the necessary compliment:

Awaken to our aid the mourning Muse;
Thro every bosom tender thought infuse;
Melt angry faction into moral sense;
And to his guests a BEDFORD's soul dispense.
The Prologue was printed in both the 1743 and the 1759 editions of Mallet's works. The 1759 version, however, has been slightly altered. Four additional lines are added, lines which advise the audience to observe the tragedy carefully, for faults exhibited there may be those of all men:

An equal eye on our own hearts we turn,  
Where frailties lurk, where fond affections burn:  
And conscious, Nature is all the same,  
We mourn the guilty, while the guilt we blame!

Since the performance at Woburn was partisan, these lines would have been out of place when addressed to a group believing itself to be politically in the right. Other changes are very minor, except for one occurring in the seventh line. Originally, that line had read: "The Patriot then would soothe his toils with wit." In the 1759 edition, the word statesman is substituted for Patriot, a term applied very often to the Opposition. 6

II

Ten years after writing the Prologue for The Siege of Damascus, Mallet was called upon to produce an Epilogue for Edward Young's The Brothers. The history of that tragedy is interesting. Young had written it earlier in the century--about 1725, according to Davies--and the play had actually been in rehearsal at Drury Lane in 1726. 7 The principal male parts had been assigned to Wilks and Booth, and the leading female role was to be taken by Mrs. Porter, who was later
to appear in *Eurydice*. However, the play was not produced at that time, for Young entered holy orders and the production was canceled because the author changed his mind upon becoming a clergyman. In 1753 Young did permit the staging of the tragedy, giving the profits of the author's benefit nights to the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts. 8

The *Brothers* opened on March 3, 1753, with Garrick and Mossup taking the parts of the two brothers, Perseus and Demetrius. In addition to Young's pious desire to use the play to acquire funds for missionary work, there was a theatrical reason for producing a piece that had languished unperformed for over fifteen years: Mossup had come to Drury Lane the season before, in 1751; he was an applauded and valuable actor, ranking in ability and popularity below only Garrick and Barry. 9 His appearance at Drury Lane gave Garrick—that astute showman—a chance to capitalize financially by producing plays in which Garrick and Mossup could perform as rivals. Shortly after his arrival, Mossup was given the difficult role of Richard in *Richard III*, which was performed in September, 1751. In October and November, Garrick played the part; then in January and February, Garrick and Mossup alternated as Richard. The following season—the one during which The *Brothers* appeared—*Richard III* was again used as a vehicle for the deliberately contrived rivalry between Garrick and Mossup; *Richard III* appeared during six of the nine months of that season, and the two actors alternated in the lead. 10 Mossup was also given opportunities in both seasons to play the part of Zanga in revivals of Young's *The
Revenge, a role in which he had made his first appearance as an actor at Smock Alley, in Dublin, on November 28, 1749. By casting himself opposite Mossup in The Brothers, Garrick evidently was attempting to reproduce to some extent the financially successful rivalry that he and Quin had occasioned when they performed The Fair Penitent at Covent Garden in 1746-1747.

The Brothers, however, was not as successful as either Young or Garrick hoped it would be. On November 21, 1752, when the tragedy was in rehearsal, a notice appeared in the Public Advertiser which stated that all profits arising from the play would "be apply'd by the author to a particular charity." On the third night, which fell on March 6, the play was advertised "For a Public Benefaction," and the same advertisement appeared on March 12 and March 17. Although the play ran only eight nights, Young had three benefits. He got the extra benefit, which technically he was not entitled to, because the seventh performance was postponed. On that night, March 13, one of the principal performers was ill, and As You Like It, with Beard and Lacey in the leads, was substituted. Young had hoped to raise a thousand pounds by allowing his tragedy to be performed, but undoubtedly he made much less than that. On March 14, 1753, an announcement appeared stating that the author had given a thousand guineas to the missionary society, most of which must have come from Young's own pocket. Davies, who had played Manly in The Provok'd Husband on the day before The Brothers opened, evidently saw the performance of Young's tragedy. He says that Garrick played Demetrius with all of that
master's "native fire and energy." Mossup was more than adequate as Perseus, but Berry and Miss Bellamy were weak as Philip and Erixene. Miss Bellamy failed to represent the pride and passion of that Thracian princess; as Philip, the Macedonian king, Berry wept a sufficient abundance of tears, but he did so both too loudly and too ungracefully.\footnote{16}

Garrick had requested Mallet to write the Epilogue, which was given by Mrs. Clive, the actress who had delivered the magical conclusion to the 1751 Alfred. Like most of the Epilogues of the period, Mallet's is sexually suggestive, a quality that clashed with the seriously religious purpose for which Young had allowed his tragedy to be performed. On the night of the first performance, Dr. Young sat in Garrick's box, which was in the upper portion of the theatre opposite to the King's side. The moralistic Dr. Young had not heard the Epilogue before that night, and he was shocked and incensed when Mrs. Clive appeared and introduced a concluding note of levity which he felt unbecoming and immoral.\footnote{17} She came on stage, employed a double entendre about woman's "most severe affliction," hinted at seducing "Our Bard," and finally made fun of his "moral scheme": the contribution of his benefits to the missionary society:

A scheme, forsooth! to benefit the nation!
Some queer, odd whim of pious propagation!
Lord! talk so, here—the man must be a widgeon:—
Drury may propagate—but not Religion.

The obvious play on the sexual implications of the word propagating in the name of the missionary society offended Young, and he refused to allow Mallet's Epilogue to be published in the edition of
his tragedy, although epilogues of this sort were customarily used with tragedies. Instead, Young wrote a Historical Epilogue, which presented the fate of Perseus as related by Livy and which was attached to the tragedy. He felt such a summation of historical events was especially "needful" after the close of the play because

To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies,
But guilt's dread close our narrow scene denies.

The Epilogue that Mrs. Clive spoke on the stage at Drury Lane was printed in Mallet's works in 1759.

III

In addition to the Prologue, the Epilogue, and the masques, Mallet was involved to some extent in other theatrical matters. In the early forties, he projected a tragedy about Socrates, which, like the proposed play about Xerxes, was discussed but never written. Shortly afterward, Mallet lent assistance when Hill resurrected a cherished dream of his—the establishment of a national theatre. At the end of the decade, Mallet was largely responsible for the production of Hill's Merope; in helping Hill, Mallet was rewarded by meeting Garrick, who later produced Mallet's two masques and his Elvira.

In the same letter of May, 1743, in which he requests an Epilogue from Hill for the Woburn Abbey performance of The Siege of Damascus, Mallet mentions that for some time he has been meditating a tragedy on the death of Socrates, "which I am wild enough to
imagine may be relished even on an English stage." The idea of such a tragedy was by no means original with Mallet—a state of affairs that the student of his work soon comes to expect. The idea may have been originated by Mrs. Barbara Sandys in 1736 and may have been suggested to Mallet's friend, Thomson. About January, 1737, Thomas Rundle, the Bishop of Derry, wrote to Mrs. Sandys that Thomson was not using a suggestion of hers: "My friend THOMPSON, the Poet, is bringing another untoward Heroine on the stage, and has deferred writing on the subject you chose for him, though he had the whole scheme drawn out into acts and scenes, proper turns of passion and sentiments pointed out to him, and the distress made, as touching and important, as new, and interesting, and regular as any, that was ever introduced on the stage at Athens, for the instruction of that polite nation." Professor McKillop suggests that the "subject" Rundle mentions is possibly a tragedy based on the death of Socrates. Many years later, when Voltaire published his Socrate at Amsterdam in 1759, he states in the Preface that his tragedy is a translation of Thomson's prose drama about Socrates, which was originally sketched to that poet by Addison. According to Voltaire, Thomson's Socrates was never performed because of the objections of Lyttelton, but in January, 1760, Lyttelton wrote a letter to the editor of the Monthly Review in which he denied that Thomson had ever written such a play, although he admitted that Bishop Rundle had once suggested that topic to Thomson. Thus it appears that the idea of a tragedy based on the death of Socrates had been discussed as early as 1736 in the group with which Thomson and Mallet were associated.
When Mallet wrote Hill about his plan for a play on Socrates, Hill quickly answered in a letter dated May 24, 1743, only two days after Mallet's. Hill's reaction to Mallet's idea was instantaneous, probably because Hill was grateful, once again, for a chance to write somebody else's play. In the beginning of his letter, Hill points out that the principal difficulty in using Socrates as a tragic hero is the fact that "the philosophical ray is too faint for the clash of passions," an objection which he claims can also be brought against Addison's use of Cato. But Hill softens this objection by saying that in Mallet's hands even Socrates "may shine in a dramatical light."

Then for the next five pages, he tells Mallet how to go about achieving such a performance.

Hill sees dramatic possibility in the struggle to get Socrates to escape from prison once the sentence of death has been passed upon him. Although Socrates refuses this aid, the struggle could terminate in a rescue of the philosopher by force of arms, his friends freeing him despite his contempt of death. When he is freed and triumphant over his enemies, Socrates could appear before the citizens of Athens, gathered "in one great assembly." There, facing both friends and enemies, Socrates could speak of the injustice of his sentence and of the injustice of the administration that convicted him. But he could also speak of a more terrible and yet greater injustice: that of "encouraging a tumultuous resistance, in violation of establish'd laws, and their authority." Then the philosopher could procure the cup of poison and drink it to the bottom to the astonishment of the
assembly. By the time Hill has planned this far, his imagination has
so excited him that he tells Mallet, "I don't know, as the idea grows,
under this short, and hasty examination, of the subject, whether you
may not work up, as active a Tragedy, upon a story, which would
generally be fear'd too tame, too passively declamatory, as on any
other groundwork, from the Greek or Roman history."^{23}

Hill next brings up a favorite topic of his—the matter of
poetic justice, which he feels Addison failed to employ in his Cato
but which could easily be utilized in a play about Socrates. The
fault in the philosopher that could justify his eventual death is the
fault of pride, which could easily be developed through his refusing
"to submit to pay the fine, his judges first condemn'd him in." This
refusal, Hill says, would indicate "pride of wilfulness" and "arro-
gance of obstinate, invincible, self-humuring perverseness." The
refusal could be exploited by having Crito reproach Socrates for his
"pride of heart"; Socrates could answer with "all the ablest Salvo's
of philosophy." This discussion between Crito and Socrates could have
two good effects: "The contrast of opinions, so disputed, would be
actively dramatical; and the exposure of such faults, as evils capable
of making heaven displeas'd, with one, so amiable, and so virtuously
adorn'd as Socrates, most touch the hearts of a like guilty, yet not
like virtuous, audience, with a double force of pity; from the conscious
feelings of their own infirmity."^{24}

Although Hill's discussion of Mallet's projected tragedy is con-
siderably detailed—though not as lengthy as his nine-page analysis of
Thomson's Agamemnon, which he sent to Pope and Mallet—he was very willing to elaborate further and to give Mallet "fuller hints, and a more weigh'd, and perfect scheme" of his conception of the way such a tragedy should be written. When Mallet answers the letter, on May 30, 1743, he thanks Hill for his suggestions and mentions that he had foreseen the objections Hill raised to the story—the fact that the character of Socrates is more philosophical than it is "dramatical." Mallet continues by saying that he had hoped to remedy "these defects" by using, "in my original plan," the same "machine" which Hill had suggested: "I mean the rescuing Socrates by force of arms, under the direction of the younger and more vehement among his followers. But whether I dare venture to change the manner of his dying (a fact so known and celebrated in all ages) I have not yet determined."  

Shortly after he had written Hill about the proposed tragedy, Mallet may have received a letter, dated July 11, from Lyttelton in which the play is discussed at some length. Professor McKillop dates Lyttelton's letter as of 1743, but he warns that it "cannot be certainly dated from internal evidence." Little thinks the letter was written about 1730. Since Lyttelton discourages Mallet from pursuing his idea of a play about Socrates and since there is no further mention of that tragedy in subsequent Mallet correspondence, in all probability Lyttelton's letter was written in the summer of 1743 when Mallet was also conferring with Hill about the same plan for a tragedy. Judging by Lyttelton's letter, Mallet had evidently written him about the proposed play. Lyttelton warns Mallet that Thomson has a
"prior Right" to the idea and that "he is so full of the Plan that was sent him by the Bishop of Derry (in which however he has made some corrections) that I apprehend he will go on with it, and have it ready against next Winter."²⁹ This plan to which Lyttelton refers is quite possibly the plan that Rundle mentioned several years before to Mrs. Sandys in the letter already quoted, for in that letter Rundle says that Thomson "had the whole scheme drawn out into acts and scenes . . . pointed out to him."

Lyttelton had talked with both Pitt and Gilbert West about Mallet and Thomson's conjectured tragedies, and all three had agreed that an interesting play could not be written upon that subject. Their objection was similar to that which Hill had advanced, for they considered that the character of Socrates allowed the playwright no opportunity for portraying passion—a requisite for eighteenth century tragedy—since his "gay unconcern at the approach of Death is Philosophical, but by no means Tragical."³⁰ In conclusion, Lyttelton suggests that Mallet, if he must write a play at this time, write one on the death of Seneca. It is probable that when Mallet received such a discouraging response from the patron who was responsible for his pension from the Prince, he immediately gave up any idea of pursuing the project, for no further reference to this dramatic plan is at present known.
During the early years of the forties, Mallet was also involved in one of the perennial plans which Hill regularly drew up for the establishment of a third Patent theatre. Hill was interested in theatrical management all his life, and he had managed Drury Lane for about seven months in 1709-1710, an administration that was remarkable only for his production of his own tragedy, *Elfriede*. Following his short experience at Drury, Hill rented the Haymarket from Collier and went into "Musical Government," as Cibber called it. Hill was very successful in producing operas, and when Handel visited England in 1710, Hill persuaded him to compose an opera for the house in Haymarket. The result was *Rinaldo*, which ran from February until June in 1711. Hill was so successful with opera that Collier, shortly afterwards, took the Haymarket away from him. In the early twenties, Hill had attempted to operate the newly built Little Theatre in the Haymarket as a third theatre. He was joined in this endeavor by the Duke of Montague, but the project never came to fruition.

In 1733, shortly before Fleetwood acquired control of Drury Lane, Hill tried to raise money to buy shares in the patent, but he failed. During the thirties, he became convinced that London needed a new house, particularly a house that would train young actors and actresses. In 1734, he began publishing *The Prompter*, in which he set forth many of his ideas about the craft of theatrical management. In 1735, he wrote Thomson about the possibility of "a new company," and suggested that
the Prince would be the appropriate personage to head such an undertaking. Hill included in the letter a declaration which states the purpose he had in mind: 35

WHEREAS certain gentlemen have propos'd, at their own expense, to attempt an improvement, under name of a tragic academy for extending, and regulating theatrical diversions, and for instructing and educating actors in the practice of dramatic passions, and a power to express 'em strongly; the success of which laudable purpose, might establish the reputation of the stage, by appropriating its influence, to the service of wisdom, and virtue; our names are therefore subscrib'd in declaration, that we will protect and give countenance, to this useful undertaking, so long as the same shall be carried on with a skill, and intention, correspondent to the proposal.

A year later, Hill again brought up the suggestion in another letter to Thomson. He still wanted Thomson to use his influence with the Prince, and he thought the Opera house in the Haymarket could be used three or four nights weekly for the endeavor. 36 But the indolent Thomson never acted upon Hill's repeated hints about the Prince.

