

The Regency Reader

April 2013

In this issue:

From the Editor's Desk

April 2013 Print Releases

Article: *Change Ringing - A Mystery to Americans* Part Two of Two – Grace Kone
New in Ebook for April 2013

Article: *John Philip Kemble – An Ever Dignified Heartthrob* – Elf Ahearn

Still Available in Print

Still Available in Ebook

Coming in May 2013

From the Editor's Desk, April 2013

Happy Spring!

This month we have the second part of Grace Kone's article on Change Ringing. We also have an article by Elf Ahearn on John Philip Kemble, the Colin Firth of the 1800's.



There are many great new releases this month for your spring reading pleasure.

This month's book shopping list is available at the link below:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TheRegencyReader/files/>

The shopping list is also included as a .doc file attachment with the newsletter.

Please feel free to send your *Letters To The Editor* to editor.regencyreader@yahoo.com. I will do my best to address them as quickly as possible.

—Cynthia Young
Editor

Email: editor.regencyreader@yahoo.com

April Print Releases



Vanessa Riley **MADELINE'S PROTECTOR**

Pelican Book Group :978-1-61116-226-4 Paperback, 978-1-61116-225-7 Electronic, will also be available in Audiobook.

Inspirational Regency

If all young men leapt off a cliff, Madeline St. James wouldn't care. Yet, a chance meeting and a bullet wound change everything. She must trust the Good Shepherd has led her to marry a dashing stranger, Lord Devonshire. Can they forge a true bond before the next disaster strikes?

<http://www.christianregency.com/>

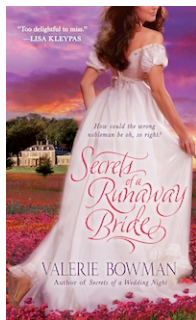
<http://www.christianregency.com/blog/> & <http://www.infinitecharacters.com/>

@vanessariley

facebook: christianregency

Also available in ebook and audiobook

April 19, 2013



Valerie Bowman **SECRETS OF A RUNAWAY BRIDE**

St. Martin's Press, 978-1250008961

Regency Historical

RT Book Reviews 4.5 stars, TOP PICK!

THE THRILL OF ESCAPE

Miss Annie Andrews is finally free to marry the man she loves. With her overprotective sister out of the country on her honeymoon, nothing can prevent her flight to Gretna Greene—nothing, that is, but an abduction by the wrong

gentleman.

THE SWEETNESS OF SURRENDER

When Jordan Holloway, the Earl of Ashbourne, promised to look after his best friend's sister-in-law, he didn't realize she would prove so difficult. But when he spirits her away to his country house to prevent her elopement, he discovers that the tempting beauty knows how to put up a fight. To make matters worse, he's stuck playing the role of honorable protector...when what he really wants is to run away with her himself.

<http://www.ValerieBowmanBooks.com>

<http://www.Twitter.com/@ValerieGBowman>

<http://www.Facebook.com/ValerieBowmanAuthor>

April 2013





Heather Snow

SWEET MADNESS

NAL Signet Eclipse ISBN-13: 978-0451239679

Regency historical with mystery

There's a fine line between love and insanity...

Ever since her husband's sudden and tragic death, Lady Penelope Bridgeman has dedicated herself to studying maladies of the mind, particularly those of soldiers returning from the Napoleonic Wars, but Gabriel Devereaux's unpredictable episodes are like none she's ever seen. Even though she knows the folly of loving a broken man, she can't help herself from trying to save him, no matter the cost...

"In this emotional, compassionate romance...the powerful love story will sweep readers away."

~RT BookReviews, 4 1/2 stars

"The brilliance of Sweet Madness shines strongly and completely. Heather Snow is cutting edge...a master storyteller. Sweet Madness is a magnificent story."

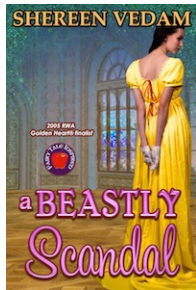
~Book Obsessed Chicks 5 stars

<http://www.HeatherSnowBooks.com>

<http://www.twitter.com/HeatherSnowRW>

<http://www.facebook.com/AuthorHeatherSnow>

April 2, 2013



Shereen Vedam

A BEASTLY SCANDAL

ImaJinn Books, 978-1-61026-124-1

Regency Historical (fairytale-inspired)

"A treat to enjoy!" Jo Beverley, Author of A Scandalous Countess

A BELLE OF THE BALL...

