

IN MEMORIAM  
*Josephine Waters Bennett*

ON December 30, 1975, Josephine Waters Bennett died, and everyone who came to know her through her many articles in learned journals or through her books or through a warm, if sometimes prickly, personal contact has cause for deep regret. Her literary interests ranged from the medieval period through the Renaissance. Among her books, the most provocative and influential was *The Evolution of The Faerie Queene* (1942), an effort at literary and historical reconstruction that helped to initiate the current lively interest in Spenserian studies. Her continuing concern with textual matters was evidenced in her work on Sir John Mandeville, a volume which appeared in 1954. More recently her energies were directed to Shakespeare; in 1958 she edited *Much Ado* for the Pelican Shakespeare and this was followed in 1966 by another title that was also to prove provocative, *Measure for Measure as Royal Entertainment*. Her last work, in progress, was a study of the *Sonnets*.

In 1954, in conjunction with other specialists from along the Eastern seaboard, she helped to found the RSA, becoming the first editor of the Society's journal and preparing the first issue (of 52 pages), as she liked to recall, from the confines of her bedroom. Though she gave up the editorship in 1962, she continued a tireless advocate of the aims of the Society, attending and speaking at numberless local and national conferences and supporting other scholars and their activities in manifold ways.

During her long tenure at Hunter College of the City University of New York, followed by a stint as Visiting Professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus, she provided the same sympathy and support for her students. To do research, to edit, and to teach in the fellowship of other scholars, whether incipient or established, was for her a persistent mode of life, and her contributions, together with those of her late husband, Roger Bennett, who published seminal studies on Donne and Cornwallis, attest to a vital concern for the intellectual and cultural milieu of the Renaissance. A fitting summation of the productive career

of Josephine Waters Bennett (1899–1975) comes from the *Sonnets* on which she was last at work: ‘Thine eyes,’ we acknowledge, ‘have added feathers to the learned’s wing.’

[E.S.D.]

## Conferences

THE COUNCIL OF THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA will hold its twenty-second annual meeting at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, in conjunction with a conference to be held Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, March 5–6, organized under the terms of the Ruth and Clarence Kennedy endowment at Smith College of a Visiting Professorship in the Renaissance. The business meeting of the RSA Council will follow on Saturday afternoon, March 6.

The program, on the theme ‘Art and Politics in the Renaissance,’ has been arranged by Felix Gilbert (Institute for Advanced Study), holder of the Kennedy Professorship for 1975–76, and Myron P. Gilmore (Harvard U) as representative of the Renaissance Society. The first session, on Friday at 2 p.m., will be devoted to ‘The Role of the Arts in Florentine Politics from Savonarola to the Medicean Grand Dukes.’ An evening session on ‘The Arts in the Service of the Venetian Political Myth’ will be followed by a short concert of sixteenth-century motets composed in celebration of political events. The Saturday morning session will be concerned with ‘Art and the Rulers of the Great Monarchies.’

Persons planning to attend should notify Miss Mary McDougale, Secretary of Smith College, before February 15, 1976, indicating whether they will attend the dinner to be held on Friday evening and enclosing a check payable to Smith College for the registration fee of \$4, which includes cocktails and dinner.

THE 7TH ANNUAL OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE ON MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES will be held February 27–