Six years afterwards, Hill broached substantially the same plan to Mallet, whose Mustapha and Alfred had solidly established him in the favor of the Prince. In June, 1742, Hill sent the following query to Mallet: "Can there be no probability to move the Prince to get a License granted to a Company call'd His? In such a case, I know, upon sure Grounds, how better Players might be speedily procur'd, than Either of the present Theatres can boast of. Think of it: and let me know your sentiments." 37 Mallet answered Hill in the latter part of July. Hill's proposal, he says, is one "which I had often thought of asking you to consider and cast into method." This agreement of minds
is followed by an assertion that "the Prince, by what I have observed, is well inclined to patronize the theatre." Mallet asks Hill to send him complete plans about his proposal, for "I hope I may find proper opportunities to lay before him the scheme you mention." Perhaps to show that he is in a position to aid Hill, Mallet refers to his recent good fortune, which came to him on May 27, 1742: "The Prince . . . has lately created an employment for me in his family."38

In early August, Hill sent details entitled: "By His Royal Highness's the Prince of Wales's Company, at the Accademic [sic] Theatre, for educating new Successions of Performers for the Stage." The purpose of the new theatre, Hill contends, is to set an example so that "the loose customary Levities of Playhouse Management" may be reformed and altered, "greatly." Hill also cautions Mallet that the new theatre should be free and not under the jurisdiction of the managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and he warns that the plan should not be jeopardized by an imitation of that patent granted during the Restoration: "Only proper caution must be us'd, to keep it from approaching the Old Precedent of such a Kind of Patent as was pass'd . . . in 1664, for a Third Company, to be call'd a Nursery:--That having been no independent Grant, but subject to the Management and Interests of Killygrew and D'avenant."39

After considering and approving Hill's scheme, Mallet answered in mid-August. A conspiratorial note enters into the correspondence at this point as Mallet cautions Hill that the plan should be religiously kept a secret until the "most important Particulars are adjusted
and agreed upon." He wants Hill to come to London so they may discuss the matter, and perhaps they may also go to "Twittenham [Sig]," a hint that the pair hoped Pope would aid their endeavors. ⁴⁰

At this point the correspondence between Hill and Mallet concerning the proposed theater lapses for several months. But in May, 1743, the scheme is referred to again by Mallet when he consulted Hill about writing the Epilogue for the private performance of The Siege of Damascus at Woburn Abbey. Mallet says that he will try to mention the matter to the Duke of Bedford and, should that nobleman take any interest, he will let Hill know. ⁴¹

In Hill's 1753 Works, there is an undated, unaddressed letter which speaks of the Prince and of the "dramatic scheme." The first part of the letter concerns Hill's Fanciad, a poem that Hill discussed with Mallet during the major part of 1743. It is quite possible that this letter was written to Mallet in May, 1743, if it can be shown to illuminate a cryptic remark in a letter of Mallet's, dated May 30. If so, Hill's following remarks in the undated letter about the Prince indicate that Frederick had definitely refused to extend his patronage to the scheme of the two writers: ⁴²

The only hope I had, for poetry, is lost. I thought that the P----- might be awakened into more than passive inclination, to promote a scheme for stage improvement.--A new licence for us, by his procurement, had done everything we wished, or stood in need of. But even there too we were disappointed.

In an age, then, when a P----- of such a humane and amiable disposition, can find reasons to decline bestowing his intreated countenance on honest meaning, which he loves, and longs to cherish, what prospect can we have of other patronage, equivalent to our unseasonable purpose? For my part, I despair of any; but I shall both rejoice and wonder, to be found mistaken, in this notion; and whenever you can call me to conviction, that I am too sullen a
distruster of the times, you may command me to contribute all the little help that is within a power, so humble, and so limited, as mine is . . .

If the assumption about the date of this letter is correct, then an enigmatical statement in Mallet's May 30, 1743, letter to Hill can be clearly understood. In that letter Mallet says that "what you mention in regard to the Prince, I wish to talk with you at large in person." Should the date and sequence of the letters be right, one can conclude that Hill, upon the Prince's refusal, had given up hope but that Mallet still believed success possible through application to "other patronage." This theory is supported by a succeeding letter Mallet wrote Hill on August 7, 1743. In that letter, Mallet speaks of attempts he has made to approach Lord Middlesex. Middlesex—who later became the second Duke of Dorset—was a faithful follower of the Prince. A dissolute and extravagant man of fashion, he was inordinately fond of the opera, and he may have owned a share of the theatre in the Haymarket. Mallet says that he had written a week before to Joseph Spence, but that he has received no answer. Such being the case, he wonders "might not Cross wait on Lord Middlesex; and without naming the persons who commission him, (for that I think should not be done at first) inform himself whether the Haymarket-house may be had for four days a week? I see no impropriety in a message of this kind: and, if that theatre cannot be obtained, neither your name nor mine will be bandied about, among players and patentees." Whether or not Cross—presumably Richard Cross, the prompter at Drury Lane—was amenable is unknown, and
with this letter references to the "dramatic scheme" cease. Since the scheme, after Frederick's refusal, came to nothing at all, Hill was obviously correct when, in the undated letter, he gave up every hope: "You seem to hope it probable, that some one of the ministers might be induced to favour an attempt to make the stage more useful; but, in truth, I am afraid you over-rate the taste and disposition of those gentlemen."

V

Although Mallet was unable to help Hill in the attempt to establish a third theatre, he was much more successful in aiding the production of Hill's Merope, which was staged at Drury Lane during April, 1749. Hill sent a copy of Merope to Mallet toward the end of September, 1748, at the same time that he sent a copy to Millar, the printer. Hill's play was an adaptation of Voltaire's, which, he told Mallet, "I undertook . . . upon a motive, more malignant than it should have been; for I but sought to mend, with the bad view, to mortify him." Hill's malignant motive was a reaction against Voltaire's slandering English taste in tragedy in his La Mort de Cesar. In retaliation, Hill attacked French tragedy in his Preface to Merope:

Our unpolished London stage (as Voltaire assumes the liberty of calling it) has entertained a nobler taste of dignified simplicity than to deprive dramatic poetry of all that animates the passions, in pursuit of a cold, starved, tame, abstinence, which, from an affectation to shun figure, sinks into flatness, an elaborate escape from energy into a grovelling, wearisome, bald, barren, unalarming, chillness of expression, that emasculates the mind instead of moving it.
Mallet read *Meropé* twice, and when he wrote Hill in the middle of October he offered his help in bringing the play to the stage as soon as he was able "to go abroad."²⁸ Nine months before, Mallet had fallen from his horse and his head had been severely injured. One eye had to be kept in darkness for many weeks, and about the time he appeared to recover, he was seized by a "vertiginous distemper" which confined him again to his bed for a long period. He did not completely recover until nearly the end of 1748.²⁹

Hill eagerly accepted Mallet's offer of assistance, for his finances were in perilous condition. He had lost nearly £6,000 in an unprofitable venture in a Public Company and another £3,000 in two bad private debts. On October 21, 1748, he wrote Mallet accepting his aid, and he also asked that Mallet request Chesterfield to read the play and, if he liked it, to use his influence with Garrick.³⁰ The following day Mallet answered, saying that Chesterfield was in Bath, but through the Lord's secretary Mallet had learned that he would be back in three weeks. Mallet also had other available avenues: "I am very well known to the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whose only son married lately the Chamberlain's daughter, Lady Caroline. General Cope too (whom the Earl of Harrington created and still preserves) by just now asking a favour of me, has given me a right to task all the interest he can make in his patron's home."³¹ The Earl of Harrington was William Stanhope, who had succeeded Chesterfield as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1746. Mallet felt that his contact, through the son, with the Lord Chamberlain would facilitate matters.
On the 25th of October, Hill wrote Mallet suggesting that he go
directly to Garrick if Chesterfield was not available; but if Mallet
did not wish to go, Hill left the matter to his friend's "judicious
and decisive choice." 52

Eventually, Mallet had to do just that—contact Garrick—in
order to get _Merope_ produced, but in the meantime he indulged the
taste for conspiracy which he evidently acquired during the intrigues
concerning the theatrical schemes. The letters of Mallet during the
next few months are full of his comings and goings as he busily tried
to see first one nobleman and then another. Chesterfield's brother
died in December, 1743, and Mallet waited unsuccessfully at the noble-
man's door on several occasions. 53 He never saw either Lord Harrington
or the son, the two aristocrats being unfortunately laid up with gout
in both the hands and the feet. The Lord Chamberlain, the Duke of
Grafton, disappeared on a Christmas vacation and did not return until
after the new year. 54 Mallet kept up his intrigues even after Chetwynd,
the Licenser, had arranged a meeting for him with Garrick. In the mid-
dle of November, Mallet met with Garrick, Mrs. Cibber, and Mr. Sloper,
the gentleman under whose protection Mrs. Cibber lived for years.
Mallet wrote Hill that Garrick was persuaded that he would appear to
advantage in the part of Eumenes. Mrs. Cibber was also delighted with
her part, which even Sloper thought was good for his mistress. 55 At
that meeting, however, Garrick did not definitely commit himself to
produce _Merope_. In a subsequent letter late in November, Mallet told
Hill not to worry, for he still had in mind other men and women "who
might be of use." 56
Actually, all of the difficulty lay in the fact that Garrick had two previous commitments. He had agreed to play Samuel Johnson's *Irene* and he felt honor bound to bring that play on first. In addition, Rich planned to put on Thomson's *Coriolanus* posthumously during the second week in January, and Garrick also had agreed (Mallet learned through Lyttelton) not to run anything new against that play. When he was alive, Thomson had intended to have *Coriolanus* performed at Drury Lane. He wanted his old friend Quin to play the part of Coriolanus and Garrick to take the subordinate role of Tullus. Garrick refused to take the lesser part and the play was not produced. After Thomson's death, the tragedy was brought on at Covent Garden through the persuasion of the executors of Thomson's estate, George Lyttelton and Andrew Mitchell. Lyttelton wrote the Prologue and Quin played the title role. The day before *Coriolanus* was performed, Samuel Richardson wrote to Hill and explained why Garrick agreed not to play anything new against Thomson's tragedy: "There was ill-will between Mr. Thomson and Mr. Garrick on the score of Mr. Quin, and of that Play, and Mr. Garrick was glad of an Opportunity to regain Mr. Lyttelton's Opinion by such a Promise. So these were not mere Pretenses." By the second week in December, Garrick gave Mallet a definite promise that he would bring *Merope* on, and about the middle of that month the manager postponed a third, unknown play to insure *Merope*'s production. Mallet's only concern after that was the fact that *Merope* would appear late and perhaps thereby be not very profitable. On December 18, he sent Hill the schedule of appearances for the
tragedies. Coriolanus was to appear first in January. Then "Irene is to take it's Chance, which (if I may believe the noble Lord whom I have not been able to see) will not retard yours long." And, finally, Merope would appear.\(^{63}\)

But an unexpected difficulty developed when Mrs. Cibber decided that she could not take the role of Merope. At the beginning of March, Mallet wrote Hill of her excuses. Mrs. Cibber claimed that she was "indisposed," and Mallet agreed that her health was not the best. She also said that she had to play in all the principal benefits, in addition to studying anew the part of Sigismunda, in Thomson's Tancred and Sigismunda, which was to be performed for her own benefit on March 7, 1749. In view of all these labors, Mrs. Cibber insisted that she could not attempt "so very long and trying a character, at the latter end of a season."\(^{64}\)

Garrick was willing to substitute Mrs. Pritchard in the part of Merope, but evidently Mallet thought Hill would be fearful that the play's receipts would suffer if Mrs. Cibber—Drury Lane's principal actress—were not in the title role. In his letter of March 2, 1749, Mallet told Hill that he had "coldly" informed Garrick of Hill's desire to have Mrs. Cibber take the lead. Garrick contrived a scheme that he thought might persuade Mrs. Cibber to accept the role, and Mallet relayed to Hill Garrick's request that the author write "an ostensible letter" to the manager "in which you insist upon Garrick's carrying out his promise to perform the Tragedy in April, and if Mrs. Cibber will not take the part because of her health, give it to Mrs.
Pritchard." Garrick thought that his leading lady's vanity and jealousy might be aroused by Hill's suggestion that the part be given Mrs. Pritchard. Mallet explained Garrick's trickery: "This, he imagines, may be more effectual to remove the scruples of the former (who must be jealous of the latter's acquiring new reputation by a capital part with him) than any persuasions whatever." In the conclusion of the letter, Mallet wittily expressed his own opinion about the merits of the two actresses: "Upon the whole, I have no fears for the success of the play, whether your Heroine has a little more or a little less flesh on her bones." Although Mrs. Pritchard has been a slender, lovely girl in her youth, as she approached middle-age (she was thirty-eight in 1749) she assumed a "fulness of person"—to use Davies' delicate words.

Hill's motives for desiring Mrs. Cibber in the title role may have been sentimental as well as financial. In her first stage appearance in London, she played Zara in Hill's The Tragedy of Zara when that play opened in 1736. Much of the credit for the play's success was attributed to her performance, for which she had been untiringly coached by Hill; he had instructed her in every look and gesture, and he had given her full directions for each accent and emphasis in every speech. Hill fully expected her to play in his Merope. In January, he came to London for a meeting with Garrick that Mallet had arranged. During that time, he saw Mrs. Cibber and she told him that "she shed tears for Merope." As late as February, Hill still believed that she would be in his play, but in March she declined the part and eventually the role was given to Mrs. Pritchard.
The change in the female leads forced Hill to rewrite the Prologue and the Epilogue. When he sent the new versions to Garrick, he explained why he felt he had to rewrite them. His explanation gives an excellent description of the contrast between Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Pritchard:

Please to tear out the old Prologue, and the Epilogue, and let these alter'd ones be put, in place of 'em. A friend of mine was advising me, to give the last, a lighter turn, which would not, perhaps, have been wrong, had Mrs. Cibber been the Merope, because from a soft-looking, maiden-like, slim figure, (such as hers) the point of joke, in double entendres, catches spirit from surprize, and makes the wantonness attractive; but those turns, from a look, and form, of different appearance, make but cold impression; through in all things, but the look, and shape, their merit may be equal. I dare venture to insure Mrs. Pritchard as great applause in this grave address, as she could have expected, from a fat high one, season'd to the full relish of the fashion.

Shortly after the casting of the female lead was settled, difficulty arose concerning the subordinate role of Polyphontes. Originally, Spranger Barry had been scheduled for the part; for some unexplained reason, he decided that he did not want the role and it was given to Havard. Barry was then offered the part of Nahas, which he also refused and which was given to Edward Berry. By the end of March, 1749, so many disappointments had been attendant upon the casting of Merope that, in writing to Garrick about the selection of a player for one of the minor bits, Hill despairingly said that "the High Priest may be acted by any body, who can speak articulately."

After the holiday season, Rich brought out Coriolanus, which opened on January 16, 1749, and ran until the 24th. Two weeks later,
on February 6, Johnson's Irene appeared with Garrick as Demetrius and Mrs. Pritchard as Irene. Hill saw the play on the night it was performed for the benefit of the author—"the Anamalous Mr. Johnson," as Hill termed him in a letter to Mallet. The production and the acting impressed Hill, except for Barry's performance as Mahomet. Irene ran nine nights, and two months later Merope appeared on April 15, 1749.

Merope was performed nine times in April and twice in May, but Hill did not realize as much profit from the play as he had expected. On May 5, 1749, he wrote Mallet that his three benefit nights netted him only £148. Mallet attempted to console Hill with profitless flattery, saying that "circumstanced as that play was, nothing less than universal approbation could have drawn even small audiences." He blamed Hill's small receipts on the fact that the sale of tickets had been mishandled. The tickets, he says, should have "been printed and distributed among half a dozen leading hands." There is no doubt as to whose hands should have distributed the tickets, for as Mallet assures Hill, "the applications to me from women of great rank were frequent and importunate."