Lady Annabelle Marchant was a belle of the ball in London until she used her psychical senses to save a man's life. She failed miserably, leaving him dead and her disgraced. All she wants now is a chance to comfort his widow by cleansing the woman's home of her husband's restless spirit. But the widow's son, the beastly Lord of the Manor, accuses her of coming to the wilds of Cheshire to snag him as a husband. Thoroughly disgusted, she is bent on proving him wrong.

...BECOMES PERSONA NON-GRATA...

Lord Rufus Marlesbury, the Earl of Terrance, is suspected of murdering his father. He has come home to clear his name by finding the real killer before the new year or the king has promised that Rufus will be called in front of the House of Lords to answer for the crime. He does not have time to waste fending off a marriage-minded miss who has inveigled an invitation to his home by playing on his grief-stricken mother's worst fears.

...WHEN A MURDERER IS ON THE RAMPAGE

With an unruly manor ghost terrorizing the occupants and corpses piling up in the village, Belle must find a way to see the man beneath the beast and Rufus must learn to believe in the love of a woman who has no reason to trust him. Only by working together can they stop a vengeful ghost before it torments the guests or before the killer strikes again.

<http://www.shereenvedam.com/>
[@ShereenVedam](https://www.facebook.com/ShereenVedam) <https://twitter.com/ShereenVedam>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzFVC4czH0w&feature=youtu.be>
Late March, 2013



Joan Vincent

NEVER TO PART

De Rigueur Press ebook 978-0-9852913-4-1

Regency Paranormal

The Dremore Legend promises treasure but more importantly, enduring love. When treachery threatens the current Lord Dremore, the family ghosts contrive to aid him. Daphne, our heroine, who believes Dremore responsible for her brother's huge gaming losses, is desperate to find the treasure. As they follow the clues ever closer to the treasure they risk losing their lives, the treasure, and most of all their hearts.

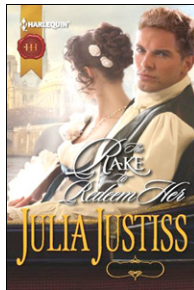
Available at RegencyReads.com <http://tinyurl.com/cs8lkxe>

www.joanvincent.net

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Joan-Vincent/417333368316017>

A very limited number of print books are available at <http://joanvincent.net/booksNever.php>

Late March, 2013



Julia Justiss

THE RAKE TO REDEEM HER

Book 2 of The Ransleigh Rogues

Harlequin Historical

ISBN: 0373297335

Regency Historical

Will Ransleigh wants to track down the woman who ruined his cousin's diplomatic career and bring her back to England to absolve Max. But Elodie

Lefevre hasn't survived revolution, war and poverty to bow to the wishes of any man. "Justiss brings an infamous seductress together with an unreformed rogue and lets the sparks fly." –

Romantic Times Magazine

--An RT KISS award to hero Will Ransleigh

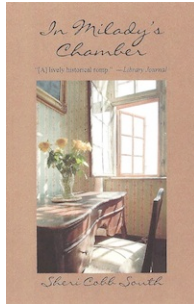
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April 2013





Sheri Cobb South
IN MILADY'S CHAMBER

CreateSpace, ISBN: 978-1483915739

Regency Mystery

When beautiful young Lady Fieldhurst discovers her faithless husband dead in her boudoir with her nail scissors protruding from his neck, it is up to John Pickett, twenty-four years old and new to the Bow Street force, to prove her innocence. "This charming and lively historical cozy is the author's first venture into the mystery genre, and she has created a definite winner. Pickett is a clever

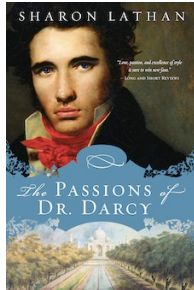
and amusing fella who well warrants a follow-up series." --I Love a Mystery

Trade paperback re-issue of the 2006 Five Star hardcover edition.

www.shericobbssouth.com

www.facebook.com/SheriCobbSouth?ref=stream

April 2013



Sharon Lathan
THE PASSIONS OF DR. DARCY

Sourcebooks Landmark, 1402273495

Georgian/Regency Historical Fiction & Romance

George Darcy is the second son of a wealthy landowner in Georgian Era England and, at 22, is considered to be a brilliant, rising star in England's field of medicine. However, Dr. Darcy refuses the easy, comfortable pathway and enlists as a physician with the British East India Company, embarking on a

personal quest where he strives to change the face of medicine while yearning to fill the void left within his soul at the death of his twin. His search for family, enduring love, and lost companionship is a quest not wholly realized until his return to England and Pemberley after thirty years of amazing adventures. It is then that a new generation of family and friends that will heal the physician, and to his greatest surprise, where the true love of his life awaits.

