BECKET

At this performance the part of 'Saxon Girl' will be played by MEG RITCHIE
ALDWYCH THEATRE
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY
Director  PETER HALL
Becket

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ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY

BECKET

OR

THE HONOUR OF GOD

by Jean Anouilh

translated by Lucienne Hill


presented by the governors of the

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BECKET

A Note on the Play

Thomas Becket is the King's constant companion in hunting and pleasure; he also tries to curb the excessive power vested in the Church and its Archbishop by England's ancient charter. He is the King's true friend. They have much in common, as well as the usual differences that separate any friends. But he is deeply loyal to his liege lord and the feudal oath that binds him. He belongs to an age when human relations were based, quite simply, on faith between man and man.

The Archbishop dies, and the King tries to resolve matters to England's benefit by forcing Becket to take his place. Becket warns him against such folly. "If I become Archbishop," he tells him, "I cannot remain your friend." But the King is adamant. So, on the evening of his election, Becket dismisses his concubines, sells his gold plate, horses and rich clothes to a Jew; and having done so, puts on a homespun robe, invites the local poor to sup with him, and begins his struggle against the King whom he still loves. He has accepted the burden. The easy-going libertine, the realist who squeezed the Church's wealth into his King's coffers, is now the guardian of God's Honour.

All this I read one day in Augustin Thierry's Norman Conquest of England, which I had bought solely for its handsome green binding. I was so delighted and moved by it that I looked no further. In the relationship between these two men, these close friends divided by one great absurdity—absurd at least to the more deeply loving—I already had my play. I hope the English will forgive me, not only for a few satirical digs which I couldn't resist, but also for never bothering to find out what Henry II. or even Becket, was really like. I created the King I wanted, and the ambiguous Becket I needed.

I have since been told that poor old Augustin Thierry, and the contemporary chroniclers whose clumsy Latin he so faithfully quotes, have been utterly superseded by modern, scientific history; for even history progresses, and the world of scholarship moves radiantly and rationally towards the Truth. Apparently Thomas Becket was not even of Saxon origin— one of the mainsprings of my play—he was a Norman. Was he in fact the son of the beautiful Saracen girl who saved his captive father from a Pasha during the Second Crusade? Is my song on the subject inaccurate, then? An inaccurate song! God forbid!

Everything, in fact, for a serious man, has collapsed. But I suppose I am not very serious; after all, I work in the theatre . . .

JEAN ANOUILH
BECKET

OR
THE HONOUR OF GOD

by Jean Anouilh
translated by Lucienne Hill

Characters in the order of their appearance

KING HENRY OF ENGLAND
THOMAS BECKET
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
BISHOP OF OXFORD
BISHOP OF YORK
GILBERT FOLLIOt Bishop of London
SAXON FATHER
SAXON GIRL
SAXON SON
FIRST BARON
SECOND BARON
THIRD BARON
FOURTH BARON
GWENDOLEN
FRENCH GIRL
FIRST SOLDIER
LITTLE MONK
PROVOST MARSHALL
SECOND SOLDIER
WILLIAM OF CORBEIL

CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER
ERIC PORTER
DONALD LAYNE-SMITH
P. G. STEPHENS
PETER RUSSELL
PETER JEFFREY
ALAN DOWNER
JEANNE HEPPLE
BARRY MACGREGOR
GEORGE MURCELL
CLIVE SWIFT
EDWARD ARGENT
ROY DOTRICE
DIANA RIGG
MARIAN DIAMOND
GEOFFREY STAYVERT
IAN HOLM
PHILIP VOSS
THERE LOUIS
TERENCE GRENNIDGE

THE ACTION TAKES PLACE IN ENGLAND AND IN FRANCE DURING THE HENRY OF ENGLAND
Directed by PETER HALL
Setting and costumes by LESLIE HURRY
Music by IAIN HAMILTON
Lighting by BRIAN PRIESTMAN
There will be one interval of fifteen minute
The version of the National Assembly played tonight has been orchestrated
by Raymond Leppard from the earliest known source of the music
Consultant designer at the new stage and prosenium arch: HEATHER
Choreographer: Pauline Grant
Music Adviser: Raymond Leppard
Scenic Advisor: Lighting Advisor:
Becket

