

The Reign Of King Edward The Third William Shakespeare

The Reign Of King Edward The Third

The Reign of King Edward the Third is an Elizabethan play printed anonymously in 1596. It has frequently been claimed that it was at least partly written by William Shakespeare, a view that Shakespeare scholars have increasingly endorsed. The rest of the play was probably written by Thomas Kyd. The play contains many gibes at Scotland and the Scottish people, which has led some critics to think that it is the work that incited George Nicolson, Queen Elizabeth's agent in Edinburgh, to protest against the portrayal of Scots on the London stage in a 1598 letter to William Cecil, Lord Burghley. This would explain why the play was not included in the First Folio of Shakespeare's works, which was published after the Scottish King James had succeeded to the English throne in 1603.

The plot of the play consists of two distinct parts. The first is centred on the Countess of Salisbury (the wife of the Earl of Salisbury), who, beset by rampaging Scots, is rescued by King Edward III, who then proceeds to woo her himself. In the second part of the play, in several scenes reminiscent of Henry V, Edward joins his army in France, fighting a war to claim the French throne.

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