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April 2013

CHANGE RINGING - A Mystery to Americans – Grace Kone

Part Two of Two

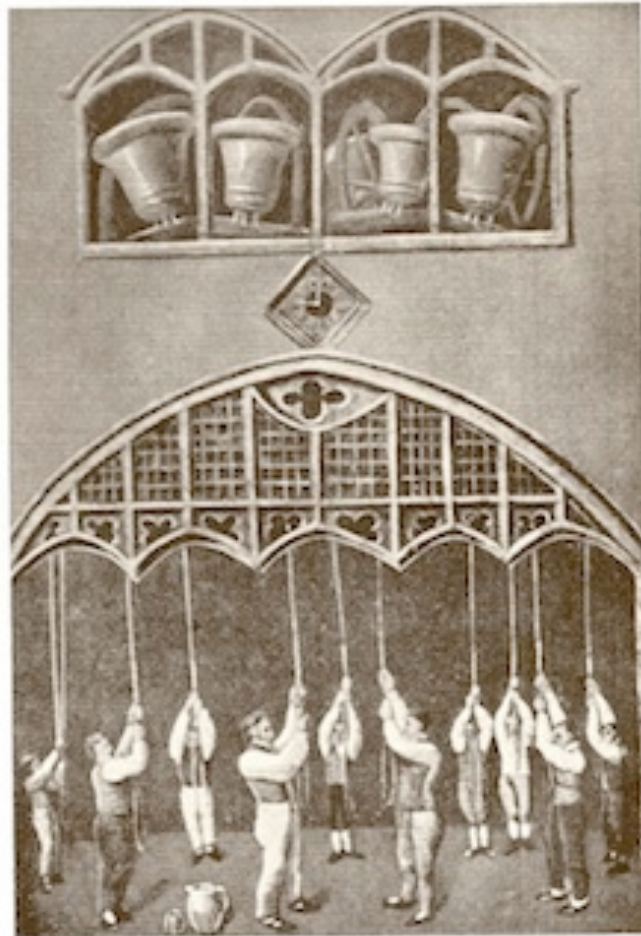


FIG. 48.—KENDAL RINGERS OF 1828.

[To face p. 309.]

Kendal Ringers of 1828: Morris, Ernest. The History and Art of Change Ringing. London Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1931. No attribution given.

Above, a group of ten bell-ringers in 1828. (Note bells in the “up” position.)

Bell ringers were paid, even from the earliest times. Peals were rung for Sunday services, church holidays, special occasions. They were rung for village fairs, the squire's birthday, the end of harvest, births and deaths. Some individuals left bequests for the bells to ring on special anniversaries. One of the more unusual being a gentleman of Bath in 1813 who requested the bells be "muffled" and "solemn and doleful" changes be rung every May 14 to commemorate his happy release from "Domestic Tyranny."

Great "peals" (the successful completion of a specified number of changes) were so highly regarded that they were recorded in church registries, with plaques often being put up on the ring-chamber walls. In 1931 Ernest Morris authored a book listing most of these great feats of ringing. To do so, he traveled the length and breadth of England, personally recording each one. Here are a few excerpts from the early 19th century:

Liverpool. "On October 25, 1814, a peal of 5040* Grandsire Triples was rung . . . one of the finest struck peals ever rung."

St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich. "Thursday May 23rd 1811, was rung on the old peal of eight bells, 5040 changes of Bob Major in 3 hours and 15 minutes by the following persons." [It goes on to name each ringer and the "conductor.]"

New College, Oxford. "Rung in this tower on Easter Monday, March 27th 1815, a complete Peal of 10,008 GRANDSIRE QUATERS in 6 hrs. 42 mins. By the Society of Oxford Cumberland Youths." [again, followed by the names of the ringers and the "caller"]

Mansfield Youths. "On Monday 17th 1806 Mr. Richard Peat's Complete Peal of BOB MAJOR Composed of 6000 Changes was rung at Mansfield Church by the Youths of Mansfield, in 4 hours & 4 minutes." [plus names - from a frame in the steeple]

Oldham. "On October 24, 1809, the Society rang 15,120 Bob Major in eight hours forty-six minutes."