Although Hill gained very little from the production of Merope, Mallet profited greatly by aiding in getting that play on the stage for he made the acquaintance of Garrick. Years later, when Mallet's finances were desperate, Garrick's friendship for him came to his aid and Elvira was produced. The performance of that ministerial tragedy gained for Mallet the governmental office which he had sought unsuccessfully for twelve years—from the death of Bolingbroke until the summer of 1763.
NOTES

1. David Mallet, The Works of Mr. Mallet (London, 1743), p. 223 n. "The Siege of Damascus was acted at Woburn, by the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Sandwich, and some other persons of distinction, in the month of May, 1743." Among those "persons of distinction" was Sir Francis Dashwood, whom Hesiod Cooke says "played Scrub among this set of comedians." Cooke goes on to belittle all of the distinguished company at Woburn that month. "All these noble fellows had certainly been players, if they had been born in humble life; and, in all likelihood, would better become that station than the senate." Gentleman's Magazine, LVI (1791), 1182.

2. David Mason Little, The Letters of an Eighteenth Century Scotsman, unpublished dissertation (Harvard, 1935), pp. 285, 291. On May 22, 1743, Mallet wrote Hill: "Lord Sandwich has writ to me again, with redoubled importunity, on hearing that I had applied to you for the favour of an epilogue. He adds, that the play will not be performed till towards the end of this week." Little, p. 285.

3. Gentleman's Magazine, LVI (1791), 1181. Concerning the Prologue, Cooke says: "The Prologue is a very indifferent one. I entertained a tolerable opinion of the Earl of Sandwich's understanding till I saw this. The man, who can condescend to speak a trifling Prologue on such an occasion, must have a great flaw in his head. The Duke of Bedford is of the booby-cast.


5. For a discussion of these activities during the summer of 1743, see Rose Mary Davis, The Good Lord Lyttelton (Bethlehem, Penna., 1939), pp. 122-127.

6. When Walpole was in power, he termed the members of the Opposition "Boy Patriots."


8. See Davies, I, 203. Also John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830 (Bath, 1832), IV, 361. Also, Arthur Murphy, The Life of David Garrick, Esq. (London, 1801), I, 224-225.
The Thespian Dictionary (London, 1805), under "Mossup (Henry)."

10. See the list of performances of Richard III at this time in Dougald MacMillan, Drury Lane Calendar 1747-1776 (Oxford, 1938), p. 314.

11. For Mossup's first appearance, see The Thespian Dictionary. For Mossup's appearance at Drury Lane in The Revenge, see MacMillan, p. 313.


13. Genest, IV, 361, and Murphy, I, 224.


17. Murphy, I, 227-228.

18. The Historical Epilogue is reprinted in Murphy, I, 228-230.


21. Davis, pp. 294-295. According to Miss Davis, who has studied Socrates, Voltaire's motives in attributing a fictitious play to Thomson are not clear. Since Socrates was a satire upon some of his Parisian enemies, he perhaps may have tried to obscure his intent by claiming his play was a translation of Thomson's. See her "Thomson and Voltaire's Socrates," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLIX (1934), 560-565.

23 Hill, II, 18.


25 Little, p. 296.

26 Little, p. 297.

27 McKillop, p. 162.

28 Little, p. 294.

29 McKillop, pp. 161-162.

30 McKillop, p. 162.


32 Brewster, pp. 86-94.

33 Brewster, pp. 101-104.

34 Brewster, pp. 121-122.

35 Hill, II, 128-129.

36 Hill, I, 233-236.

37 Quoted in Little, pp. 282-283.

38 Little, p. 280.
39 Quoted in Little, p. 286.
40 Little, p. 284.
41 Little, p. 290.
42 Hill, II, 139-140.
43 Little, p. 297.
44 Little, p. 297.
45 Little, p. 302.
46 Hill, II, 138-139.
47 Hill, II, 347 [misnumbered 3747].
48 Little, pp. 375, 379.
49 Little, pp. 360, 363, 368.
50 Quoted in Little, p. 385.
51 Little, pp. 379, 383.
52 Quoted in Little, p. 389.
53 Little, pp. 396, 402, 405.
54 Little, p. 405.
55 Little, pp. 391-392.
56. Little, p. 397.

57. Little, pp. 397-398.


60. McKillop, pp. 211-212.

61. Little, p. 402.

62. Little, p. 405.

63. Little, p. 406.

64. Little, p. 409.

65. Little, pp. 409-410.

66. Davies, II, 185.


68. Hill, II, 368.


71. See Hill, II, 370, and Davies, I, 182.

73. MacMillan, pp. 9–10, 261.


76. Hill, II, 361.

77. Little, p. 410.

78. Little, p. 414.
CHAPTER VI

ALFRED, 1751: EXIT PRINCE AND PATRON

More than a decade after Alfred was performed at Cliefden, Mallet brought out his alteration of the masque, which was produced at Drury Lane on February 23, 1751. A new edition of Alfred was also published. It contained an advertisement in which Mallet said that he had improved the masque during a short respite from his labors on "the Duke of MARLBOROUGH's History."¹ The play ran for nine nights, and whether or not it was a success depends upon which account one reads: Genest is noncommittal; Baker says it was not very successful.² Contemporary reports, however, treat the masque more kindly. The London Magazine gave a synopsis of the plot in the March issue, 1751, stating that it was "acted with success,"³ and also printed both the Prologue and the Epilogue.⁴ Although the Monthly Review praised Alfred, it mentions that the first performance of the 1751 version was received with something less than enthusiasm. "This piece, however, suffered a sort of damp . . . by the imperfection of some of the underactors and dancers, in their parts, which begot an apology in one of the public papers, with a promise of amendment."⁵

Garrick played the part of Alfred, which had been greatly enlarged by Mallet. Mrs. Clive, who had performed so admirably at Cliefden eleven years before, was present to sing in Alfred once more. The Hermit, Quin's old role, was taken by Edward Berry, who was certainly suited for the part since he was in his seventy-fifth year. For decades, Berry had established a solid reputation by
regularly bringing his audience to tears when he played Adam in *As You Like It*, a role he first played in December, 1740, when that play was revived in its original form for the first time since the Restoration. During the mid-century, Berry, along with Quin, was one of the actors most successful as Falstaff and as Gloucester. The reduced role of the Earl of Devon was played by John Lee, who was soon to leave Drury Lane because of a disagreement with Garrick. After a sojourn in Edinburgh, where he managed a theatre and performed in his altered version of *Macbeth*, Lee returned to London and established himself at the Opera House in the Haymarket. For years there, he pretended to be Garrick's rival. Eventually his temper became so vile that no playhouse would employ him, and he was banished to Bath. The part of Alfred's queen, Eltruda, was played by the famous Mrs. George Anne Bellamy, who claimed to be the illegitimate daughter of Lord Tyrrawley and who was then in the early years of her career. Her playing opposite Garrick in Mallet's *Alfred* perhaps gave the masque an added interest, for she had been Juliet to Garrick's Romeo in the remarkable *Romeo and Juliet* battle of 1750. In that year, Shakespeare's romantic tragedy served as a test of strength between Drury Lane and Covent Garden. Each theatre acted the play twelve times on the same nights: Garrick and Mrs. Bellamy vying with Barry and Mrs. Cibber for audience approval. The outcome of the struggle was indecisive, although Garrick managed to play a thirteenth night and thereby claim a victory of sorts.8

As Genest points out, one of the principal methods whereby
Mallet altered Alfred was by introducing supernatural beings, machinery, and more singing. The number of songs was increased, but this enlargement of quantity did not result in any increase in quality. Dr. Arne had composed the music for the original version of the masque and for the 1745 performance, but the music for the alteration was written by a group of gentlemen who belonged to the Apollo society, a musical club that met regularly at the Devil Tavern. Their efforts were received with much disfavor, and the audience's response was such that Dr. Arne felt obliged to advertise that he had condescended to have no more than three of his songs included in the performance. A Mr. Oswald, "a composer of distinction," also felt he should exonerate himself and he made known the fact that he had written none of the music, although he acknowledged being guilty of having published it.

Supernatural beings had existed in the original version of Alfred; the Hermit's prophetic vision, accompanied by music, is the best example of Mallet and Thomson's use of this type of spectacle. But Mallet introduced other types of supernatural agency and machinery in his alteration. One of the most spectacular occurs in the third act when Alfred returns victorious from battle. The scene opens disclosing several triumphal arches, each adorned with trophies and garlands. Then the procession enters, led by shepherdesses who dance and strew flowers. They are followed by soldiers bearing palm branches and an officer who carries aloft the magic Raven--the symbol of the hated enemy. When Alfred passes under the triumphal arches, the sun rises above the horizon in the background.
As the audience is overwhelmed by the artificial sun that Mallet and Garrick managed to provide for them, the sound of discordant musical instruments herald the approach of four furies, who rise from trapdoors—"four different openings from underground." The furies carry torches in their left hands and bloody swords in their right. They dance confusedly about, shaking and pointing their bloody swords at the king, until the music changes back into harmony. Then, like a deus ex machina, the Genius of England descends slowly from above. He carries a crowned sword and a laurel wreath. When they sight him, the four furies sink back into the floor through the traps from which they came. The Genius of England gives the sword and wreath to Alfred and everyone bursts into joyous song.

It is easy to see how impressive this spectacle was for the eighteenth century audience. Concerning this aspect of Alfred, Davies says: "In decorations of magnificent triumphal arches, dances of furies, various harmony of music and incantations, fine scenes and dresses, this masque exceeded every thing which had before made its appearance on the English stage." Mallet made every attempt to capitalize upon the visual delights which the stage might offer, and one has to admire his ingenuity. He was certainly not the poet that Thomson was, but he had a theatrical sense that blossomed hugely in Alfred. The ode, "Rule, Britannia," was surrounded with such a contrivance of scenic effects that it is quite possible the audience did not even notice that three stanzas had been completely rewritten by Bolingbroke. In the original Alfred, the Hermit introduces a "Venerable Bard"—appropriately "Aged and blind"—who then
sings "Rule, Britannia." But in Mallet's version, the Hermit calls Alfred's attention to "this unfolding scene": an ocean in prospect, upon which ships are sailing along. From the ships, two long boats come and land their crews. One sailor then sings "Rule, Britannia," while the others indulge in a lively dance.

In the original Alfred, the audience has a chance to catch its breath after the ode, for Quin steps forward and in sawing tones closes the masque with a paean to British commerce. But in the alteration, there is no opportunity for the audience to relish the sentiments of Bolingbroke's crippling lines. Instead of a farewell address by a grave Hermit emerging from an eighteenth century artificial grotto, the spectators are stunned by the bouncing appearance of sprightly Kitty Clive, whom Johnson once called "a better romp than any I ever saw in nature." She bounds forth, seizes the old man's wand, and bids him go upstairs to employ his serious head on state affairs, while she creates her own particular kind of enchantment.

In her long and eminent career, Mrs. Clive had achieved many distinctions, among which oddly enough was her performance in 1738 in Dalton's adaptation of Milton's Comus, the first time that masque ever appeared on the public stage. As Davies says, the whole empire of laughter was hers, but with woman-like perverseness she drove Garrick to the edge of insanity with her nagging demands for serious roles. Garrick never gave in to her desire to play tragic parts opposite him, and until she died she was convinced his refusal was due to his fear of her getting the better of him if they played
together. She created a new Portia at the same time Macklin created a new Shylock in 1741. But whereas Macklin transformed the Jew from a buffoon to a serious role, Mrs. Clive, with her gift of comedy, made a clown of Portia, who mimicked as she pled. 14

Mrs. Clive's comic enchantment, which closes Alfred, is the evocation of more scenic magic: "On waving her wand, the scene opens, and discovers a beautiful valley, bordered on each hand by forest trees, rising irregularly, and forming from space to space various groves. The prospect behind is a landscape of woodlands, and of mountains that ascend above one another, till the last seem to lose themselves in the sky. From the summit of the nearest hill a river pours down, by several falls, in a natural cascade. The warbling of birds is heard." (Epilogue) Against this background, a husbandman and his family, shepherd and shepherdesses, and a band of soldiers engage in various dances as they are directed by Mrs. Clive's "enchanting wand."

The grandiose extent of these scenic manipulations is one method Mallet chose by which to alter the masque. But the plot also underwent considerable change. In the advertisement to the printed edition of Alfred, Mallet says: "to fit it for the stage, I found it would be necessary to new-plan the whole, as well as write the particular scenes over again; to enlarge the design, and make ALFRED, what he should have been at first, the principal figure in his own MASQUE." His rewriting was so extensive that the political parallel which the masque presented at Cliefden no longer exists and, as it
comes to the stage in 1751, Alfred no longer has any connection with the now vanished aspirations of the dying Frederick Louis.

The fact that the ambitions at Cliefden no longer existed meant that the Hermit's prophetic visions were unnecessary in 1751. In the alteration, those visions are reduced to a single brief look into the future; instead of the progress of kings, there is the spectacular view of a spirit seen, amidst a blaze of light, sitting on the edge of a rock and singing the ode "From those eternal regions bright." Edward, Elizabeth, William, and "that invidious reflexion," the Black Prince, have all returned to their dusty tombs, and Quin's dramatic and lengthy discussion of British history has been replaced by Berry's pathetically few lines:

See England's genius soar again to heaven,
And better days in white succession roll,
Without a cloud between! (III. v.)

The heart and meaning of the old masque is surgically removed with the excision of the Hermit's vision. In this respect, Mallet's version represents an entirely new Alfred, a version that retains many of the innocuous lines of the old but that has none of the implications that so rejoiced the hearts at Cliefden. The masque is not as interesting any more, but it is dramatically more effective than the 1740 collaboration.

Shortly after the appearance of Alfred at Cliefden, Hill had read the masque four or five times. There were bound to be reverberations when Hill paid that much attention to any work, and in December,
1741, he sent Mallet a detailed criticism replete with suggestions for rewriting. As nearly as one can judge, Mallet accepted in practically every instance the suggestions that Hill gave him, and the pedigree of the 1751 Alfred is so obvious that with truth one can say it is out of Mallet and Thomson by Hill. In first passing judgment on the masque, Hill says that it is "too thin for the occasion" and that it wants action, language which Tovey was to echo when he termed it "thin enough to be sure" but pretty. Hill's principal concern, one already noted in connection with Hesiod Cooke, was that Alfred "should do more in his own drama ... than condescend to hear himself advised, blamed, spurr'd, and comforted." He suggested that Alfred rather than Devon--whom Hill calls Devonshire--should be the one to propose the attack upon Kinwith Castle, and Alfred should also be more directly concerned with the winning of the battle. In addition, while the king is engaged with military matters, he ought to lodge his family with the Hermit so that his children might have the benefit of the old man's tuition if Alfred falls in battle. At the end of the masque, Hill continues, it would be appropriate if the Danish king were captured. All of these suggestions were embodied in Mallet's version of Alfred. As each correction was made, less and less of the original meaning remained. When Mallet transferred the role of strategist from Devon to Alfred, he had to do away with the theme of caution, which had been so essential when the masque was directed at Frederick Louis. The Earl of Devon now makes only a feeble attempt to console
Alfred, as the piece opens:

Sir, be of comfort.  
Who has not known ill fortune, never knew  
Himself, or his own virtue. (I. ii.)

The new Alfred is a man of action, not a prince waiting for the future  
to crown him:

Well--no more--  
Complaint is for the vulgar: kings must act;  
Restore a ruin'd state, or perish with it.  
(I. ii.)

At this point, Mallet introduces a new character, Edwin, who comes  
in with news that twelve hundred veterans are beginning to gather in  
the surrounding woods. This knowledge causes Alfred to act; ordering  
Devon and Edwin to steal into Kinwith Castle, Alfred reveals his  
plan: at the head of the twelve hundred, he will fall upon the rear  
of the enemy while Devon leads the Castle's forces in an assault upon  
the Danish forward positions. Thus the enemy will be encircled and  
destroyed.

