

THE LION IN WINTER by James Goldman

Author's Notes for Samuel French edition

Historical Notes for Random House edition

From **Samuel French** edition of playscript © 1966

Note: The italicized paragraph is not included in the Random House edition

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The historical material on Henry's reign is considerable insofar as battles, plots, wars, treaties, and alliances are concerned. This play - while simplifying the political maneuvering combining a meeting of the French and English kings in 1183 with a Royal Court held at Windsor in the following year into a Christmas Court that never was - is accurately based on the available data.

The facts we have, while clear enough as to the outcome of relationships - such things as who kills who and when - say little if anything about the quality and content of those relationships. The people in this play, their character and passions, while consistent with the facts we have, are fictions.

The play, finally, contains anachronisms in speech, thought, habit, custom and so on. Those the author is aware of - the way, for instance, Christmas is celebrated - are deliberate and not intended to outrage the historical aspects of the script.

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HISTORICAL NOTES

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There were no laws of primogeniture in Henry's time. It was a rare thing when the King was followed by his eldest son. When kings died, it was open season on the English throne, a fact responsible for much that Henry did.