Wakefield Society. "On the 27th August 1814 the above named Wm. Woodhead rung the 7th bell in the church of Ottley through a peal of treble bob consisting of 12,320 changes in 7 hours 15 minutes, being the longest peal in this method ever rung in England."

"On Monday March 27th 1826 the Company of all saints Ringers, Wakefield, ascended the Tower of the Parish Church, and had the honour of Ringing, in a Masterly style, a true and complete peal of SUPERLATIVE SURPRISE ROYAL, consisting of 5400 changes, in three hours and Twenty-six minutes, by Ten men only . . . The great superiority of this Peal over any other is, it being the only true Peal ever rung in the Kingdom in so intricate a method, and will be a standing laurel for the Society for ages to come."

*Keep in mind that each change is "times" the number of bells. For example, if an 8-bell church rings 5000 changes, one or another of the 8 bells is heard 40,000 times during that peal.

* * *

Whether you consider Change Ringing an art or a team sport, it's easy to see that the ringers quoted above were highly pleased with themselves.

Modern Change Ringing. Bells were not rung in England from the dramatic evacuation of Dunkirk in May/June 1940 until after the British victory at El Alamein (Africa) in November 1942. The reason: the bells, which could be heard everywhere, were to be rung only to signal an invasion. But after the tide of war began to turn, churches phased the bells back into the old routines. Certainly, bells were being rung in a church in Bath at some time prior to VE day or my husband would never have learned how to ring. (His ordnance battalion was preparing vehicles for the D-day invasion.)

Bell-ringing was an almost exclusively male domain until the end of the 19th c. (although I suspect more than one female substituted for a missing bell-ringer over the years, just never in competition). The first lady to ring in an official tower-ring peal is recorded in 1896. In general, however, as more ladies became bell-ringers, the “bands” were segregated into all male or all female. I suspect it was the lack of men during World War II which changed all that, with “mixed” ringing now the norm. One interesting source, a female English author who tried bell-ringing because she had a heroine who was a bell-ringer, discovered it took eight hours to learn how to properly pull the rope, let alone toll in sync with the others! She also insinuates that romance—even a dash of adultery—has reached the bell towers of England. (Stedman, who wrote his “methods” for the male youth of London, may be rolling in his grave!)

Change ringing is still very much alive, particularly in the land of its birth. Quote from *Wikipedia*: “The Central Council, by means of its peal records, also keeps track of record length peals, both on tower bells and handbells. (The record for tower bells remains the 1963 Loughborough extent of Plain Bob Major (40,320 changes))”

And from The Central Council's website, January 2013:

Why learn to ring?

- Friends around the world
- Lifelong learning experience
- Maintain a traditional skill
- A service to the church
- Team activity
- A great mental workout
- Opportunity to visit amazing places

~ * ~

I strongly suggest it's time Change Ringing made it into Regency novels. Simply because Jane Austen and Georgette Heyer never mentioned it doesn't mean those bells weren't chiming every chance they got. Can't you see the not-quite-what-dad-wanted son of an earl dashing off to the village to ring bells? Or maybe his sister demanding equal opportunity? A female who saves the day of a competitive peal, although she has to wear boy's garb to do it. A peer of the realm

who has to forever ring the “tenor” because he can’t keep up with rapid mathematical changes a 12-year-old orphan aces with no trouble. Clergy/ringer animosity causing a scandal in the village. (In one village the ringers actually locked the vicar out of the bell chamber.) Or, as in *Ring Out the Dead* (see below), you could have an old curmudgeon who can’t stand the bells and does his best to get them silenced. The possibilities are as endless as the author’s imagination.

Addenda for those who would like to know more:

The Wikipedia article: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Change_ringing

Ring Out Your Dead, from the Fifth Season of Midsommer Murders - an excellent way to see how bells are hung, how they’re rung, how they sound. Includes the fervor of dedicated bell-ringers and a touch of clergy/bell-ringer animosity.

The Nine Tailors by Dorothy Sayers, a mystery featuring change-ringing

Bell Ringing for the 2012 Olympics: (copy & paste URL)
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/lifestyle/9143030/A-bellringing-bonanza-is-planned-for-the-Jubilee-and-Olympics.html>.