After the battle is won, Devon is very explicit about Alfred's  
role as hero in the fight:

The clock struck three--  
At once our gates flew wide: at once we rush'd  
Prone on the Danish trenches--While behind,  
Just to the fatal instant, ALFRED rose  
In all his terrors; o'er the mounded camp  
Tempestuous drove; from space to space along  
Spred slaughter and dismay. Nor rest, nor pause:  
Back'd by his ardent band, right on he bore  
Even to the tent, where sunk in sleep profound
The Danish monarch lay. His guards, a few
Whom honor prompted to defend their prince,
Fell round him. (III. vi.)

In reducing the Hermit's role, Mallet quite naturally reduced
his importance. Although the Hermit still proclaims Alfred's future
greatness, he no longer gives him as much fatherly advice. Neither
does he counsel caution, as he did in the previous version of the
masque. When Alfred lays his plans for encircling the Danes and then
prepares to lead the attack, the Hermit speaks proudly of the boldness
of Alfred's venture:

Your enterprise is bold--and may be fatal:
Yet I condemn it not. All is not rashness,
That valor of more common size might think,
And caution term so. Souls of nobler scope,
Whose comprehensive sight beholds at once
And weighs the sum of things, are their own rule,
And to be judg'd but by themselves alone.
(II. iii.)

Mallet also followed Hill's suggestion about Alfred's leaving his
family in the old man's care and about appointing the Hermit as tutor
to his children. When Alfred prepares to go to war, he gives Eltruda
into the Hermit's protection and speaks of the Hermit's task of educa-
ting the children:

That task then, difficult alike and noble,
Be thine, O sacred sage; to whose try'd wisdom
I, henceforth, solely trust their tender years.
(II. ix.)

At the end of the battle, the English forces capture the
Danish king, which was Hill's idea, although he got it from Rapin.
Hill had also followed Rapin by suggesting that "the Dane, as ransom for his life and liberty, might have engaged himself, by oath, to ship off all his troops, to quit the kingdom peaceably, and to embrace the Christian faith; (facts authorized enough, you know, in Alfred's history).") Mallet disregarded Hill's plan at this point and simply had the Danish monarch move offstage, raging in despair and madness. Another suggestion of Hill's that Mallet did not use was that of changing the names of the characters. Just as he had objected to Lycophron in Eurydice because it was unmusical--an objection Mallet accepted--Hill also objected to the harsh Danish and Saxon names: "by the way, I wish your Hubba's name had been his brother Ongar's, or else Uter, Halden; any of the Danish names, the history justifies, would have had a more poetic sound than Hubba; and do you think Eltruda quite so soft (or even quite so Saxon) as Editha would have been?" Mallet retained Eltruda, but he compromised on Hubba by not giving the Danish king a name at all.

One element that appears to be original with Mallet concerns Eltruda. In the 1740 masque she appears in the first act. In the later Alfred, her appearance is constructed more dramatically and is delayed until the second act. Corin, the shepherd, observes three Danes who have found the isle of Athelney as they pursue a lady. The beautiful woman has excited the lust of the leader of the Danes, who is really the son of the Danish king. The lady, of course, turns out to be Eltruda; Alfred rescues her and kills all three Danes as Corin describes the action to Eltruda and the audience.
All of the party hints present in the conclusion of the original masque are removed in the alteration. In the 1740 edition, the piece closes with the Hermit's speech about the future of British commerce:

I see thy commerce, Britain, grasp the world:
All nations serve thee; every foreign flood,
Subjected, pays its tribute to the Thames.

Britons, proceed, the subject Deep command,
Awe with your navies every hostile land.
In vain their threats, their armies all in vain:
They rule the balanc'd world, who rule the main.
(II. v.)

The theme of this speech is dragged in by the scruff of the neck, so to speak, because there is no preparation for the Hermit's suddenly dwelling upon the virtues of commerce, except possibly the refrain from the ode which precedes this impassioned commercial vision:

Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
Britons never will be slaves.

In the 1751 version, however, the ending is well designed. Having defeated the Danes, Alfred begins musing on ways to prevent a recurrence of such a threat to English national security. Deciding that "these roving Danes a stricter watch demand," Alfred reaches a decision:

'Tis naval strength, that must our peace assure.
Be this the first high object of my care,
To wall us round with well-appointed fleets.
(III. ix.)
Inspired by Alfred's wisdom, the Hermit undergoes a minor vision in which he sees "whole moving forests" from English hills bound for shipyards where they are to be sawed and hammered into fleets. Then the long boats beach on the wooden shores of Drury Lane and sailors dance to the appropriate refrain:

        Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves:
        BRITONS never will be slaves.

Ordinarily, Mallet would have to be congratulated for having arranged the ending in this manner. Unfortunately, the idea was Hill's, who suggested that the masque end with Alfred's forming a resolution "to build and man a fleet, and fix the safety of his too oft insulted kingdom, on the future guard and sovereignty of the ocean."20

From this discussion, it is quite evident that Mallet relied very heavily upon Hill's suggestions when he rewrote the masque after Thomson's death. In two definite instances now—Eurydice and the 1751 Alfred—one can see to what a large extent Mallet is indebted to Hill. Even in a case where no Scotsman should take an Englishman's correction, Mallet slavishly followed Hill's advice. In commenting upon one of Corin's speeches in which the shepherd speaks of "A British man," Hill suggested that the term Englishman be used: "As to the change of British into English, I am far from being so little acquainted with the right and merit of the north part of our island, as to have substituted, for the sake of an impertinent partiality, a word less just, in our days, no doubt, than was your own; but Corin, I conclude to have been a Saxon, and so the Britons, who were his
countrymen's enemies, could have no claim to a share in his compliments." In the 1751 Alfred, the word Briton has been excised from every passage except Thomson's ode.

In addition to the aid that he received from Hill, Mallet also got assistance from Bolingbroke, who rewrote the last three stanzas of "Rule, Britannia." This help from the statesman does not mean, however, that the revised Alfred is a political piece. Bolingbroke was Mallet's patron now, and Alfred may still reflect palely some of the ideals of the Patriot King, but the Prince had forfeited Mallet's service in the decade between Cliefden and Drury Lane. His labors on Mustapha, Alfred, and possibly The Life of Francis Bacon, had resulted in Mallet's obtaining a post as undersecretary to the Prince at an annual salary of six hundred pounds. But in 1748, Mallet lost the position and, undoubtedly, his loyalty to Frederick Louis.22 Certainly the 1751 Alfred shows no particular admiration of, or devotion to, the Prince.

About the time that Alfred opened at Drury Lane, the Prince was walking in the Gardens of Kew. There he caught a cold which later developed into pleurisy. At a quarter to ten one night three weeks later, the Prince was seized by a pain in the chest. Falling back upon his pillows, he became aware of an unusual odor, as though a corpse were in the room. For a minute he complained of the smell of death, and then the plans of many years came to naught as, besieged by strange odors, he turned in annoyance and died.23 Frederick was carried to his grave in a "fine and curious hearse" adorned with a
crown, the only one he ever had a chance to wear. A week later
Alfred was performed for a final time that season as a benefit for
John Havard. The Prince had been neatly clipped out of it, and
when Garrick advanced to the front of the stage to deliver the Pro-
logue, no one doubted that the masque was now nothing more than the
story of a king who long ago had "adorn'd his throne."

In the lengthy obituary for Frederick in the London Magazine,
he was referred to as one who "had made the knowledge of the consti-
tution his study and delight," a remark which perhaps has significance
in view of the constitutional theory that served as background for
the original Alfred. The following month he was obliquely compared
to the Black Prince: "In our whole story, we find but one heir-
apparent, like him hurried off in the meridian of his life, when all
the hopes of the publick centered in him; and who, like him also,
was every way disposed to graft the honour and happiness of himself
and his posterity, upon the honour and happiness of his people." In the May issue, a poetic lament "Upon FREDERICK" appeared. Al-
though the unidentified poet surely did not intend them to be, the
final lines are an ironic footnote to the Prince's life:

... tho' publick praise, that flies,
Like wat'ry bubbles blown into the skies,
(Too oft a people's pastime for a day,)
Should burst it's ball, and melt in air away.

During the nine months following Frederick's death, Boling-
broke was in constant agony with cancer of the face. Then in
December, 1751, he died at Battersea, and Mallet had to look elsewhere for political ties.

Alfred held the boards longer than any other dramatic production with which Mallet was connected. In 1753 the masque was reprinted as an opera entitled Alfred The Great, a Drama for Music. The music was advertised as being "New Composed by Mr. Arne," and several new songs were included. The cast of characters was narrowed; Devon was omitted and Edwin was changed to Prince Edward. The ode "Rule, Britannia" was reduced to four stanzas. No indication is given, however, concerning where the opera was presented; nor were the names of the players included.30

In 1773 Garrick altered the masque and it was performed for eight nights, beginning October 9. Reddish took the lead as Alfred; James Aickin, who was later to have a duel with the famous Demble, played the Hermit; and Miss Younge was Eltruda. The alteration consisted of the addition of a few songs and the omission of the spectacular scenes of the triumphal arches, the artificial sun, and the dance of the furies.31 However, to replace these effects a new and more contemporary "grand occasional" scene was introduced: "being an exact Representation of the Grand Naval Review at Portsmouth, designed by Monsr. de Loutherbourg, and vastly well executed." This representation was "greatly received," although the prompter at Drury Lane, William Hopkins, noted in his diary that "The Masque is dull."32 According to Genest, this appearance of Alfred was the first in sixteen years, a remark that, if true, means the masque was performed
about 1757. But no record of such a performance can be found.

Five years later, in 1778, the alteration was revived with Reddish again in the role of Alfred. No record of the performances at that time seems to exist. In 1781, the masque appears to have been staged for a final time. Alfred was reprinted that year with the notation: "As it is Acted at Theatres-Royal in Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden." No list of players is given, although the copy has a picture of Reddish in the role of Alfred. Dinsdale notes that in this same year Mallet's version of Alfred was reprinted in the Theatrical Magazine and that a portrait of Reddish as Alfred was also reproduced. There are no known records concerning the appearance of the masque after 1781.
NOTES

1 The complete text of the Advertisement follows: "Having been obliged to discontinue the Duke of MARLBOROUGH's History for a few months past, till I could receive from a foreign country some papers of importance; that I might not be quite idle in the meanwhile, I read over, in order to improve, this MASQUE; the first draught of which had been written by the late Mr. THOMSON, in conjunction with me, several years ago. But to fit it for the stage, I found it would be necessary to new-plan the whole, as well as write the particular scenes over again; to enlarge the design, and make ALFRED, what he should have been at first, the principal figure of his own MASQUE. This I have done; but, according to the present arrangement of the Fable, I was obliged to reject a great deal of what I had written in the other; neither could I retain, of my friend's part, more than three or four speeches, and a part of one song. I mention this expressly; that, whatever faults are found in the present performance, they may be charged, as they ought to be, entirely to my account." David Mallet, Alfred: a Masque. Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by His Majesty's Servants (London, 1751).

2 John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830 (Bath, 1832), IV, 323. Also David Erskine Baker, Biographia Dramatica (London, 1812), II, 15.

3 London Magazine, XX (1751), 51.

4 London Magazine, XX (1751), 133-134.

5 Monthly Review, IV (1751), 369.

6 James J. Lynch, Box Pit and Gallery: Stage and Society in Johnson's London (Berkley, Calif., 1953), P. 280.

7 The Thespian Dictionary (London, 1805), under "Lee (John)."


9 Genest, IV, 323.


13 See Genest, III, 533, and Lynch, p. 52.

14 Davies, II, 194-197.


16 D. C. Tovey, The Poetical Works of James Thomson (London, 1897), I, lxvii.

17 Hill, II, 163-165.

18 Hill, II, 165.

19 Hill, II, 165.

20 Hill, II, 165-166.


22 Rose Amy Davis, The Good Lord Lyttelton (Sethelhem, Perma., 1939), pp. 61, 73.

23 The London Magazine, XX (1751), 139.

24 The London Magazine, XX (1751), 185.

25 Genest, IV, 327.
26. London Magazine, XX (1751), 139.

27. London Magazine, XX (1751), 175.


31. See footnote on p. 1 of both the 1773 and 1778 editions of Alfred: a Masque.


33. Genest, V, 394.

34. Dinsdale, p. 32.
CHAPTER VII

BRITANNIA: PATRIOTISM AND DRUNKENNESS

When Bolingbroke died in December, 1751, he left all his writings, published and unpublished, to Mallet, who spent the next three years preparing them for the press. The nobleman's works were not published until March 6, 1754. During this time, Mallet was involved in a lawsuit with the printer Richard Franklin, who also had a claim to the works. As a result of the lawsuit and the burden of editing Bolingbroke's papers, Mallet produced practically no literary work until the masque Britannia appeared at Drury Lane on May 9, 1755.

Britannia is a very slight affair which Mallet seems to have written primarily as an appeal to patriotism. In 1755 England was on the verge of war with France, a war which was to break out the following year. Although the conflict had not officially opened in Europe, it had actually already begun in India and America. Clashes had occurred between English and French colonial forces in 1754, and two months after Britannia was staged Braddock suffered his disastrous defeat at the hands of French and Indian enemies in the ill-fated campaign against Fort Duquesne. The English populace was eager for war, a fact easily established by the numerous poetic exhortations that appeared in the various magazines during the months of 1755. A typical example of the sentiments expressed during this time can be seen in the following song, which was a favorite at Vauxhall:
Smile, smile Britannia smile,
Thy genius comes again
To guard thy fruitful isle,
And thunder o'er the main;
Thy gallant sons disdain their ease,
Now crown thee mistress of the seas,
Now crown, &c.

While dauntless they advance,
And bid the cannons roar,
They'll scourge the pride of France,
And shake the Gallick shore.
With courage never known to slaves,
With courage, &c.

The decks all stain'd with blood,
The bullets wing'd with fate,
The wide and restless flood
Cannot their rage abate.
In Anson and in Warren wake
The souls of Russel and of Blake,
The souls, &c.

Britons pursue the blow,
Like sons of freedom fight;
Convince the haughty foe,
That you'll maintain your right.
Defiance bid to France and Spain,
Assert your empire o'er the main.
Assert, &c.

The masque was performed as an afterpiece to Hill's Zara, which was periodically revived throughout the century. The music for Britannia was composed by Dr. Arne, whose talents were probably more appreciated by Mallet after the disastrous experiment with the amateur composers of the Apollo Society in 1751. In all probability, the music was the best part of the performance, for the masque is distinguished by neither lyrics nor scenic effects. As the piece opens, Britannia is seen reclining against a cliff, her shield, helmet, and spear strewn negligently on the ground--signifying
undoubtedly that the British were not prepared for war with France. In accord with the spectacle of defeat, or at least inaction, the landscape is gloomy and lowering and the music is soft and plaintive.

The Genius of Britain, who so effectively routed the furies in Alfred, now appears. The sex of the Genius has changed, for in Britannia he appears as she, played by Miss Isabella Young, a bewitching nymph whose arrival brings a blaze of glorious light and an array of gay and animating airs. The Genius pleads with Britannia to "Grasp thy shield, and shake thy spear!" But Britannia is fearful that she cannot rise to defeat the enemy until:

My jarring sons unite,
To do their sacred country right!
(i.)

Thereupon Mars, in complete armor and with a red star on his helmet, "appears in air." Mars was played by Beard, who also doubled as the Boatswain, a bit of stage economy which unconsciously resembled the statesmanship of Pelham, whose devotion to a balanced budget had resulted in seriously reducing both the British army and navy by 1755. Mars calls for the sound of trumpet and "thundering drum" to renew the martial heat "In every BRITON'S every vein," a grammatical repetition which Mallet must have felt the dire state of British arms demanded. A squad of soldiers led by a singing recruiting "serjeant" answers the call of Mars, and Britannia fondly addresses them as her "bold rough sons" (iii.).

