Garrick's Jubilee

by Martha Winburn England
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A comprehensive—and occasionally hilarious—study of the three-day festival staged by David Garrick, the brilliant actor and manager of the Drury Lane Theatre in London, at Stratford-upon-Avon, in September, 1769.

This was the first Shakespeare festival to engage national interest, and although its critics vilified it as a fiasco and a monumental example of bad taste, its defenders thought it a glorious occasion. James Boswell, a member of the latter group, described it as being "not a piece of farce . . . , but an elegant and truly classical celebration of the memory of Shakespeare."

Reproduced on the stage in varying moods of glorification and satire, the Jubilee ultimately became entangled in the very threads of English life. The combination of Garrick and Stratford produced a catalyst

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To Harry Levin