Article on contemporary Change Ringing - at the Central Council of Church Bell Ringer’s Website: <http://www.cccbr.org.uk/changeringing>

Google “Change Ringing Audio” and/or “Change Ringing CDs” to hear the sound of bells rung in “changes.”

A few expressions spawned by change ringing:

Learn the ropes - to learn a new skill
Ring the changes - to endure a series of emotions or events
Ring a peal (over) - to scold

~ * ~

Yes, bell-ringing is alive and well, but recruits are always needed.
Anyone want to “learn the ropes”?

Attribution of graphics in “Change Ringing” by Grace Kone

Grace Kone, who writes as Blair Bancroft
www.blairbancroft.com
<http://mosaicmoments.blogspot.com>

Sources for this article:

Duckworth, Richard.* *Tintinnalogia, or The Art of Ringing*. London: Duckworth, 1668
Morris, Ernest. *The History and Art of Change Ringing*. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1931
Camp, John. *Bells and Bellringing*. Aylesbury: Shire Publications, 1968 & 1975
Powell, E. S. & M. *The Ringers' Handbook*. Leeds: Whitehead & Miller, 1973
Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia

* Although Fabian Stedman wrote the original instructions for “method” (mathematical) Change Ringing, his name does not appear in the manuscript. (Amazon, however, lists him as “co-author” on its website.) Only by reading more modern texts on Change Ringing can one find the name of the Father of Method Change Ringing, Fabian Stedman. Richard Duckworth was the publisher.

New in Ebook



Barbara Monajem

THE MAGIC OF HIS TOUCH (May Day Mischief, Book One)

Harlequin Historical Undone, 978-1-460-31096-0

Regency Historical Novella (with a touch of the paranormal)

Tired of being paraded before every eligible bachelor, Peony Whistleby decides it's time to find her true love—through the ancient custom of rolling naked in the dew on May Day morning. But the magic goes awry when she is caught in the act—and by an entirely unsuitable man. And yet, the way his eyes linger upon her flesh ignites a sensual craving that can only be satisfied by his touch...

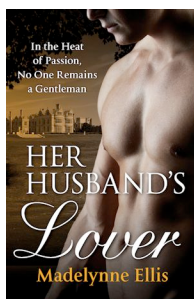
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April 2013



Madelynne Ellis

HER HUSBAND'S LOVER

Mischief, HarperCollins, ASIN: B00AAU7AEE

Regency Erotic Romance, Menage

Emma Langley abhors physical contact, consequential she's shocked to her toes when she realises she attracted to one of her father's guests. Robert, Lord Darleston is like no other man she's ever met. He's flamboyant, charming and terrifies her as much as he arouses her.

Nor is Emma the only person caught under his spell...

Forced into an arranged marriage to avoid exposure as a sodomite, Robert Darleston has a reputation as a rakehell and a voluptuary. His wife is a bitter, scheming harpy, whose

rumor-mongering has already driven him from London into the heart of the English countryside. Here, fate unexpectedly reunites Darleston with his former lover, Lyle Langley. Torn apart by the intervention of their families, the primary barrier to their reunion is now Emma, Lyle's wife, a woman Darleston is fascinated by and has no wish to disrespect. All seems hopeless, that is, until Lyle admits that Emma is frigid and their marriage unconsummated.

Darleston proposes a plan... If he can just win Emma over, then maybe they can find happiness as a threesome. Old ghosts, a jealous wife, and an outraged father stand in his way.

<http://www.madelynne-ellis.com>

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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Madelynne-Ellis/141618932598924>

March 2013



Deb Marlowe
THE LOVE LIST
Regency Historical

Miss Brynne Wilmott escaped her monstrous betrothed once, with the inadvertent help of the Duke of Aldmere. Now Lord Marstoke has revived the old Harris List--that wickedly witty annual register of London's light skirts--and is using it to destroy her future. Aldmere has no wish to involve himself in Miss Wilmott's affairs, but his brother is mixed up in the nasty business and has gone missing. Reluctantly, the two agree to work together. Their search leads them through some of London's most dangerous haunts and it quickly becomes clear that Marstoke's plans are more twisted and treasonous than anyone has suspected. Yet the danger and intrigue are as nothing compared to the effect that Nathan and Brynne have on each other . . .