Having accounted for the army, Mallet then turns his attention
to the navy. Triton, played by Vernon, rises out of the waves and sounds his shell to signal the approach of Neptune, played by Mr. Champness. Neptune expresses his devotion to Britannia in a song which is appropriately climaxed by the arrival of sailors and a boat-swain. After the sailors sing "ours is the bottom, on which to rely" (vi.), a couple of fleet followers named Nancy and Sukey come on stage to bid the boys goodbye. The masque closes with Britannia’s final speech, in which she sends soldiers, sailors, and possibly even doxies, off to war:

Go then; the call of glory each attend:  
At home, abroad, your country’s rights defend.  
While this great aim, united, you pursue,  
And BRITAIN is, to BRITAIN, nobly true,  
Bear high your hopes to conquest and renown:  
The cause, that heaven inspires, success shall crown!  
(vii.)

From this résumé, one can see that the masque is only a trifle. Perhaps Mallet recognized it as such, and for this reason declined to have his name attached to it when Britannia was first printed. The music must have been acceptable since Dr. Arne’s name was included in the notice printed in the Gentleman’s Magazine.\(^3\) Knowledge of the authorship, however, was not a well-kept secret. The Monthly Review stated that "Mr. David Mallet is the reputed author of this piece,"\(^4\) and the Scots Magazine echoed that attribution.\(^5\)

Nevertheless, the masque was performed six times during May, 1755.\(^6\) According to Davies, the piece was a success because of the
portrayal of Britannia by Mrs. Jefferson: "the most complete figure in beauty of countenance and symmetry of form I ever beheld." Mrs. Jefferson had a very short stage career, appearing at Drury Lane only for five years, from 1753 to 1758. She died suddenly at Plymouth while watching a dance. She was a tall woman and, despite her beauty, often played the parts of old men in comedies, such as Fodlewife in The Old Bachelor and Sir Jealous Traffic in The Busy Body.7

To enhance the masque, a Prologue was written, which Garrick delivered in the character of a drunken sailor. According to Johnson and Baker, Mallet and Garrick collaborated in writing the Prologue, and Davies says that Garrick composed it in part.8 In the printed edition of the masque, the Prologue is solely attributed to Garrick, but in the collected 1759 Works a footnote to the Prologue says "some of the lines" were written by Garrick.9 Whatever the correct circumstances of the authorship of the Prologue, there is no doubt that it was an instantaneous success. The popularity of it was so great, Murphy claims, that the public often demanded the performance on nights when Britannia was not acted. Genest disputes this claim, and the evidence seems to support him since there is no record of Garrick's having given the Prologue without the performance of Britannia.10 There is also some doubt concerning whether or not the Prologue was given on the night of the first performance of Britannia. The bills do not mention the Prologue until the second performance of the masque, when Britannia was an afterpiece to Vanbrugh's The Mistake.11 However, in the Prologue Garrick, as the drunken sailor,
reads a playbill advertising "SARAH . . . To which will be added a new MASQUE." It seems likely that had the Prologue been given for the first time on the second night, the playbill that the sailor reads would not have mentioned Zara. Notice of the Prologue was probably added to the bills when Britannia was performed after Garrick's great success that first night.

Since Britannia was performed at a time when anti-French feeling was running high, the Prologue capitalized on that sentiment. As the drunken sailor, Garrick staggered about the stage, muttering imprecations on "mounseer":

What! shall we sons of beef and freedom stoop,  
Or low'r our flag to slavery and soop?  
What! shall these parly-vous make such a racket,  
And I not lend a hand, to lace their jacket?  
Still shall old England be your Frenchman's butt?  
Whene'er he shuffles, we should always cut.

The sailor then notices the playbill and decides to take his girl to the tragedy, an experience which will not bother him since

As for me,  
I'll sleep as sound, as if I were at sea.

Upon uttering this piece of acute dramatic criticism, the sailor notices the name of the masque, a name which appeals to his patriotic heart. He gives three cheers to Britannia and starts to leave the stage. Then he pauses to give advice to the members of the audience:

I wish you land-men tho', would leave your tricks,  
Your factions, parties, and damn'd politicks:
And like us, honest tars, drink, fight, and sing;
True to your-selves, your country, and your King.

The reception of Britannia was modest. It was given slightly more than a half-dozen lines in the Monthly Review, and the reviewer for that journal admitted that he had not taken time to see the masque, though "the music, machinery, and scenes, we imagine, must be pleasing." After guessing that Mallet was the author, the reviewer goes on to suppose that "he probably considered it as too much a trifle for him to affix his name to." This statement was tempered by the opinion that Britannia "is not unworthy the pen of that ingenious gentleman," a remark that was kinder in those days than in these.12

The Prologue was reprinted in the London Magazine, the Scots Magazine, and the Gentleman's Magazine,13 but the copy in the latter differs somewhat from the copy prefixed to the printed edition of the masque, because it was taken down in shorthand on the third and fourth nights of the performance. The principal difference is that the sailor's dramatic criticism of tragedy is lengthened by two lines which are omitted in the printed copy. The lines, which follow, certainly would not appeal to any lover of tragedy at that time:

I'll skip the names--I would not give a pin--
Damm all their actors, except Harlequin.

In addition to the Prologue, the London Magazine reprinted two songs from Britannia.14 It also gave a brief account of "this curious piece" so that the country readers would be able to form some
The account did not treat Britannia gently:

The curtain rises to soft musick, and discovers Britannia reclining pensively against a cliff, amid the playhouse gloom of the lamps drawn down by trap-doors. But the gloom is suddenly dispersed, the lamps arise, and while the musick changes into lively airs, the Genius of Britain appears to Britannia, who sings her two or three songs, and then tells her,

Lo! where descending from on high,
The radiant god of war draws nigh.

Upon which enters Mars with a sword and shield, and sings a song full of drums, guns, and trumpets, which mighty naturally introduces a recruiting serjeant, who comes on the stage to beat up for voluntiers. Thus Britannia, we see, is provided with men for the land service. Then a green-haired triton comes to inform her that Neptune is coming, who immediately rises from the sea, and, after a song, introduces a boatswain and his crew, who come to tell us in rhyme, that they have true hearts, and sound bottoms. Then, because there must be women in all dramatick pieces, enter the sailors doxies, who assure them that they do not want to detain them in Wapping or Redriff, but would have them go and beat the French: To which the sailors agree, only saying with one of the kings of Brentford--"But first let's have a dance," with which this extra-ordinary performance is concluded.

Britannia was played three times during the following season. In February, 1756, it was the afterpiece to Zara and The Alchemist, and in March it was again coupled with The Mistake when both were played for the benefit of Beard, who had done such yeoman service in the first performance of Britannia. In May, 1757, it was revived once more when it was played with The Suspicious Husband. On that occasion the two pieces were presented for the benefit of the Marine Society in an attempt to raise funds for "cloathing friendless Boys and Men for the Sea." For that appropriate purpose, Britannia was furnished with an "Epilogue suitable to the Occasion, to be spoke at the head of a Number of Boys cloath'd in Sailors Habits given them by
the society." An interesting footnote to this performance for the Marine Society is that two years later Mallet published a poem celebrating the charitable organization. Entitled *Tyburn: To the Marine Society*, the poem presents a humorous and reproachful complaint by Tyburn-tree against the activities of the Society, who has robbed the gallows of many potential victims:

My property you basely steal,  
Which ev'n a British oak can feel.

According to the Advertisement of the poem, by 1759 the Marine Society had "collected, clothed, and fitted out for the sea-service, 5452 grown men, 4511 boys: in all 9963 persons." Mallet's poem is a clever compliment to these impressive statistics, though it does not really warrant the high praise given it by the *Critical Review*: a "piece, in which we meet with abundance of arch irony and manly satire, a good deal of wit, and a great deal of humour." 

The masque was on the boards for the final times in May, 1758, when it appeared twice. There are no records of its having been staged after that date. It slipped into the limbo for forgotten plays, and the judgment Davies passed upon *Britannia* is probably as accurate and fair an appraisal as can be made of the piece.

The masque has little variety in it, nor does it charm either with power of imagination or energy of sentiment. The Britons are called bold and brave in one place, rough and honest in another. The plainest is the truest heart--Let not Punic art amuse thee--Let not Punic oaths abuse thee, &c. With such trite thoughts and hackneyed metre does the Britannia abound. However, Mallet gained what he wanted by it; it was acted a few nights, and played for the benefit of the author.
NOTES


2. London Magazine, XXIV (1755), 292.


5. Scots Magazine, XVII (1755), 270.


15 London Magazine, XXIV (1755), 239.


17 MacMillan, p. 56.

18 Critical Review, VII (1755), 465.


20 Davies, II, 52.
CHAPTER VIII

ELVIRA: PEACE AND PENSION

Perhaps the best-known story about Mallet is the apocryphal tale of the trickery he employed to persuade Garrick to produce Elvira. The story is told by both of Garrick's early biographers, Murphy and Davies. The account below is that of Davies; it is more detailed than Murphy's, and the incidental material which Davies introduced (particularly the last paragraph) is so plausible that one can bring himself only with reluctance to disbelieve the story, even when faced with proof of its falsity.

When he had finished his Elvira, he cast about in what manner he could best prevail upon Mr. Garrick to act it. He knew that his revived Eurydice, and his masque of Britania, had done nothing for the managers, though he had gained something by them himself. He waited on Mr. Garrick, in the usual intercourse of friendship, with Elvira in his pocket.

After the common salute, Mr. Garrick asked him what it was that employed his studies. "Why, upon my word," said Mallet, "I am eternally fatigued with preparing and arranging materials for the Life of the great Duke of Marlborough; all my nights and days are occupied with that history; and you know, Mr. Garrick, that it is a very bright and interesting period in the British annals. But hark you, my friend! do you know that I have found out a pretty snug niche in it for you?"—"Heavens! how's that? a niche for me?" said the manager, turning quickly upon him, his eyes sparkling with unusual fire. "How the devil could you bring me into the history of John Churchill Duke of Marlborough?"—"That's my business, my dear friend," rejoined Mallet; "but I tell you, I have done it."—"Well, faith, Mallet, you have the art of surprising your friends in the most unexpected and politest manner; but why won't you, now, who are so well qualified, write something for the stage? You should relax. Interpone tuis—ha! you know! for I am sure the theatre is a mere matter of diversion, a pleasure for you."—

"Why, faith," said the other, "to tell you the truth, I have, whenever I could rob the Duke of an hour or so, employed myself in adapting La Motte's Ines de Castro to the English stage, and
here it is." The manager embraced Elvira with rapture, and brought it forward with all expedition.

A gentleman of the law, who could not miss such an opportunity of laughing at Mr. Garrick's vanity, met him one day, and told him he had been applied to by the booksellers to publish an edition of the Statutes at Large, and he hoped he should find a snug niche in them to introduce him.

Actually, Mallet was much more direct with Garrick than the story indicates. On August 3, 1762, he wrote the manager, complaining of his financial condition and stating that he was being forced to sell a farm in order to meet certain debts. He tells Garrick that he has recently written a play, a drama which is an adaptation of "one of the most interesting plays that was ever exhibited on ... [The stage] ... of Paris." He then asks "in the name of our friendship" that Garrick consider producing Elvira. Garrick had evidently contemplated reviving Alfred, for Mallet remarks at the conclusion of the letter: "Alfred cannot interfere: it is no more than any other old play revived." If Garrick was considering bringing back Alfred, he must have given up the plan after hearing about Elvira, since there are no records at present of the masque's appearance during the 1762-1763 season.

Mallet's directness in approaching Garrick is an indication of the intimacy of their acquaintance. They had first met, as has been seen, during the negotiations concerning Hill's Merope. A year later, they became neighbors for a short while. In March, 1748, six months before the Merope affair began, Mallet and his family had moved from London to Putney, in Surrey, presumably to be near Bolingbroke at Battersea. In July of the following year, Garrick
married Violetti, the famous Viennese singer and dancer, shortly thereafter, Garrick and his bride honeymooned at Merton, nearby Putney. In August, 1749, Hill wrote to Mallet in Putney: "I am glad to hear, that you have Mr. Garrick, for your neighbour, and that you are so both charmed with his late choice." This remark suggests that Mallet and his wife had visited the newlywed couple. During the 1750's, of course, Mallet and Garrick would have had contact when Alfred and Britannia were produced.

Mallet's worry about his financial condition is a recurrent theme in his correspondence during the late 1750's and the early 1760's. Though the death of Bolingbroke had left him without a patron, the legacy of the nobleman's works promised much financial gain. But Mallet's dream of getting, as Davies says, "golden mountains" through the editing of Bolingbroke's writings proved to be illusory, for his first edition was not sold off in twenty years. When this bitter fact became evident, Mallet assiduously began to court politicians. Perusal of his letters from 1755 (when it became obvious that he was not to profit from his edition of Bolingbroke's works) until 1763 (when Elvira resulted in his appointment as keeper of the books of entries for ships in the Port of London) indicates that Mallet pursued a constant and untiring search for preferment. This hope of acquiring governmental office apparently dictated and controlled his literary activity for the rest of his life. Mallet obviously was quite willing to do anything that might cause those in high office to notice him favorably. During
these years, his letters were mainly addressed to the Duke of Newcastle, though three of them in 1755-1756 were appeals to Philip Yorke, 1st Earl of Hardwicke.

When Henry Pelham died in 1754, his elder brother, the Duke of Newcastle, soon became Prime Minister and remained the nominal head of the cabinet until Bute took the position in 1762. During much of this time, William Pitt was actually the head of the government. He and Newcastle formed an uneasy alliance: Pitt controlled the military and strategic activities of England in the Seven Years War, and Newcastle managed the financial and domestic affairs of the nation. Pitt, however, did not assume power until the middle of 1757. Prior to that time, the war went badly with England, and as early as 1756 Mallet was enlisted as a pamphleteer in the defence of the administration. In June of that year, he volunteered his efforts to Newcastle to help "strengthen the hand of the ministry at this critical juncture." Newcastle obviously accepted his offer, for in the autumn of 1756 Mallet's *The Conduct of the Ministry Impartially Examined* appeared, which attempted to defend the measures taken by the government in the crucial opening months of the war. According to the *Monthly Review*, which describes the author as "a very able one," Mallet's shilling octavo is "of all the pamphlets which either the passions or interests of men have lately given rise to . . . [the] . . . most worthy of our consideration." Several months later, Mallet's pamphlet on Admiral Byng was published, which justified the sentence of the Admiral by
defending the twelfth article of war. Johnson claims that the pamphlet gained Mallet a pension from the government, but Dinsdale points out that there is no evidence to support this statement. Indeed, Mallet's begging letters during the years after these publications clearly imply that the poet had no governmental position.

The letters to Newcastle and Hardwicke show that Mallet had a strange and ludicrous penchant for espionage and intrigue. Shortly after returning from France and Holland (where he had gone in 1755, perhaps to get material for his life of Marlborough), Mallet wrote Hardwicke, offering to give whatever information he had picked up in Paris "concerning . . . the temper of the people, among whom I have lately passed four months." In July, 1756, he wrote Hardwicke again, offering to employ the servant of a friend as a messenger to English agents in France: "I have here with me a French servant, from Paris . . . the man is to carry back with him a couple of horses for his Master; one of the farmers general of the French king's revenue, with whom I was intimately acquainted, and with whom I correspond still. Should this incident suggest anything to your Lordship and the Duke of Newcastle; I will detain the man, as long as shall be judged necessary, under different pretences, that may be started from day to day, easily and without affectation." Mallet evidently had a number of friends and acquaintances on the continent with whom he corresponded, because he sometimes sent information from their letters to Newcastle and Hardwicke in an
attempt to ingratiate himself with those noblemen. On November 17, 1755, he sent Hardwicke a letter he had received from a Mr. de Silhouette; in February, 1758, he forwarded to Newcastle a paragraph from a letter he had received from Paris so that the Prime Minister could judge "whether our enemies really intend all they threaten here." In May, 1759, he sent Newcastle another extract from a letter from Paris. In his desire to serve the ministry, Mallet even offered to become a spy himself. Dorothea, his daughter by his first wife, had married a Genoese diplomat named Celesia, and in the early part of 1759 she planned a journey from England to Genoa. Mallet wrote Newcastle that he could easily accompany Dorothea for part of the journey should the Minister have any task in mind that Mallet could perform: "Nothing can be more natural, nor less liable to suspicion, than a father's accompanying on such an occasion, part of her way, a daughter, whom he may possibly never see again." There is no evidence that Newcastle took him up on this offer.