OR

THE HONOUR OF GOD

by Jean Anouilh

translated by Lucienne Hill

Characters in the order of their appearance

AN OFFICER
SERVANTS TO BECKET
QUEEN MOTHER
YOUNG QUEEN
PRINCES
ETIENNE a monk
FRENCH PRIEST
FRENCH CHOIR BOY
FIRST MONK
SECOND MONK
A PAGE
FIRST FRENCH BARON
SECOND FRENCH BARON
KING LOUIS OF FRANCE
ARUNDEL
THE POPE
A CARDINAL
A SENTRY
YOUNG SENTRY

GEOFFREY STAVERT
WILLIAM AUSTIN, IAN CULLEN
GWEN FRANGCON-DAVIES
YVONNE BONNAMY
DANE HOWELL, BARRIE DAVIES
BARRY MACGREGOR
P. G. STEPHENS
BARRIE DAVIES
ALAN DOWNER
EDWARD ARGENT
PHILIP VOSS
WILLIAM AUSTIN
IAN CULLEN
PATRICK WYMARE
JAMES KEEN
ROY DOTRICE
GEORGE MURCELL
ALAN DOWNER
BARRY MACGREGOR

TAKES PLACE IN ENGLAND AND IN FRANCE DURING THE REIGN
OF KING HENRY II OF ENGLAND

Directed by PETER HALL

Setting and costumes by LESLIE HURRY

HAMILTON

Lighting by JOHN PYCKHAM

Shakespeare Theatre Wind Band: Leader ALEC WHITTAKER
Music Director BRIAN PRIESTMAN

WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

The National Anthem played tonight has been orchestrated and arranged
by Leppard from the earliest known source of the melody, c. 1740

Designer on the new stage and proscenium arch: Henry Bardem

Script Advisor: John Holmstrom

Lighting Advisor: John Wyckham
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One Over the Eight
the hit revue

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ALDWYCH THEATRE

productions by the

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY

BECKET
by Jean Anouilh
CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER          ERIC PORTER
GWEN FRANGCON-DAVIES         PATRICK WYMARK

directed by Peter Hall

“brilliantly theatrical” (Times); “another triumph” (Daily Mail); “dazzling . . . superbly produced and acted” (Financial Times); “magnificent, breathtaking theatre” (Daily Herald); “its grip never falters” (Daily Express).

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by William Shakespeare

VANESSA REDGRAVE            DEREK GODFREY
PATRICK WYMARK             GEORGE MURCELL

the 1960 Stratford Production

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STRATFORD'S
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IN 1961, this superb publication is enlarged to no less than 72 pages so that it includes Stratford's London productions at the Aldwych as well as those at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Nearly every page has colour; there are vivid photographs representing eleven productions; the article is by Mary Holland of Vogue; the high-gloss cover is by Eden Box. It is by far Stratford's biggest and most ambitious illustrated programme, yet its price remains the same.

Price: SIX SHILLINGS (or by post, one shilling extra).

FOR STRATFORD'S ALDWYCH AND ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE STAFF PLEASE SEE BACK PAGE

The alterations to the theatre were carried out, under the supervision of J. Lawson and Co., by Hall's Stage Equipment, E. Babcock and Co., The Strand Electric and Engineering Co. Ltd., Panichelli and Sons, L. B. Cox and Co., General Building Co., RCA Great Britain Ltd., John Holliday and Sons Ltd.

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The Management reserves the right to refuse admission, also to make any alteration in the cast which may be rendered necessary by illness or other unavoidable causes.

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In accordance with the requirements of the Lord Chamberlain—1. The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exit doors and such doors must at that time be open. 2. All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstructions. 3. Persons shall not in any circumstances be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating or to sit in any of the other gangways. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be strictly limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. 4. The safety curtain must be lowered and raised in the presence of each audience.

REFRESHMENTS—The Management desire to draw the attention of their patrons to the special service of Tea, price 2s. 0d., at matinées, and Coffee with biscuits, price 1s., at evening performances which are served by the attendants. To facilitate service patrons are requested to order in advance.

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GERnard 1592

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Wardrobe Supervision .. JUAN SMITH
Construction (Scenery) .. FRED JENKINS
Construction (Properties) .. GERRY WATTS
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SHAKESPEARE THEATRE
AT THE ALDWYCH THEATRE WC2

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STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

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Gardening Manager EDOARDO MILANO
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The management wish to emphasise that smoking is not permitted in the auditorium and that photographs may not be taken during a performance. It would be appreciated if patrons respect these rules, understanding that they are made for their own comfort.