

Actor Packet

*Into the Breeches!*

Curated By  
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## Glossary of Terms

**Lysistrata** (pg 10, Celeste): A bawdy anti-war comedy by the ancient Greek playwright Aristophanes, first staged in 411 BCE. It is the comic account of one woman's extraordinary mission to end the Peloponnesian War, as Lysistrata convinces the women of Greece to withhold sexual privileges from their husbands as a means of forcing the men to negotiate peace. *Source: [Ancient Literature](#).*

**Axis** (pg 11, Celeste): AKA the Axis Powers. Name given to the alliance of Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary before and during World War II. The name is taken from the 1936 treaty between Germany and Italy which formed the so-called "Rome-Berlin Axis."

**Rosalind, Olivia, Viola** (pg 11, Celeste): Rosalind is from *As You Like it*, Olivia and Viola are from *Twelfth Night*.

**The Henriad** (pg 11, Celeste): In Shakespearean scholarship, the Henriad refers to a group of four history plays about Prince Harry/Henry V which includes *Richard II*, *Henry IV* (parts 1 & 2), and *Henry V*, as well as four plays about The War of the Roses which includes *Henry VI* (parts 1-3), and *Richard III*. However, in the play's reference "The Henriad" is referring only to *Henry IV* (Parts 1 & 2), and *Henry V*.

**Saint Crispian's Day** (pg 12, Celeste): October 25, 1415- the day on which the French and English armies fought the battle of Agincourt in the middle period of the Hundred Years War. Also known as St. Crispin's Day, it refers to "a time of battle" or "a time to fight." The Shakespearean context refers to the [Feast of St Crispin's Day speech](#) (*Henry V*, IV.iii) spoken by King Henry V. The scene is set on the eve of the battle of Agincourt at the English camp in northern France. Through the course of the speech, Henry V motivates his men - his "band of brothers," outnumbered greatly by the French - by recalling previous English military defeats of the French. *Source: [Interesting Literature](#).*

**Amapola** (pg 13, Celeste): Amapola is Spanish for "poppy." See photo.

**"Amapola, the pretty little poppy..."** (pg 14, Maggie): Lyrics from "Amapola," a 1920 song by Spanish American composer José María Lacalle García. In the 1930s, the song became a standard of the rumba repertoire, later crossing over into pop music charts. Click link for video to song!



**Neophyte** (pg 17, Ellsworth): A beginner or novice.

**WASPs** (pg 20, Maggie): The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) was a civilian women pilots organization that flew military aircraft during WWII. The women tested and ferried aircraft, and trained other pilots. Their work enabled male pilots to join combat. See photo.



**Billing and cooing** (pg 22, June): To talk and kiss quietly.

**Hotspur and Kate** (pg 23, June): References to Henry Percy (nicknamed Hotspur) and Lady Percy (aka Kate) from *Henry IV* parts 1 & 2.

**Longish in the tooth** (pg 27, Maggie): AKA long in the tooth, meaning old.

**Vaughn Monroe** (pg 29, June): an American baritone singer, trumpeter, and big band leader, most popular in the 1940s and 1950s.

**Pearl Harbor** (pg 44, June): A U.S. naval base near Honolulu, Hawaii. On December 7, 1941 hundreds of Japanese fighter planes descended on the base, where they destroyed and/or damaged nearly 20 American naval vessels, including eight battleships, and over 300 airplanes. More than 2,400 Americans died in the attack, including civilians, and another 1,000 people were wounded. Source: [History](#).

**Swish** (pg 44, Stuart): A derogatory term for describing queer or gay men.

**Negro Story** (pg 47, Ida): a 1940's newspaper published during Chicago's Black literary renaissance that provided outlets for fiction writers, poets, and essayists.

**Mistress Quickly** (pg 52, Stuart): A female inn-keeper character who appears in *Henry IV* (parts 1 & 2), *Henry V*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

**Charley's Aunt** (pg 53, Maggie): an 1892 farce written by British playwright/actor Brandon Thomas, in which a man dresses up as his aunt.