When intrigue and pamphleteering failed to secure preferment for him, Mallet turned to flattery. In 1760 Newcastle was named first Lord of the Treasury, and Mallet sent congratulations. He also mentions: "Should I happen to outlive you, my Lord, this, and some other events to which I have been a witness, shall be placed in their true and proper points of lights." This naked invitation to become his Grace's biographer undoubtedly failed to excite Newcastle's attention: the Duke could easily remember that the world had been
waiting nearly sixteen years for Marlborough's life. By 1761 the
government had still neglected to reward Mallet, although he had
been attending Newcastle and Hardwicke for seven years. Mallet
must have decided to be much more direct with the Duke, because in
June of that year he sent a letter to Andrew Stone, Newcastle's
private secretary, that was an outright plea for assistance. 22
Mallet reviewed all of the services he had rendered the government
and then remarked upon his own precarious financial situation,
which was desperate because he had to maintain three households:
his wife was ill and at a spa for her health; his daughters, in the
absence of their mother, were in boarding school; and he had to
maintain himself in London. He concludes the letter with this
demand: "My views are moderate; and some one, of the many places
in his disposal of three or four hundreds pounds a year . . . would
make me gratefully easy as his friend and servant." 23 For a time
Mallet expected good results from the petition. Stone told him that
Newcastle had received his application "in the most favourable
manners." 24 Overjoyed, Mallet sent a gracious letter of appreciation
to the Duke, 25 but this direct appeal eventually gained Mallet
nothing.

At this point, Mallet became desperate. Four days after
Richard Franklin, who held the post of commissioner of taxes, died
on September 21, 1761, 26 Mallet wrote a letter reminding the Duke of
Newcastle that Franklin was dead and that the position he had
occupied was now open. 27 But months went by and Mallet was not
appointed. Perhaps believing that the lapse of four days between Franklin's death and his request had been too long and had allowed someone else to petition for the job with more success, Mallet obviously decided that at the next opportunity he would not be so tardy in appealing to the Duke. Therefore, in January, 1762, when he heard of the serious illness of another governmental official, Mallet wasted no time and wrote the following to Newcastle: "I have just learnt that Sir Francis Eyles, one of the commissioners of the Victualling Office, who has been some time at Naples for his health, is now extremely ill."28 He begged the Duke to promise him that he would be Eyles' successor. This appeal was also ignored.

In May, 1762, a deathblow was struck at all Mallet's plans. Newcastle announced his intention to retire from office as Lord of the Treasury. Mallet sent the nobleman a piteous letter begging the Duke to make some provision for him before retiring.29 Again Mallet was disregarded. Three months later he wrote to Garrick about Elvira.

II

During the early years of the 1760's, however, Mallet apparently began to doubt that Newcastle would ever bestow a governmental pension on him, and he was cautious enough to begin courting the favor of the Earl of Bute, who came into prominence on the succession of George III. George II died suddenly on October 25, 1760,
and the crown passed to his twenty-two year old grandson—the young prince whom Quin had coached a decade before for the production of Cato at Leicester House. The new king differed from his two Hanoverian predecessors. Both George I and George II had been, in a sense, foreigners: Hanoverian princes who sat uneasily on an English throne and who felt more at home in Hanover than in England. But George III was born and reared in England; he had never visited Hanover, and he was not subject to affections for a distant ancestral home. In his first Speech from the Throne, he uttered a sentiment indicating the extent that his English allegiance separated him from the previous Georges: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton." 

George III also differed from his predecessors by attempting to reassert monarchical supremacy over Parliament. When his father, Frederick Louis, died in 1751, control of George's education passed into the hands of his mother, the Princess Augusta. She had come from the small court of Saxe-Gotha, one of the many tiny German states where the power of the king was absolute, and she endeavored to inculcate this ideal of absolutism in her young son. In addition, the Scottish Earl of Bute was made George's tutor shortly after Frederick's death. In directing the prince's education, Bute had him read Blackstone's Commentaries (in manuscript, for they were not published until 1765), which set forth the legal powers of the crown—assigning them to the king, although in practice they were exercised by the cabinet. The prince also read Bolingbroke's
Idea of a Patriot King, which presented the image of a truly national king who prevents the tyranny of the party system by ruling above party and group interest. Because of this education, George III came to the throne determined to break down the system of cabinet government erected during the previous two reigns, the system which caused his grandfather once to exclaim: "Ministers are the king in this country." The first twenty years of the young monarch's rule were marked by a continuous and effective attempt to make a reality his mother's exhortation: "George, be a king!" 31

With the accession of George III, Bute began to maneuver into a position of power. In November, less than a month after the death of George II, Bute was given the relatively minor post of Groom of the Stole. 32 In the early part of 1761, the king managed to get Bute appointed as joint Secretary of State with Pitt. This appointment drove a wedge between Pitt and Newcastle: the Duke had agreed to Bute's elevation, but Pitt knew nothing of it until it was an accomplished fact. During this year the issue of peace became a major political controversy: the king, Bute, and the Tories desired to bring the French war to a close, but Pitt wished to push the conflict with exceptional vigor. In the latter part of the year, Pitt discovered a secret alliance between France and Spain, and demanded that England declare war on Spain. When his demands were not met, he resigned in October, 1761. Pitt's resignation made Newcastle's continuance as nominal head of the government extremely difficult, and in May, 1762, the Duke finally decided to retire.
His position as first Lord of the Treasury was assumed by Bute, who now became the open leader of the ministry.\textsuperscript{33}

When Bute's rise to prominence became obvious in 1761, Mallet wrote \textit{Truth in Rhyme—"a pretty court-compliment,"} as the \textit{Monthly Review} calls it.\textsuperscript{34} In the Advertisement prefixed to the poem, Mallet gives an extract from a speech by George III to both houses of Parliament as "the fullest and best explanation of the author's meaning" in the poem.

In consequence of the act passed in the reign of my late glorious predecessor, King William the Third, for settling the succession to the crown in my family, the commissions of the judges have been made during their good behavior, their offices have determined upon the demise of the crown, or at the expiration of six months afterwards, in every instance of that nature which has happened.

I look upon the independency and uprightness of the judges of the land as essential to the impartial administration of justice; as one of the best securities of the rights and liberties of my loving subjects; and as most conducive to the honour of the crown. And I come now to recommend this interesting object to the consideration of parliament, in order that such farther provision, as shall be most expedient, may be made, for securing the judges in the enjoyment of their offices, during their good behaviour, notwithstanding any such demise.

This passage and the position it takes toward the independence of judges has an interesting connection with the \textit{Alfred} that was performed years before in the garden at Cliefden. As noted in a previous chapter, the masque had as its background a theory of British constitutional development which presented contemporary English government as a decayed form of that established by Alfred. The discussion (presented in the pages of the \textit{London Magazine}) that developed this theory paid much attention to the independence of
judges, insisting that originally the judgeships had been free from but the influence of the crown that later they became a property which the crown bestowed upon its willing hirelings. This attack upon control of justices by the monarch was, in reality, an attack upon the king's minister, whose power to select magistrates could also give him power, in the form of patronage, to influence parliamentary elections. 35 George III's desire to perpetuate the judges in their positions regardless of a change in reigns is, therefore, a manifestation of his intention to weaken the strength of the cabinet system of government; furthermore, it is evidence that he was attempting to put into practice some of the precepts developed and set forth by the Opposition in its long struggle with Walpole. As a result, Mallet's poem to the young King endorses principles that the poet espoused in Mustapha and Alfred.

Truth in Rhyme begins with a restatement of the myth of Astraea, the goddess of justice, who lived on earth during the golden age but who later withdrew to the sky because of the wickedness of mankind. Stellified in the constellation Virgo:

She long has ceased on earth to shine; 
Or if, at times she deigns a smile,
'Tis chief o'er Britain's favour'd isle.

Her smiles are caused by her having found in Britain "what fables paint, what poets sing . . . a patriot-king!" The goddess reads the king's mind and finds "his plan, to blest mankind": his intention to destroy the cabinet system, presumably. In order that
"the plan now brightening in his mind . . . may shine through
nations yet unborn," Astraea summons the muse Urania to record the
great event. But Urania wonders whether the modest king might not
disclaim her praise. She decides to transmit the song she had
composed in George III's honor through "the monarch's and the muse's
friend." In the final four lines of the poem, Mallet manages to
compliment his future patron, as well as the king, for Urania's
problem of selecting an intermediary is solved as:

After thinking o'er
The men in place near half a score,
To strike at once all scandal mute,
The goddess found, and fix'd on Bute.

This poem is the first instance to be found of Mallet's
turning his attention to the Earl of Bute. The obvious courting
of the Scottish Earl caused the Monthly Review to remark: "a
certain noble Lord makes almost as good a figure as his Majesty." Smollett's Critical Review, a supporter of Bute, considered the
reference to the aristocrat in a much more kindly light: "These
verses are easy and elegant, enriched with sentiment, and conclude
with a well-turned compliment to the earl of Bute, a nobleman,
surely entitled to the regard and veneration of all those who admire
and love the extraordinary talents and transcendent virtue of their
sovereign."
Truth in Rhyme appeared slightly more than a year before Mallet wrote to Garrick about Elvira. After Garrick had accepted the tragedy for production, Mallet wrote to Bute in November, 1762, informing him that Elvira had been written during the preceding summer and that it was to be produced, perhaps before Christmas, and requesting that the nobleman allow its being dedicated to him. Although Bute was to say of Mallet later: "I own I have not a great opinion of his taste," he evidently granted the request, because by the end of the month a letter from Mallet to John Gilbert Cooper, Jr., indicates that the Earl had accepted the dedication.

Originally, the play had been scheduled to appear on December 11, 1762, with Garrick as Don Alonso, Holland as Don Pedro, Mrs. Cibber as Elvira, and Mrs. Pritchard as the Queen. But difficulties arose almost immediately, and appearance of the tragedy was delayed until January. The character of the Queen is unsavoury, and Mrs. Pritchard at first refused the role. The story is told that Mallet, attempting to persuade her, compared the part of the Queen to that of Lady Macbeth: "Why, Madam," he is supposed to have said to the actress, "you have always played Lady Macbeth; just such another part as this I designed for you, and yet you never complained of the former." Whether or not this argument convinced Mrs. Pritchard, she eventually accepted the part.
During the time that the tragedy was in rehearsal, Edward Gibbon (then a young man and a friend of Mallet's) assisted the actors and the author in the green-room. Gibbon was surprised at the startling versatility of Mrs. Pritchard, who was rehearsing for two plays simultaneously. In the green-room she portrayed a furious and vengeful queen; on the stage she practiced the part of Lady Medway, a coquettish matron in Frances Sheridan's *The Discovery*, a comedy which opened two days after *Elvira* closed. Gibbon was struck with Mrs. Pritchard's ability to pass from the emotional turbulence of tragedy to the sprightliness of comedy as, alternating between the green-room and the stage, she rehearsed both roles during the same afternoon.

Once Mrs. Pritchard had been persuaded to take the part of the Queen, other problems beset the tragedy. The opening had to be postponed when Mrs. Cibber became ill; as soon as she recovered, Mrs. Pritchard caught a cold and the opening was postponed once more. These repeated delays forced the opening perilously close to Christmas, an unfavorable time for introducing a new play because the theatres were closed nearly a week during the holidays. Garrick suggested that *Elvira* be played four nights before the holidays and then reopened in January, but Mallet refused to consider such an arrangement. On December 28, he wrote to Edward Jerningham and gave his reason for not agreeing to Garrick's scheme: "I would not give Elvira to be baited by a mere hockley-in-the-hole-audience; and so her fate is postponed, till the holy days and drunkenness are
over. I shall not however be surprised, nor consequently much disappointed if I have reserved her for a set of spectators, who tho they may be dignified by higher titles, and wear better cloaths, have yet as much of the bear-garden in their taste and inclinations as the very butchers who used to frequent the other theatres. 47

Mallet's objection was legitimate. During the first half of the theatrical season, from September until the beginning of the Christmas holidays, performances were primarily arranged for the citizen rather than for the man of quality. Old favorites—dramatic standbys—were usually played at this time. The holiday season was marked by the production of spectacles and pantomimes. After the festivities were over, fashionable people returned to town in early January, and the performances during the first two months of the year were tailored for their tastes. To have played Elvira for four nights prior to the Christmas season would have forced the tragedy to compete with forthcoming spectacles for the tradesman's shilling. To have tried then to revive it in January would have caused Elvira to lose its appeal as a new play that must be seen by the gentry.

Mallet's arguments must have persuaded Garrick, for the tragedy's opening was delayed until the latter part of January. On December 30, Mallet wrote Andrew Millar of Elvira's postponement. He untruthfully says that he refused to allow the play to be brought on sooner for Millar's sake, because he was fearful that an early production might "damp the sale of the play." In the same letter, Mallet also
gives instructions that three copies of *Elvira* are to be bound for
the king, the queen, and Bute.

IV

*Elvira* opened on the night of January 19, 1763. Present in
the audience were two young men—Gibbon and Boswell—whose names
would later far outshine that of the author of *Elvira*. Both Gibbon
and Boswell have recorded their experiences on this opening night,
and their accounts are doubly interesting since Gibbon attended as
Mallet's friend and Boswell as Mallet's enthusiastic enemy. 50

Boswell was accompanied by his two Scottish friends, George
Dempster and Andrew Erskine. Dempster was a lawyer who had gone
into politics and who had been a member of Parliament since 1761;
Erskine was a young, poverty-stricken nobleman whose father had
unfortunately taken part in the rebellion of 1745. 51 Both young men
were very close to Boswell, and they had readily fallen in with his
"whim" to damn *Elvira* on its first night. On the morning of January
19, the three young men met to spend the day together before attend-
ing the theatre that evening. After breakfast they went to the top
of London Bridge to view the partly-frozen Thames. 52 The winter of
1762-1763 was excessively cold. A "frost" had set in on Christmas
day and continued until the end of January. 53 From the bridge
Boswell and his friends viewed with "pleasing horror" the enormous
shoals of ice repeatedly crashing against each other in the river.
Sufficiently chilled after their experience on the bridge, the young Scotsmen had beefsteaks at an inn and then, sipping port, drank damnation to Elvira and eternal remorse to Mallet. To make certain that they were well fortified for the anticipated struggle, they had coffee and tea before going to the theatre.\(^{54}\)

The doors of Drury Lane opened at four o'clock. At that hour Boswell and his party entered the theatre and took their station in the center of the pit. Each carried an oaken cudgel in his hand and a shrill-sounding cat-call in his pocket. Since the three men were stuffed with beefsteak, white wine, port, coffee, and tea, Boswell may have mistaken indigestion for the "generous resentment" which burned in their breasts against "dullness and impudence." At any rate, they sat expectantly, waiting to act as "the swift ministers of vengeance."\(^{55}\)

About the same time, Gibbon and his father went to the Rose Tavern, which was located in the passage way of the entrance to Drury Lane. There they found Mallet and about thirty of his friends. The Gibbons joined Mallet's party, and after dinner the entire group entered the pit in one great body—considerably outnumbering the slender forces of Boswell, Dempster, and Erskine.\(^{56}\) The house was well crowded by five o'clock. Boswell's group called for "Roast Beef of Old England," a popular patriotic song from Fielding's Grub-Street Opera, which was usually called for on first nights and those nights when the temper of the audience was ugly. The musicians did not comply with the request, and Boswell saw this refusal as a "bad omen"
for their chances of damming the play.