Available at Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, iBooks and Smashwords

www.DebMarlowe.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Deb-Marlowe/70397149702>

<https://twitter.com/DebMarlowe>

April 2013



Karla Darcy
THE DIVIDED HEARTS
Glades Publishing, 978-0-9857614-6-2
Traditional Regency

If you love Downton Abbey and Jane Austen you'll love The Divided Hearts! This is the 7th book in the Sweet Deception Regency series. At the death of her mother Lady Judith Hallowell decides to visit her father in America. She agrees to find out if her Godmother's grandson is still loyal to England. Despite her father's high praise of the man, she is stunned when Nathanael appears as a pompous dandy with powdered hair and peacock clothing. As she falls in love with a new country, she can't understand how she can have feelings for someone so shallow and yearns to find someone like

the mysterious Palatine who is considered a hero in the fledgling colonies on the brink of war?

Available at Amazon, B&N, KOBO, iTunes

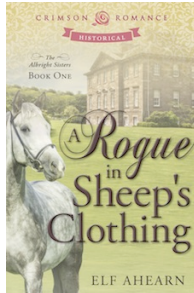
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<http://www.facebook.com/karla.darcy.3>

April, 2013



Elf Ahearn

A ROGUE IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

Crimson Romance

Regency romance with a Gothic twist.

In Lord Hugh Davenport's opinion, women of the *ton* perpetually hide behind a mask of deception. That's hard for Ellie Albright, the daughter of an earl, to swallow – especially since she's disguised herself as a stable hand to get back the prized stallion her father sold to Hugh to pay a debt. If Hugh learns her true identity she'll lose the horse and her family will go bankrupt. Somehow, though, losing Hugh's affection is beginning to seem even worse.

Already only a step away from being snagged in her own web of lies, Ellie's deceit threatens to spin out of control when Hugh's mother invites Ellie and her sisters to a house party. Now Ellie has to scramble to keep Hugh from knowing she's the stable girl he wants to marry, while simultaneously trying to win his trust as herself. Can she keep her costumes straight long enough to save her family? And even if she does, will it be worth losing his love?

Available at Amazon.com, B&N and Smashwords.com

elfahearn.com

Author blog – The Writer's Cat

www.facebook.com/elf.ahearn

April 2013

John Philip Kemble – An Ever Dignified Heartthrob — Elf Ahearn

John Philip Kemble was the heartthrob of his time, and that time lasted from the moment he trod the boards at Drury Lane as Hamlet in 1783 until he gave a final, graceful bow at Covent Garden playing Coriolanus in 1817. Think of him as a later-day Colin Firth – good looks, a great voice and a large dollop of gravitas.

In class conscious England, it mattered that Kemble was descended from two generations of strolling actors. Strollers walked from town to town mounting plays in poorly lit barns, costuming themselves in dressing gowns donated by charitable squires. One audience member noted a drunken emperor, a lord as “elegant as a ticket porter, a queen with one ruffle on” and



another lord without shoes, “or at least but an apology for them.” The troop Kemble’s father managed, did a little better than most strollers, but the patriarch often cast his productions using his 12 children, thereby lightening the payroll. Still, he did not want his children leading the vagabond life of an actor, and packed his oldest, John Philip, off to France to become a Catholic priest.

Kemble’s sister Sarah was the first to disobey her father. She took to the London stage becoming the “Immortal Siddons,” one of the greatest tragedians in British history.

Try as he might, however, John Philip Kemble couldn’t make a go of religion. Eventually, he also rebelled against his father’s dictates and began making a name for himself as an actor in Dublin. Word of his success as Hamlet quickly reached London in 1783, where Sarah urged the manager of the Drury Lane Theatre to sign her brother post haste. Covent Garden got wind of the deal and sent its own emissary, but his sister’s company won the day.

Styles in the theatre at that time had changed from dramas about the nobility to morality tales of bourgeois maidens triumphing over poverty and assaults on their chastity. “The measure of our dullness is full,” Horace Walpole complained. Actors tended to milk the audience for laughs in comedies, or storm about in a frenzy of passion in tragedies. They rarely, if ever, addressed one another, preferring to concentrate exclusively on the audience.

Kemble’s technique differed. He stood his ground and, using elegant sweeps of the hand, delivered his lines like an orator. His Hamlet mesmerized the audience. By the next morning, everyone in London was talking about him. Half the populace worshiped the new god of the theatre, the other half thought him pedantic and stiff.

Five years of leading roles followed until Kemble was made manager of Drury Lane. His first move was to virtually banish all new plays. That season the theatre produced seven Shakespeare dramas and Kemble starred in all of them.