**Pyrrhic victory** (pg 57, Ellsworth): A Pyrrhic victory is a victory that is not worth winning because so much is lost to achieve it. The word comes from the name Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who suffered heavy losses in defeating the Romans in Apulia in 279 B.C.E.

**Brutus** (pg 62, Stuart): A reference to the character of Marcus Brutus from *Julius Caesar*. In the play, Brutus is a Roman general and close friend of Caesar yet still he joins in the conspiracy against Caesar's life, convincing himself that Caesar's death is for the greater good of Rome.

**Khaki-wacky** (pg 62, June): a slang term for women who like men in uniform.

**General Patton** (pg 63, Ida): During WWII, he commanded the Third U.S. Army in France and Germany as well as the Seventh U.S. Army in Italy and North Africa. Led U.S. troops through an invasion of Casablanca during “Operation Torch” in 1942.

**Roger Wilco** (pg 64, Stuart): Short for “Roger that. Will comply.”

**Margaret Dumont** (pg 64, Maggie): An American stage and film actress (from the 20s-40s) best known for being the comic foil to the Marx brothers. See photo.



**Groucho Marx** (pg 65, Winifred): An American comedian and actor of stage, film, and radio, most popular during the 30s and 40s. He was known for his wisecracking hustler characters and his distinctive appearance which included an exaggerated stooped posture, spectacles, a cigar, a thick greasepaint mustache, and dark eyebrows.

**Sieg Heil** (pg 65, Stuart): a victory salute originally used by Nazis at political rallies.

**The Allies** (pg 67, Grace): AKA the Allied Powers. Refers to the alliance of Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union during WWII.

**Gold star in the window** (pg 67, Grace): A blue star flag was a sign that a family member was fighting in the war. If a soldier died in combat then the flag was replaced with a gold star. During World War II, the star flags were common sights across the country, often displayed in windows. See photo.



**V for Victory patches** (pg 69, Maggie): On July 18, 1941, U.K. Prime Minister Winston Churchill spoke on the BBC radio to the occupied countries of Europe: “The V sign is the symbol of the unconquerable will of the occupied territories and a portent of the fate awaiting Nazi tyranny...” Thus was launched the “V for Victory” campaign, the most successful propaganda campaign in history. By August 1941, the campaign caught on in the U.S. and thousands of posters, stamps, stationary, and envelopes were printed with the slogan. See photo.



**Titania and Cleopatra** (pg 74, Maggie): Titania is from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Cleopatra is from *Antony and Cleopatra*.

**Lunge, parry, feint** (pg 77, Stuart): Refers to different fencing tactics. The most common way of delivering an attack in fencing is the **lunge**, where the fencer reaches out with his/her front foot and straightens his/her back leg. This maneuver has the advantage of allowing the fencer to maintain balance while covering far more distance than in a single step. The **parry** is when a fencer deflects or blocks the opponent's blade with their own to defend themselves. The **feint** attack is where you point your blade at your opponent.

**Tread water** (pg 79, Celeste): Failing to advance or make progress.

**Victory roll** (pg 85, Grace): a popular women's hairstyle from the early 1940s characterized by voluminous curls of hair that are either on top of the head or frame the face. See photo.



## Shakespearean Text Citations

“O, for a Muse of fire...” (pg 9, Maggie): spoken by the Chorus in the prologue of *Henry V*.

“O, my good Lord, why are you thus alone?...” (pg 23, June): From *Henry IV* part 1 (II.iii.28-30).

“Tell me, sweet Lord, what is’t that takes from thee...” (pg 23, June): From *Henry IV* part 1 (II.iii.39-40, 55-58, 62-63).

“Therefore take heed how you impawn our person...” (pg 26, Grace): From *Henry V* (I.ii.23-30).