The time for the performance arrived and Holland appeared on stage to deliver the Prologue, which Boswell considered "politically stupid." The Prologue had been hurriedly written by Mallet after he had rejected the one composed at Garrick's request by John Gilbert Cooper, Jr., the insignificant son of John Cooper, a good classical scholar and author of a life of Socrates. The younger Cooper's piece incensed Mallet almost as much as Mallet's Epilogue had angered Dr. Young ten years before. After Cooper sent the Prologue to him, Mallet indignantly returned it with this remark: "You ended the prologue without saying anything at all of the tragedy it is to usher in; an omission so unusual that I can hardly persuade myself it happened by mere accident." In all probability, Cooper had not given the Prologue his best effort because Elvira espoused a political cause with which he was unsympathetic. In rejecting the piece, Mallet mentions (perhaps spitefully) that the play will be inscribed to a minister "not much in your favour." 58

Boswell, Dempster, and Erskine hissed the Prologue and several of the audience joined them, but the disapproval apparently passed unnoticed. During the first act they did what they could to cause a disturbance, but the audience gradually quieted down. According to Gibbon, there was no reaction but applause from the spectators, who deservedly cried up the play despite "the malice of party, Mallet's nation, connections and indeed impudence." 59 Boswell and his friends were disconcerted and their impetuosity was dampened. During the
remainder of the play, they were obliged to lay aside ... [their]
... laudable undertaking in the cause of genius and the cause of
modesty," because it was "needless to oppose that furious many-headed
monster, the multitude, as it has been very well painted." When the
play ended, Mrs. Cibber—who, as Elvira, had just expired in the arms
of Holland—was resurrected in time to dash upon the stage and
deliver the Epilogue. Written by Garrick, this final speech sets
forth the necessary reasons for having a comic Epilogue conclude a
tragedy. In view of the enormous appetites shown by Boswell,
Dempster, and Erskine during the day, Mrs. Cibber's lines have more
than a usual pertinence.

Ladies and Gentlemen—'Tis so ill bred—
We have no Epilogue, because I'm dead;
For he, our Bard, with frenzy-rolling eye,
Swears you shan't laugh, when he has made you cry.
At which I gave his sleeve a gentle pull,
Suppose they should not cry, and should be dull;
In such a case, 'twould surely do no harm,
A little lively nonsense taken warm;
On critic's stomachs delicate and queasy,
'Twill ev'n make a heavy meal sit easy.

After the play Boswell and his two friends naturally went to
supper. They dined at the home of Lady Betty Macfarlane, Erskine's
sister. There they spent a pleasant time throwing out "many
excellent sallies of humour and wit and satire on Malloch and his
play." Stunned by their wit, they made plans to bring out a pamphlet
attacking the tragedy.62 The next day the friends met and drew up a
draft of their observations; the manuscript was taken to the shop of
William Flexney, the publisher of Charles Churchill, who agreed to
bring it out. On the following day, however, Boswell was afraid that the pamphlet was "too abusive," and he persuaded Dempster to go with him to Flexney's in order to stop its publication. The publisher agreed that it had less cleverness than scurrility," and the pamphlet was altered. On January 27, Critical Strictures on the New Tragedy of Elvira, Written by Mr. David Malloch appeared, and Boswell records: "I felt just the satisfaction that a man does on the first time of seeing himself in print."

The reviewers treated the pamphlet with contempt. The Critical Review summed up its attitude in one sentence: "We shall not bestow no further notice on these strictures than to say they appear to be the crude efforts of envy, petulance, and self-conceit." To which Boswell replied: "There being thus three epithets, we, the three authours, had a humourous contention how each should be appropriated." Characterizing the author of "these curious strictures" as a snarling critic, the Monthly Review dismissed the pamphlet as an invidious and dishonest job.

Critical Strictures is an attack upon Mallet personally at least as much as it is an attack upon Elvira. In the Advertisement the authors strike at the fact that he changed his name from Malloch to Mallet. In the midst of derogatory remarks about the method of exposition used in the tragedy, a reference to Mallet's former connection with Bolingbroke occurs: "No less exquisite and refined in his Morality, like a true Disciple of Lord Bolingbroke, he unites Vice and Virtue most lovingly together." When discussing
the Epilogue (which is praised because it is Garrick's), they even bring up the matter of Mallet's having been a janitor at the High School of Edinburgh: "After the Play we were entertained with an Epilogue fraught with Humour, and spoken with Spirit. There was a Simile of a Bundle of Twigs formed into a Rod, which seemed to convey a delicate Allusion to Mr. Malloch's original Profession." 71

Boswell's attack upon the tragedy itself is a disorganized affair. Elvira opens, as do many of the plays of the period, with the arrival of a gentleman who has been abroad—an arrival which gives the author an opportunity to get in much needed exposition. Concerning this stageworn device, the authors of Critical Strictures remark: "We were equally surprised and delighted with this new Method of informing the Spectators of the Transactions prior to the Commencement of the Play." 72 In attacking the language of Elvira, a rather unsuccessful "sally" is employed: "No new Thoughts or Sentiments are to be found in this Performance, we meet only with the old ones absurdly expressed. Dryden said that Ben Johnson [sic] was everywhere to be traced in the Snow of the Ancients. We may say that Malloch is everywhere to be traced in the Puddle of the Moderns." 73 Since Elvira's two young children are introduced on the stage in the fifth act, Boswell and his friends have the opportunity of quoting Addison's lengthy attack upon this stage practice.

A disconsolate Mother with a Child in her Hand, has frequently drawn Compassion from the Audience, and has therefore gained a place in several Tragedies; a modern Writer who observed how this had taken in other Plays, being resolved to double the
the Distress, and melt the Audience twice as much as those before him had done, brought a Princess on the Stage with a little Boy in one Hand, and a Girl in the other. A third Poet being resolved to out-write all his Predecessors, a few Years ago introduced three Children with great Success; and as I am informed a young Gentleman who is fully determined to break the most obdurate Hearts, has a Tragedy by him where the first Person that appears on the Stage is an afflicted Widow, in her mourning Weeds, with half a dozen fatherless Children attending her, like those that usually hang about the Figure of Charity. Thus several Incidents that are beautiful in a good Writer become ridiculous by falling into the Hands of a bad one.

The authors of Critical Strictures suggest that Mallet, in his future dramatic productions, introduce the "whole Foundling Hospital" and include, perhaps, "a well painted Scene of the Edifice itself." 74

The significance of Critical Strictures is not its content so much as its authorship: it was written by three young Scotsmen who disliked Mallet so intensely that they were willing to attack a fellow countryman. The existence of the pamphlet indicates Mallet's alienation from a large number of his compatriots. The Scots felt that he was a renegade. He was never forgiven for changing his name; he had assumed the title of Esquire to which he was not born; he had edited the infidelities of Bolingbroke. Finally, he had switched his allegiance from Hardwicke and Newcastle to the Earl of Bute, a desertion that was not too unreasonable from the point of view of Mallet's own interests. The depth of Boswell's contempt for Mallet can be seen in these lines from the unpublished satire, The Turnspitiad, which Boswell wrote in imitation of Churchill's Rosciade. 75
If doggrel rhymes have aught to do with dog,
If kitchen smok resembles fog,
If changing sides from Hardwick to Lord B—t
Can with a turnspit's turning humour suit,
If to write verse immeasurably low,
Which Malloch's verse does so compleatly show,
Deserve the preference—Malloch, take the wheel,
Nor quit it till you bring as gude a Chiel!

Scotsmen like Boswell, who hated Mallet, were allied with the political enemies of the Bute administration, who viewed Mallet merely as a hireling of the government. One of the most prominent of these political enemies was Charles Churchill, whose The Prophecy of Famine (published in the same month that Elvira was produced) was a bitter attack upon the Bute ministry. In this poem Mallet is mentioned and characterized as a freethinker:

Thence Malloch, friend alike of church and state,
Of Christ and Liberty, by grateful Fate
Raised to rewards, which, in a pious reign,
All daring infidels should seek in vain.
(ll. 131-134.)

The political issue which faced the nation at the beginning of 1763 and which forms the background for the political intent in Elvira was the question of the continuance or cessation of the Seven Years War. Anxious to promote the political projects of George III at home, the Earl of Bute and his administration wanted peace. In September, 1762, the Duke of Bedford was sent to Paris to promote a treaty; on November 3, 1762, the Preliminaries of the Peace were
signed at Fontainebleau. The successes which British arms had achieved throughout the war placed England in an advantageous position for imposing harsh terms upon her enemies. In order to hurry the peace, however, Bute was willing to settle for far less than Britain could command at the treaty table. This unwillingness of Bute to demand heavy concessions from the enemy raised suspicions that England was being betrayed, and the administration was vigorously attacked as both timid and traitorous.

There is another event important to the political background of Elvira. As noted earlier, in 1761 Pitt became aware of a secret alliance between Spain and France and demanded that England declare war on Spain. The ministry did not meet his demands and Pitt resigned. By late 1761, however, the hostility of Spain became so obvious that in January, 1762, England finally declared war. Portugal was invaded by Spain, and England dispatched 6,000 troops to the small country that was now a British ally. The temporizing of the ministry made the Portugese war an unpopular affair.

As a political piece championing the policies of the Bute administration, Elvira emphasizes the desirability of peace and presents the Portugese in an extremely favorable light. The Monthly Review immediately recognized this double intention of the tragedy.

Although Mr. Mallet, the Author of this tragedy, has, in his dedication of it to Lord Bute, disclaimed its bearing any immediate relation to public affairs, yet we cannot but think it is too particularly well-timed to have been merely the effect of accidental coincidence. Our connexion with Portugal, where the scene of this tragedy lies; the favourable light in which the
court of Lisbon is here placed to our view; but above all, the
peaceful sentiments, the idea of a monarch who places his glory,
not in that military spirit which operates to the destruction of
mankind, but in cultivating the arts of peace: are all circum-
stances which unite to stamp this play with the character of a
political performance.

Undoubtedly, the Portuguese war determined Mallet's selection
of a plot. In the Postscript to the tragedy, Mallet explains that he
adapted his play from that of "Monsieur de la Motte." The play to
which he refers is Inez de Castro, by Antoine Houdar de la Motte,
which was first produced in Paris on April 6, 1723. La Motte's play
was founded on an episode in the Lusiad of Camoens. Mallet's
adaptation of la Motte's tragedy is better called a translation,
for his changes were minor. For one thing, Mallet has softened the
character of Elvira. In Inez de Castro, the heroine behaves like a
stern Roman hero, but Elvira has been feminized so that her behavior
is less Amazon-like, and she provokes pity rather than admiration.
Mallet also introduced a sufficient number of appeals to peace in
order that the desirability of a treaty ending the Seven Years War
would not be forgotten. Finally, so that Spain could be placed in
as bad a light as possible, the figure of the Queen has been
exaggerated until she is a malignant monster.

The following summary of the plot of Elvira will help to
clarify these assertions. As the play opens, the king of Portugal,
Don Alonzo, is married to the Dowager Queen of Spain, whose son,
Ferdinand, now rules that land. The Queen wishes Don Pedro, Alonzo's
son and heir, to marry her daughter, Almeyda. Don Pedro, however, is
already married secretly to Elvira, the maid in honor to the Queen.

The Queen becomes suspicious that Don Pedro does not wish to marry her daughter and complains to the king, who promises to force his son into the marriage. Then she accuses Elvira of ensnaring Don Pedro’s heart and threatens revenge should such action on Elvira’s part be found to be true. Realizing that Don Pedro is reluctant to marry her, Almeyda asks the king to postpone the wedding until she can win the prince’s heart. The king is enraged at his son’s behavior, and he calls Don Pedro for an interview. The son tells his father that his heart has already been given to another. The Queen accuses Elvira and Don Pedro admits that she is the object of his passion. The king has the maid confined. An incipient rebellion occurs, with Don Pedro at the head of an armed mob; but when faced by his father, the prince surrenders and gives up his sword. He admits that he rebelled because of his concern for Elvira. Don Pedro is imprisoned, and the king calls his council to consider what punishment should be meted out to his son.

The council decides that the prince must die. The king tells Don Pedro that the sentence will be commuted should he marry Almeyda, but he refuses. This action so enrages the Queen that she sends the Spanish ambassador to Madrid with orders for her son to march an army upon Lisbon. Elvira has an audience with the king and reveals the fact of her marriage to Don Pedro. The king declares that she shall die for her offense, but at that moment her two children come in. Overwhelmed by the sight of the grandchildren, the king forgives
her. He sends for his son, Don Pedro enters and embraces Elvira, who promptly faints, having been poisoned by the Queen. The prince vows to steep Spain in blood for Elvira's death, but she revives long enough for a six line speech, admonishing him that the way of peace is the better road. After she dies, Don Pedro declares he will kill himself, but his father prevents this rash action and ends the play with these final lines:

Let all mankind, by one example, know,  
From passions unrestrain'd what mischief grow!

The political implications of the play are made explicit in the Prologue, which begins with a reference to the forthcoming peace:

War is no more; those thunders cease to rowl,  
That lately shook the globe from pole to pole.

This statement is followed by a remark concerning Scottish influence in the administration, an influence often portrayed by opponents of the ministry as working to England's disadvantage:

'Twas union made her Queen of land and main;  
'Tis that alone her triumphs can maintain.

Finally, the concessions made in the treaty are viewed as the mercy granted by a generous victor:

Abroad, you knew to conquer and to spare;  
And, as your cause, your conduct too was fair.  
Then, what you gave so nobly to the foe,  
At home, and to a friend, you sure will show.
In Elvira, there are two extended declarations concerning peace. When the king first speaks to Don Pedro about marrying Almeyda, he urges the prince to the union since it will insure peace between Spain and Portugal. Don Pedro demurs, and the king asks him if he wishes to

Afford to Ferdinand pretence
For kindling up, as then he fairly might,
The flames of cruel and consuming war,
And leave to us the deep, the long remorse
Of shedding in a cause, unjust and base,
The blood of thousands?
(II. iii.)

Don Pedro spiritedly replies that should Spain wish war, then Portugal might

Add Castile
To those late conquests that renown your arms.
Let neighbouring nations feel, with dread and reverence,
Th' ascendant of your genius: while your son,
In such a shining path, shall count it glory
With his last blood to seal a father's fame!
(II. iii.)

Don Alonzo delivers a lengthy speech upon the king's duty to preserve peace for his subjects.

Such talk may suit the foe of human kind,
A hero's mouth, whose business is destruction;
But I must act a nobler part—a King's!
The father and preserver of his people!
We war for them alone, to make them safer
And happier by our triumphs. Other wars,
Of mad ambition or of blind revenge,
But shame the prince, and curse the land he rules.
And may the Nimrods of each blood-stained age,
Th' exterminating Demons of mankind,
Reap horror for their portion! Are we rais'd
Alone to conquer? Are mankind but made,
That we, as lust or fury drives our will,
Should traffic with their blood? We are the guardians
Of free-born men, not lords of slavish herds.
Upon their bliss is built our truest fame;
And when we deviate from that glorious end,
We are not kings, but robbers, but assassins.

(II. iii.)

