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Masters Theses

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A Critical Edition of The Triumphant Widow, 
or the Medley of Humours

by

William Cavendish and Thomas Shadwell

Sally Ann Hoare

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Abstract

The title-page of the Restoration drama, *The Triumphant Widow, or the Medley of Humours* (1677) attributes the work to ‘His Grace the Duke of Newcastle’. However, it has long been recognized that the comedy is the fruit of a collaborative venture between William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle Upon Tyne (1593–1676) and the dramatist Thomas Shadwell (1641–1692). Newcastle was an influential patron to many prominent seventeenth-century playwrights who assisted him with his own dramatic compositions. His collaborator in the case of *The Triumphant Widow*, Thomas Shadwell, was the author of a number of highly successful post-Restoration dramas.

This thesis consists of an old-spelling, critical edition of *The Triumphant Widow, or the Medley of Humours*, prepared in broad accordance with modern editorial practices. It includes a Commentary on the play’s text with a full set of annotations. A comprehensive Introduction examines dramatic analogues relevant to the play and its evolution from disparate pieces of text, possibly composed in different decades. I discuss the likely nature of the collaboration between Newcastle and Shadwell and their respective literary interests in relation to *The Triumphant Widow*. My Introduction places the play in its socio–historic context and documents its concern with the erosion of traditional aristocratic codes of civility and sociability. I discuss *The Triumphant Widow* as an exemplar of the way in which stage widowhood is nuanced in Restoration drama to reflect the dilemma of real-life widows who wish to maintain their independence. Several contemporary plays offer a satirical treatment of the ‘poetaster’ figure and I consider the work’s implication in the topical debate concerning attribution, plagiarism and literary property, with particular relation to the dispute amongst Shadwell, Dryden and Settle.

The sub-title of *The Triumphant Widow* signals its incorporation of a medley of dramatic elements, challenging our assumptions about contemporary dramatic form. The comedy’s self-conscious theatricality and distinctiveness warrant our critical attention. The work is known to have been performed at the Dorset Garden Theatre in November 1674 and a
section of the Introduction discusses *The Triumphant Widow* in the context of contemporary methods of stage production.
For James
Acknowledgements

I should like to thank the University of Auckland for their generous grant of a Doctoral Scholarship which enabled me to embark on this project, and for supplying funding to enable me to attend a conference of the Cavendish Society in Sheffield in 2007. I am grateful to the Australian Research Council for their sponsorship of my attendance at two stimulating seminars organised by the Network in Early European Research. My thanks go to Elizabeth Evans of the University of Auckland Library who worked diligently and persistently in the acquisition of exemplars of the quarto edition on my behalf. Adrienne Morris provided skilful technical support and an expert eye for detail in her assistance with formatting the play. I am grateful to Doctor Brian Boyd for his guidance in editing matters and for his comments on drafts, especially in the latter stages of my research. My greatest debt is to Doctor Sophie Tomlinson who became an invaluable mentor in my undergraduate years and has always given generously of her time, knowledge and patience. Her thoughtful comments and astute criticism have always been received with gratitude.
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Introduction

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Page 79  Title-page of The Triumphant Widow, or the Medley of Humours
## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>CSPD</td>
<td><em>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series</em></td>
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Jonson, Works


Linthicum

M. Channing Linthicum, Costume in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1972)

London Stage


LWC

The Life of Willian Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle: To Which is Added the True Relation of my Birth, Breeding and Life by Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, ed. by C.H. Firth, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 1906)

ODEP


Perry, Henry

The First Duchess of Newcastle and Her Husband as Figures in Literary History (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1918)

Royalist Refugees

Royalist Refugees: William and Margaret Cavendish in the Rubens House, 1648-1660, ed. by Ben van Beneden, Nora de Poorter et al., (Antwerp: Rubenshuis and Rubenianum, 2006)

Shadwell, Works

The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell, ed. by Montague Summers, 5 vols (London: Fortune Press, 1927). References are to volume, act, scene and page; lines are unnumbered

Tilley


Trease


Webster, Works

### Sources

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### Journals and Electronic Databases

- **ELH**: *ELH, A Journal of English Literary History*
- **ELR**: *English Literary Renaissance*
- **HLB**: *Harvard Library Bulletin*
- **HLQ**: *Huntington Library Quarterly*
- **MLQ**: *Modern Language Quarterly*
- **N&Q**: *Notes and Queries*
- **RSELC**: *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700*
SEL  Studies in English Literature, 1550-1900

SP  Studies in Philology

SQ  Shakespeare Quarterly

TSC  The Seventeenth Century

Works attributed to William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle

The Country Captaine  The Country Captain, prepared by Antony Johnson; revised by H.R. Woudhuysen (Oxford: Published for the Malone Society by the Oxford University Press, 1999)


The Phanseys  The Phanseys of William Cavendish, Marquis of Newcastle, addressed to Margaret Lucas and Her Letters in Reply, ed. by Douglas Grant (London: Nonesuch Press, 1956)

The Triumphant Widow  The Triumphant Widow, or the Medley of Humours (London: Printed by J.M. for H. Herringman, 1677)

The Varietie  The Country Captaine and The Varietie (Printed for Hum. Robinson and Hum. Moseley, London, 1649)

Wit’s Triumvirate  A Critical Edition of Wit’s Triumvirate: or, the Philosopher, ed. by Cathryn Anne Nelson (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg, 1975)
Note on Titles

William Cavendish (1593-1676) was created Viscount Mansfield in 1620, Earl of Newcastle upon Tyne and Baron Cavendish of Bolsover (1628), Baron Ogle (1629), Marquess of Newcastle (1643), and Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1665. Application of the Duke’s chronologically appropriate title is thwarted in discussion of events overlapping his tenure of a specific title, or in comments of a retrospective nature. For the sake of clarity I shall refer to William Cavendish variously as ‘William Cavendish’, ‘William’, ‘Newcastle’ and ‘the Duke’, in full awareness that at times these appellations contravene historical accuracy.