“A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!” (pg 31, June): A reference to Richard’s line (same words) in *Richard III* (V.iv.7).

“Marry then, sweet wag, when thou art king...” (pg 40, Winnifred): From *Henry IV* part 1 (I.ii.21-25).

“But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?...” (pg 41, Grace): From *Henry IV* part 1 (III.ii. 121-123).

“Do not think so. You shall not find it so.” (pg 41-42, Celeste): From *Henry IV* part 1 (III.ii.129-134).

“A hundred thousand rebels die in this!” (pg 42, Grace): From *Henry IV* part 1 (III.ii.160-161).

“By Heaven, methinks it were an easy leap...” (pg 46, Stuart): From *Henry IV* part 1 (I.iii.200-206).

“Then shall I swear to Kate, and you to me...” (pg 48, June/Winnifred/Grace): From *Henry V* (V.ii.345-346).

“How poor are they who have not patience!” (pg 49, Celeste): A reference to Iago’s line, “How poor are they that have not patience!/  
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?/  
Thou know’st we work by wit and not by witchcraft...” from *Othello* (II.iii.273).

“What a piece of work is man!” (pg 49, Celeste): A reference to Hamlet’s line, “What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty!...” from *Hamlet* (II.ii.).

“For I profess not talking...” (pg 53, Ida): From *Henry IV* part 1 (V.ii.91-95, 97-100).

“**Tomorrow and tomorrow...**” (pg 54, Stuart): A reference to Macbeth’s line, “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow/ Creeps in this petty pace from day to day/ To the last syllable of recorded time...” from *Macbeth* (V.v.19).

“**I will redeem all this on Hotspur’s head...**” (pg 55, Grace): From *Henry IV* part 1 (III.ii.132-134).

“**Once more unto the breach, dear friends...**” (pg 56, Celeste): From *Henry V* (III.i.1).

“**I’ll be sworn my pocket was picked.**” (pg 64, Winifred)

“**Who, I? A woman?**” (pg 64, Stuart)

“**How, poor? Look upon his face.**” (pg 65, Winifred)

“**What, will you make a younker of me?**” (pg 66, Winifred)

“**O Jesu, I have heard the Prince tell him...**” (pg 66, Stuart)

“**How? The Prince is a Jack, a sneak up...**” (pg 67, Winifred)

- All from the Falstaff / Quickly scene in *Henry IV* part 1 (III.iii).

“**And wherefore should these good news make me sick?**” (pg 72, Celeste): From *Henry IV* part 2 (IV.iii.103, 110-112).

“**How many thousand of my poorest subjects are at this hour asleep!**” (pg 75, Celeste): From *Henry IV* part 2 (III.i.4-8, 26-28, 30-31).

“**I can no longer brook thy vanities!**” (pg 77, Ida)

“**...Nay, you shall find no boy’s play here...**” (pg 77, Winifred)

“**O Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth!...**” (pg 77, Ida)

“**For worms, brave Hotspur. Fare thee well, great heart!...**” (pg 77, Grace)

- All from the Hotspur / Falstaff / Henry V scene in *Henry IV* part 1 (V.iv)

Now men, “**wherefore rejoice!**” (pg 78, Celeste): a reference to Murellus’ line, “Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?” from *Julius Caesar* (I.i.32).

“**Fair Katherine, and most fair...**” (pg 80, Grace)

“**Your Majesty shall mock at me...**” (pg 80, June)

“**If thou would have such a one, take me...**” (pg 81, Grace)

- All from the King Henry / Katherine scene in *Henry V* (V.ii.)

“**Let he who hath no stomach in this fight...**” (pg 87, Grace): From *Henry V* (IV.iii.37-54, 57).

From “**And Crispin Crispian shall ne’er go by...**” (pg 88, Celeste) through “**...that fought with us upon Saint Crispin’s Day**” (pg 88, Grace): From *Henry V* (IV.iii).