The second point at which peace is emphasized occurs during the council meeting when Don Pedro’s fate is decided. The prince has endangered Portugal’s safety in two ways: by raising a rebellion and by refusing to marry Almeyda—the latter action threatening the peace between Spain and Portugal. It is interesting to note that of these two errors, the second is deemed much more important. The king presents this state crime in the following speech:

The Prince, a rebel to the law and us,
Has set at nought the binding faith of oaths;
The solemn ties of treaties ratify’d,
Whatever links one nation to another,
And king to king.

(IV. v.)

When two of the lords, Roderigo and Alvarez, attempt to speak up in Don Pedro’s behalf, the king drowns out their protests by repeating:

But treaties seal’d and sanctify’d by oaths,
He dares to violate.

(IV. v.)

In these last two speeches, Mallet is striking at those who would set aside the agreements made at Fontainebleau in November.
The final treaty was not signed until February 10, 1763, almost a month after Elvira opened at Drury Lane. During the intervening time, from November until February, the Bute ministry was under ceaseless attack from those who opposed the conclusion of the war upon the terms Bute had made. 81

VI

Despite its obvious political intent, Elvira was fairly well received. The tragedy ran for ten nights, from January 19 to February 1, and appeared two more times in February and once in March. An account of the play appeared in several of the periodicals, a usual practice at that time. 83 The Royal Magazine and the London Magazine echoed each other by saying that "the whole performance gave general satisfaction"; they also complimented Garrick, Holland, Mrs. Cibber, and Mrs. Pritchard. 84 As did the Monthly Review, the Scots Magazine recognized political implications in the play; it remarked: "The King of Portugal having made several presents to the British, for espousing his cause, he should not forget our author; since this play, produced at this juncture, has the air of a well-timed compliment to that country, every amiable character in it being Portuguese, and the only odious one, Spaniard." 85

As usual, the Critical Review was exceptionally kind to Mallet. It praised the incidents, the preservation of the unities, the characters, the expressions of passions, the situations, the noble
sentiments, the judicious reflections. The reviewer failed to mention any of the political implications to be found in the play. His estimation of Mallet was inordinate: "Mr. Mallet's character, as a dramatic writer, is so well established, that it could not have been affected by the fate of this performance, even if it had miscarried. Neither has the extraordinary success of it, in the face of a most illiberal opposition, been able to enhance the reputation he had before so justly acquired."

The Monthly Review spoke well of Elvira, though not in the exaggerated form quoted above: "The incidents, as they are found in Mr. Mallet's performance, are simple, natural, and affecting, and arise out of one another with very little intervention of art in the decorations furnished by the poet. In respect to language, this piece is at least equal to any of our late tragedies; few of which, indeed, have risen to excellence, but still fewer have sunk below mediocrity." Almost half of the space which this magazine devoted to Elvira, however, was taken up in praise of Garrick's Epilogue, which showed "the ingenious Author's intimate acquaintance with men and manners."

In contrast to these generous accolades, the North Briton had some harsh words for the play. Written primarily by John Wilkes, but with considerable assistance from Churchill, this periodical lasted for only forty-five issues, from June 5, 1762, to April 23, 1763. It ceased publication when Wilkes was arrested and committed to the tower for seditious writing. During its short life, the North Briton
was the most relentless enemy of all that harassed Bute's admin-
istration.

Wilkes turned his attention to Elvira in an issue discussing
Bute's qualifications as a minister. Bute had once been George
III's tutor, but the North Briton felt that this fact did not equip
the Earl for the role of politician:

A very good schoolmaster may make a very indifferent statesman;
pedantry is of little service in politics, and I should have a
very contemptible opinion of an English administration, who
would submit in their several departments to the imperious
dictates of an overbearing tutor. I am extremely sorry that I
cannot in this respect agree with the great Mr. MALLET, alias
MALLOCK, that ingenious SCOT, who, by the publication of Lord
Bolingbroke's deistical writings, formerly endeavoured to over-
throw our religion, and at present is doing what in him lies to
change our constitution, by advancing such doctrines as strike
at the liberties of the people. In the political poem of
ELVIRA, now acting at Drury-Lane Theatre, are the following
remarkable lines,

He holds a man who train'd a King to honour,
A second only to the prince he form'd.

The lines which Wilkes quotes occur in a conversation between the
Queen and Elvira (III. iii.). The Queen wishes Elvira to release
Don Pedro and offers to get Don Rodrigo, the former tutor to the
prince, as husband for her maid, an offer that Elvira refuses.
Rodrigo is of great estate, "near kindred to the throne," and these
lines, as Wilkes indicates, pay homage to the Earl of Bute.

Judging by this sampling of contemporary comments on Elvira,
one can see that its reception was moderately successful. This
success, however, was endangered by the occurrence of the famous
half-price riots of 1763. At the beginning of the year, the managers
of Drury Lane and Covent Garden gave notice of a new regulation; that henceforth the long customary practice of allowing admittance for half price at the end of the third act of a play would be abolished. On January 25, a printed paper addressed "To the Frequenters of the Theatres" was circulated in the taverns and coffee houses. The paper was written by one Fitzpatrick, whom Garrick had ridiculed in his mock-heroic poem, The Fribbleriad. The sheet complained of the new regulation and called upon all theatre-goers to assemble at the playhouse and demand correction of their grievance.

Elvira was not scheduled for the night of January 25, Garrick having decided to play Benjamin Victor's alteration of The Two Gentlemen of Verona. When the curtain went that evening and Obrien and Holland appeared on the stage, the audience would not let the play proceed. From the boxes, Fitzpatrick harangued the spectators; when Garrick came forward to address the house, the audience broke into a tumult and he was not allowed to speak. The ladies withdrew from the theatre and the men turned their vengeance upon the furniture. The benches were torn up and the glass lustres and girandoles were destroyed and strewn about the stage. The play, of course, could not go on, but the house was not cleared of angry spectators until nine o'clock. At Covent Garden the situation was somewhat better. When the audience demanded the restitution of half-price practice, it was speedily granted and the play was allowed to proceed.

The next day Garrick published a paper vindicating himself. That night Elvira was scheduled, its sixth performance and Mallet's
second benefit. When the third music began, the audience started howling for "Britons, Strike Home" and "Roast Beef of Old England." Holland came on and tried to speak the Prologue to Elvira, but he was hissed off. Garrick came forward and tried to speak, but as on the previous night he was denied. In the midst of the tumult, one of the spectators started to set fire to the theatre and Moody, an actor, stopped him. Finally, the pit agreed to hear Garrick if he would answer one question: "Will you, or will you not, give admittance for half price, after the third act, except during the first winter of a new pantomime?" Garrick tried to explain the purpose of his regulation, but the pit refused to hear him, demanding that the answer be "Yes" or "No." At last, Garrick agreed and the house erupted with shouts of triumph.

Elated with its success, the audience demanded apologies from two of the actors, Ackman and Moody. For some unexplained reason, Ackman had incurred the spectators' wrath the previous night and was forced to apologize. Moody was called for next. In an attempt to humour the crowd he apologized for having stopped the arsonist by saying that he was sorry he had displeased them by saving their lives. This mock apology incensed the audience even more, and it demanded that Moody get on his knees and beg its pardon. He refused and, rather than give the crowd reason to riot once again, Garrick agreed that Moody would not appear on the stage that night. Then Elvira was permitted to proceed.

Mallet received three benefit nights from the production of
Elvira, the average number for a new play at that time. According to Davies, when Garrick decided to close the play, Mallet objected and said that he had received forty cards from persons of distinction who wanted to know why his play was being stopped. Whether or not the story is true, in the end Elvira was a fruitful production for Mallet because the tragedy gained him the governmental position he had struggled so hard to acquire ever since 1755. In the "List of Promotions for the Year 1763," published in the February issue of Gentleman's Magazine, the following item appears: "David Mallet, Esq; keeper of the book of entries for ships in the Port of London."

With this notice the dramatic career of David Mallet ends. During the short remainder of his life, he wrote no more for the stage. In the following year, 1764, he went to France with his wife. He had diarrhea and, when his health did not improve, he returned to England alone and died on April 21, 1765.
NOTES


3. Little, p. 513.


5. Murphy, I, 171; Davies, I, 197.


8. Davies, II, 47.


10. Little, p. 446.

11. (Nov., 1756)


15. Little, p. 443.

16. Little, p. 450.

17. Little, p. 443.

18. Little, p. 464.

19. Little, p. 470.

20. Little, pp. 469-470.

21. Little, pp. 476, 482.

22. Little, pp. 488-493.

23. Little, p. 493.

24. Little, p. 497.

25. The letter is dated July 22, 1761.


27. Little, p. 500.

28. Little, p. 503.

29. Little, pp. 507, 510.

30. CMH, VI, 416.


33 Weatherly, pp. xi-xii.

34 XXV (July, 1761), 79.

35 See particularly the *London Magazine*, VIII (1739), 168.

36 XXV (1761), 79.

37 XI (1761), 492.

38 Little, p. 517.


40 Little, p. 526.

41 This date is given by Mallet in a letter, dated December 30, 1762, to Andrew Millar. See Little, pp. 530, 535.


44 See Dinsdale, p. 39, and Baker, II, 192.

45 These difficulties are given in Mallet's letter to Millar, dated December 30, 1762. See Little, pp. 530, 535.
46 Little, p. 535.

47 Little, pp. 526, 530.


49 Little, p. 535.


51 LJ, p. 29.


53 Gentleman's Magazine, XXXIII (1763), 42.

54 LJ, p. 154.

55 LJ, p. 154.


57 LJ, pp. 154-155.

58 Little, pp. 522, 526.

59 LJ, p. 155.

60 Gibbon's Journal, p. 203.

61 LJ, p. 155.
62 *Li*, p. 155.

63 *Li*, p. 162.

64 *Li*, pp. 163-164.

65 *Li*, p. 172.

66 Quoted in *Li*, p. 172 n. 3. Also see the *Critical Review*, XV (1763), 90.


68 *XXVIII* (1763), 68.


70 *CS*, p. 14.

71 *CS*, p. 22.

72 *CS*, p. 9.

73 *CS*, p. 11.

74 *CS*, pp. 18-19.

75 *CS*, p. iii.

76 *Lunt*, p. 528.

77 *CMH*, VI, 428.
78 CMH, VI, 428-429.

79 CMH, VI, 368-369.

80 XXVIII (1763), 67.

81 CMH, VI, 428-429.

82 MacMillan, pp. 94-95.


84 London Magazine, XXXII (1763), 37; Royal Magazine, VIII (1763), 31.

85 XXV (1763), 46.

86 XV (1763), 91, 93.

87 XV (1763), 90.

88 XXVIII (1763), 67-68.

89 Weatherly, pp. xii, xv, xvii-xix.

90 Issue no. 34, dated Saturday, January 22, 1763. The North Briton, II, 107-117.

91 The North Briton, II, 110.

92 Murphy, I, 370.

93 This paper is reproduced in Gentleman's Magazine, XXXIII (1763), 31.
Most of the account of the riot is taken from the London Magazine, XXXIII (1763), 7-8. The facts taken from Davies are subsequently footnoted.

Davies, II, 3.
Davies, II, 5-6.
Davies, II, 6.
Davies, II, 57.
XXXIII (1763), 98.

Dinsdale, pp. 39-40. For mention of Mallet's diarrhea, see Chesterfield, Letters to His Son (London, 1774), IV, 224.
CHAPTER IX

EPILOGUE

In the preceding chapters, this dissertation has examined the dramatic work of David Mallet and the circumstances involved in the writing and production of that work. The purpose of such an examination has been, primarily, to determine the intent of Mallet's theatrical labors, and the study has indicated the close connection between Mallet's dramatic compositions and the political affairs of his time. Indeed, of his three tragedies and two masques, only Eurydice appears to be without explicit political meaning.

As a result of this investigation, the following conclusions may be stated about the dramatic pieces Mallet wrote. Eurydice was the composition of an ambitious young man who had already made a name of sorts for himself in poetry and who wished to enhance his reputation with a successful theatrical venture. The tragedy has little intent other than that of entertaining the audience. The staging of the play, however, brought Mallet closer to Pope's circle and partly assisted in the playwright's eventually meeting Bolingbroke.

Mustapha was the first of Mallet's works indicating his alliance with the Opposition against Walpole. It presented in dramatic form some of the tenets of Bolingbroke's Idea of a Patriot King and introduced Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, as the obvious choice of the Opposition for a patriot ruler. Alfred, a
collaboration of Mallet and Thomson, further presented Frederick Louis as an ideal prince who was waiting for that propitious time when fortune would grant him power to deliver his faction-ridden nation from the forces that threatened her. In addition, Alfred was written against the background of a theoretical view of English constitutional history which enabled the adherents of Frederick to announce him as one who would restore the ancient form of English government.

The Prologue that Mallet wrote for the private performance of *The Siege of Damascus* at Woburn Abbey followed the fall of Walpole and reflected a division of opinion concerning the relations of England and Hanover. In the Prologue Mallet sided with Lyttelton and Bolingbroke against Frederick Louis, who was naturally attached to his ancestral home. The revised Alfred of 1751 represented a further division between Mallet and the Prince of Wales. By 1751 Mallet had lost his pension from the Prince and the masque had been altered so that Frederick no longer figured in it. What politics remained in Alfred was only a pale reflection of Bolingbroke's Idea of a Patriot King.

After Bolingbroke's death, Mallet began searching for another patron. Britannia, played in 1755, responded to the rising public demand for war with France, but the masque was not directed toward any particular clique or political group. By the time the Seven Years War neared its end, Mallet produced his final tragedy, Elvira, which was dedicated to John Stewart, the Earl of Bute, and which
defended the unpopular terms upon which Bute was ending the war. *Elvira* brought to a close Mallet's twelve year search for preference. It also brought to a close his dramatic career, because two years later he died.

In addition to pointing out the political intent of Mallet's plays and masques, this study also suggests some conclusions about his dramatic abilities. In the chapter on *Eurydice*, a brief comparison of that tragedy with Tracy's *Periander* showed that Mallet had considerable powers of dramatic construction and an eye for presenting the sort of spectacular incident which would attract an audience—the opening shipwreck scene being an excellent example of this kind of stagecraft. The additions which Mallet introduced into his revised *Alfred* and the spectacle he managed to employ in the brief *Britannia* are also indications of his ability to utilize techniques that amuse and move the audience. He had a flair for manipulating these materials; it was a superficial talent, perhaps, but one that he certainly should be credited with.

In passing judgment upon Mallet's ability as a dramatist, one has to dismiss most of his work. *Britannia* is inconsequential. *Elvira* is little more than a translation; evidence that it is a hurried work by a tired man, desperate to get any kind of production upon the stage. The 1740 *Alfred* yields no information, since there is no indication of the degree of Mallet's contribution to it. The plotting and structure of *Eurydice* and the 1751 *Alfred* are greatly indebted to Hill—a fact that demonstrates Mallet's weak-
nesses in these areas of dramatic skill. Mustapha alone remains, a tragedy that Mallet apparently wrote without aid. It is not a bad play, and it is his best dramatic work. But when Mallet wrote Mustapha, he had a ready-made situation to build a play upon: the conflict between a king and the heir to the throne.

These facts indicate Mallet's limitations. For his time, Mallet was a competent playwright, but he was essentially an imitative artist whose contributions to the stage reflect the skill and ideas of others. When given a theme or plot, he could perform adequately enough, but he had none of the inner resources of a genuine artist. In speaking of all Mallet's writings, Johnson wrote: "His works are such as a writer, bustling in the world, shewing himself in publick, and emerging occasionally from time to time into notice, might keep alive by his personal influence; but which, conveying little information and giving no great pleasure, must soon give way, as the succession of things produces new topics of conversation and other modes of amusement." This summation is applicable to Mallet's dramatic compositions. What vogue his plays had is primarily due to party interest. When the political issues died, the plays and masques died with them.

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