He had a knack for understanding the desires of his audience. During these years his editorial pen weighed heavy on the bard. Scenes were cut or rewritten to suit the delicate sensibilities of the crowd – Desdemona lived, Hamlet failed to address the players, because not being a professional the Dane shouldn’t tell someone how to conduct his business, etc. Kemble also brought greater spectacle to productions, introducing live animals and aquatic effects. Whenever box office receipts lagged, he tapped his sister’s considerable talent. The two of them appeared often in Macbeth together, which created a theatrical sensation.

These golden years could have continued were it not for the Drury Lane’s owner – greedy, irresponsible, brilliant Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridan. Sheridan wrote *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*, two of the best plays to come out of this otherwise dry period in English drama. Flush with success, Sheri, as he was called, took up politics, becoming a member of the House of Commons. He regularly drained the coffers of the Drury Lane to support his political ambitions.

After years of putting up with this behavior, Kemble could bear Sheri's interference no longer. In 1802 he quit, and the following year took up the management of Covent Garden. On Sept. 20, 1808, the playhouse burned to the ground. Almost immediately, it was decided the company would build a larger theatre, one far grander than Drury Lane. The city went giddy with support – the Duke of Norththumberland gave a gift of 10,000 pounds to insure England had its national theatre.

As construction began, Kemble left to tour Ireland to recoup some of the losses he'd sustained due to the fire. (He owned a sixteenth share in the theatre.) By the time he returned, the mood in London had turned ugly. Everywhere were rumblings that the house was too large, and that the proprietors had stuffed it with private boxes to make more money. When a rate increase on tickets hit the news, a volcano erupted.

Opening night, Kemble and Sarah relied on the popularity of *Macbeth* to tamp down the mood. But from the moment the doors opened, chaos reigned. Patrons who bought expensive boxes found them filled with rabble; the better seats were swarmed by the angry mob who ousted those who'd paid for them. Kemble's welcoming speech was drowned out by catcalls and jeers. As the night progressed and the actors doggedly recited their lines, the crowd grew rowdier, booing and hissing so that scarcely a word was heard past the first few rows. Ladies and gentlemen fled the house and were quickly replaced by a fresh influx of ruffians.

Night after night the riots continued. Kemble became known as "Black Jack" and placards were hawked on the streets vilifying him. The press rooted into his history, mocking his religious training, and colored prints depicting him as a poverty stricken stroller were circulated everywhere. From a symbol of restrained heroism, he became a black cloaked villain in the public's melodrama.

Three months of near bankrupting riots proceeded, coming at last to an end when a jury awarded five pounds to a well-to-do young man who led many of the riots. Utterly humiliated, Kemble had to go before a packed house and concede to its demand for the old ticket price. The following season the public finally let Kemble back into its heart, especially when he appeared in a repertory of his favorite Shakespeare plays. That year, the theatre made 100,000 pounds. A sum that can also be attributed to the presence of an elephant who made the first-ever pachyderm debut on a London stage.

Though Kemble outlived the public drubbing, by his mid fifties he'd become an old man. Suffering from asthma and gout, a result of drinking so much wine even in Regency England it was notable, he limped toward his final departure. The death blow came in 1814 when Edmund Kean riveted Drury Lane audiences with his characterization of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Unlike Kemble's elegant, declarative delivery, Kean filled his characters with passionate life that brought audiences cheering to their feet.

It took two more years for Kemble to retire, though no one doubted his time was up. He gave a final, triumphant performance as Coriolanus on June 23, 1817. "The orchestra stopped," wrote Herschel Baker in *John Philip Kemble, The Actor in His Theatre*, "the buzzing from the house waned and died away, the candles flared, and ... John Kemble, the last of all the Romans, paced

forth.... The huge audience rose as one man, and for five minutes the cheers resounded, while he, serene and faintly condescending to the end, smiled gravely at his public.”

The final bow came 16 years later on February 26, 1823 at Kemble’s home in Lausanne, Switzerland. As he lay dying, his old man servant burst into tears. “George, if you love me,” Kemble is reported to have said with his typical frost, “either cease crying or leave the room; reserve your tears till I am not sensible of them.” His weeping wife, Priscilla, was also led from the room to spare her husband the sound of her heartfelt grief.

Elf Ahearn is the author of the Regency romance, *A Rogue in Sheep’s Clothing*, published by Crimson Romance. For more information about Elf, please visit her on her Web site, elfahearn.com.

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