“**...nobly suffer the slings and tomatoes...**” (pg 88, Maggie): a reference to Hamlet’s line, “Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer/ the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune...” from *Hamlet* (III.i.58-59).

## Text Changes

**Original:** Pg 15, scene heading - Rhode Island Country Club Clubroom

**Fictional Options:** Massachusetts Country Club, Boston Country Club

**Historical Option:** The Country Club

- Established in 1882, [The Country Club](#) in Brookline, MA (see photo) is one of the oldest country clubs in the country. It is one of the five charter clubs that founded the United States Golf Association (USGA).



**Original:** Pg 16, Ellsworth - “The Navy’s taken over Newport, Brown’s training officers, and Narragansett’s blacking out its windows every night.”

**Change To:** “The Navy’s taken over Boston, MIT’s training officers, and [see third note below] blacking out its windows every night.”

- In 1932, the U.S. Department of the Navy assigned the [Boston \(Charlestown\) Navy Yard](#) (see photo) as the designated building site for destroyers. The Yard was also responsible for the maintenance and repair of large Coast Guard escort ships that were protecting merchant ships bringing provisions, fuel, and military supplies to Great Britain. By 1943, the Boston Navy Yard employed over 50,000 workers, including a large number of women and minorities.
- [MIT’s contributions to the war effort](#) were extensive. “They had training programs for naval and army officers. Their research facilities developed new high-tech radar systems, the Ground-Controlled Approach system for landing aircraft in low-visibility, as well as Draper Gun Sight which positions a gun at the proper lead angle to fire at moving targets. Student researchers also created a long-range weather forecasting system, and developed ways to improve oxygen production and transportation for use in submarines, aircraft, and hospitals.”
- In the original line, Narragansett is a town right on the water- an easy target. For this reason, I suggest choosing a town that would be accessible by the water and/or is exposed, like [Hull](#) or [Winthrop](#). Although, [Charlestown](#) or [Bunker Hill](#) wouldn’t be bad options for this replacement as Charlestown is where the Navy Yard was. You could also say “the seaport” considering its proximity and accessibility to downtown.



**Original:** Pg 17, Ellsworth - “For generations, Rhode Islanders will double over with laughter...”

**Change To:** “For generations, Bostonians will double over with laughter...”



**Original:** Pg 18, Winifred - "...yes, back at Miss Porter's finishing school."

**Change To:** "...yes, back at [see note below]."

- If Winifred is in her 50s, she would've attended a finishing school sometime between 1895 and 1905. [Girls' Latin School](#) (initially known as [Boston Normal School](#) and more recently as [Girls' High School of Boston](#)) has a long history beginning in the mid-1800s. Based on her age, Girls Latin School would be the more accurate choice but you could also go with Boston Normal School (even if people don't know it actually existed, the name sounds legitimate), or simply have her say "back in finishing school."

**Original:** Pg 18, Winifred - "...The Cranston Clarion called me 'rounding out the cast'."

**Fictional Options:** Boston Weekly Journal, Boston Morning Journal, Boston Morning Star

**Original:** Pg 20, Stuart - "In the *Journal* and the *Courier-Express*."

**Historical Options:** *Boston Post* (1831-1956), *Boston Globe* (1872-present), *Boston Chronicle* (1915-1966).

**Original:** Pg 22, Ida - "...a mother of two from Pawtucket."

**Change To:** "...a mother of two from Roxbury."

- Black families started moving to lower [Roxbury in the 1930s](#). Due to rising property values in the South End and discriminatory home lending practices downtown, by the early 1970s most of Boston's black community was living in or near Roxbury. Today, Roxbury is 53% black, 28% Latino, and 12% white.

**Original:** Pg 26, Grace - "...Paul's mother lives on Fed Hill."

**Historical Options:** Charlestown, South Boston (sub-neighborhoods: City Point, Telegraph Hill, Fort Point, the Seaport).

**Original:** Pg 29, Ida - "...there's a war nursery for your kids right on Chalkstone Avenue."

**Fictional Options:** Beacon Street, Boylston Street, Commonwealth Avenue, Washington Street

- "When the U.S. started recruiting women for WWII factory [and other labor] jobs...the government [began subsidizing childcare](#) for the first (and only) time in the nation's history."
- I can't find confirmation that these government-funded childcare centers existed in Massachusetts during WWII, but if they did they would likely have been in a more central part of town.

**Original:** Pg 29, June - "...Vaughn Monroe is going to be singing at a rally in Westerly..."

**Change To:** "...Vaughn Monroe is going to be singing at a rally in Cambridge."

- [Vaughn Monroe](#) (see photo) attended New England Conservatory for one semester in 1935. He later formed his first orchestra in Boston in 1940 and became its principal vocalist.



**Original:** Pg 35, scene heading and Ellsworth - "...a deranged female barging into the University Club..."

**Historical Option:** Keep it the same!

- Founded in 1891, [The University Club](#) is Boston's premier social and athletic club with programs for squash, aquatics, and fitness.

**Original:** Pg 44, Stuart - "...Providence is- it's a big small town."

**Change To:** "Boston is- it's a big small town."

**Original:** Pg 56, Celeste - "I believe Woonsocket Children's Theatre is planning..."

**Fictional Options:** Braintree, Framingham, Milford, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Wayland, Woburn, Worcester.

**Original:** Pg 57, scene heading - Rhode Island Country Club

**Change To:** Same as pg 15.

**Original:** Pg 57, Ellsworth and Maggie - Woonsocket

**Change To:** Same as pg 56.

**Original:** Pg 57, Ellsworth - "...inspecting one of my mills..."

**Change To:** "...inspecting one of my factories."

**Original:** Pg 59, Maggie - "...one that reflects the true face of Providence..."

**Change To:** "...one that reflects the true face of Boston..."

**Original:** Pg 62, June - "...I was up all night baking pies for the Stage Door Canteen."

**Historical Option:** Keep it the same!

- By 1940, [USO \(United Service Organizations\) clubs](#) were popping up "across America in buildings, train stations, and abandoned barns offering a constant flow of meals, social services, and dancing...By the height of America's involvement in WWII, more than 3,000 USO clubs dotted the globe, with an estimated 1.5 million volunteers helping out during the conflict."
- In 1942, the American Theatre Wing began hosting [Stage Door Canteens](#) (see photo) in the theater district where entertainers volunteered their talents as a way of supporting the morale of American troops during the war. The canteen's popularity led to the establishment of dozens of other canteens throughout the United States in cities like Boston, Philadelphia, and San Francisco.



**Original:** Pg 73, Celeste - "...while I delight the youth of Woonsocket..."

**Change To:** Same as pg 56 and pg 57.

**Original:** Pg 84, Ida - "I traced it out of the *Pittsburgh Courier*..."

**Fictional Options:** *The Boston Colored Citizen*, *The Boston Globe*

- *The Boston Colored Citizen* was in print between 1903 and 1909.
- *The Boston Globe* obviously printed articles about the war, but I can't find proof that they printed the "V for Victory" symbol.

## Gender on Shakespeare's Stage

Courtesy of the Writer's Theatre, "[Gender on Shakespeare's Stage: a Brief History.](#)"  
By Lucas Garcia, Dramaturg | 2018

The tradition of men portraying women on public stages dates back to the theatre of the Ancient Greeks, and is present in several other theatrical traditions from around the world. The reasons for the development of these traditions, which were to endure to various degrees for thousands of years, are intricately connected to how concepts of gender and sex were understood, and specifically the role of women in society. Ancient Greek women, like many women of Shakespeare's England, did not have the right to vote or own property, and were expected to remain at home and rear children.

Many of these same concepts were to form the core of 17th century English gender dynamics. During the time of Shakespeare and the reigns of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I, English ideas of sex and gender, the legal rights of women and the social expectations of femininity all played a significant role in the way that theatre was performed, the stories it told and who told them. In addition to other legal restrictions on the rights of women, there was considerable social pressure on women to behave according to specific social roles. Women were expected to be subservient, quiet and homebound, with their primary ambitions entirely confined to marriage, childbirth and homemaking; granted, social status and economic class played into what degree these expectations manifested, with the chief example being Queen Elizabeth I herself.

Acting was, in some ways, the exact opposite of those expectations, and female actors were associated with sexual incontinence, prostitution, lasciviousness and indecency. Though there is evidence that women acted in street performances, and in other notorious venues, all commercial acting companies of the time were made up entirely of men and it was illegal for women to act on stage professionally until 1661. Despite the profession of acting having a less than virtuous reputation, as well as a growing orthodox Christian objection to the theatre, these all-male companies were deemed as socially legitimate because they did not threaten gender hierarchy. Only the idea of women was portrayed and embodied on stage, and not the reality. These professional companies were often financed by royal patronage, for example, The King's Players.

...When a woman of this period transgressed gender boundaries and dressed in men's clothing in public, it associated her with the same social stigma that faced female actors, except that she was subject to arrest and imprisonment. One such woman was named Mary Frith, who was nicknamed Moll Cutpurse. Mary regularly went out in public dressed in men's clothing and was associated with London's criminal underground. She was also the subject of the 17th century play *The Roaring Girl*. Such behavior was understood as a threat to gender hierarchies of the time, and any woman apprehended "cross-dressing" was understood to be in



Figure 1: Mary Frith

rebellion against her betters, i.e. men. Any man caught in similar circumstances was also punished, as dressing in women's clothing was understood as a perversion of masculinity and a sign of moral and sexual degeneration.

Though the consequences for what is referred to as "cross-dressing" in public were considerable on a legal and social level, the theatre was a unique arena in which gender could be manipulated and toyed with in public, albeit by men only. Whether or not the practice of men playing women was generally perceived as a legitimate threat to masculinity is open for interpretation; it also can't be said for sure whether or not such a practice constituted an intentional challenge to the hierarchy or construction of gender in Early Modern England. Regardless, it was standard theatrical practice for men to portray women on stage in mannerism and in costume and for playwrights to write towards this expectation, just as it was convention for audiences to be fully aware of this practice.

During Shakespeare's time, theatres were experiencing social and legal pressure from the growing conservative Puritanism of the era. Tracts against the theatre often pointed to the moral and spiritual danger present in contemporary theatrical practices, including the portrayal of women by young men. These tracts also pointed to the danger in the act of public commercial theatre in general, especially because it destabilized gender expectations for women. The theatre was a commercial interest where women were, in Puritan imagination, at risk of overthrowing their rightful masters by exercising economic and social independence. These Puritan interests succeeded in shuttering the theatres for a period between 1642 and 1660, during the political turmoil of the English Civil Wars and Restoration. Even after 1661, with the rule of King Charles II, when women were legally allowed to act professionally, the negative social stigma of acting and the attending gender expectations were still in effect. As time passed and women of all races fought and agitated for expanded rights and privileges both in England and its colonies, and then later in what is now known as the United States, gender roles and expectations continued to change. In addition to the law, these changes were reflected (and sometimes caused by) evolutions in style, business, education and art. As women continued to be involved in theatre, gender play of a different sort emerged.

Perhaps one of the most famous examples of a woman portraying a man is Sarah Bernhardt's 1899 performance as *Hamlet*. In fact, by the turn of the 20th century it had become increasingly common for women to portray men in what was termed "breeches" roles. Scientific constructions of sex and gender have continued to shift since the time of Shakespeare alongside an ever-evolving social understanding of sex and gender. Of special note are current social trends with regard to gender non-conformity and gender variance amongst humans that are inviting new and exciting questions into the performance of Shakespeare's storied work...



Figure 2: Sarah Bernhardt