



KING RICHARD III

UPDATED EDITION

Edited by Janis Lull

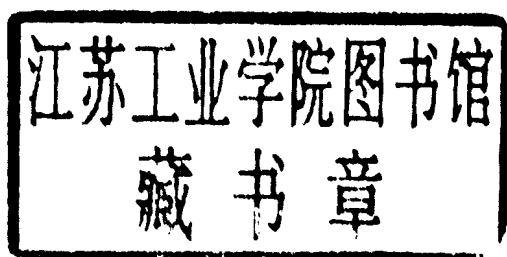
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Updated edition

Edited by

JANIS LULL

University of Alaska Fairbanks



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From the publication of the first volumes in 1984 the General Editor of the New Cambridge Shakespeare was Philip Brockbank and the Associate General Editors were Brian Gibbons and Robin Hood. From 1990 to 1994 the General Editor was Brian Gibbons and the Associate General Editors were A. R. Braunmuller and Robin Hood.

KING RICHARD III

King Richard III is one of Shakespeare's most popular and frequently performed plays. Janis Lull's introduction to this new edition, based on the First Folio, emphasises the play's tragic themes – individual identity, determinism and choice – and stresses the importance of women's roles in the play. It also underscores the special relationship between *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, demonstrating that the later tragedy re-examines issues raised in the earlier one. A thorough performance history of stage and film versions of *Richard III* shows how the text has been cut, rewritten and reshaped by directors and actors to enhance the role of Richard at the expense of other parts, especially those of the women. This updated edition contains a new introductory section covering recent criticism and performances – including the RSC cycles of the history plays – of this perennially popular play. The notes define the play's language in terms easily accessible to contemporary readers.

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To David

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ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

I. Shakespeare's plays

Shakespeare's plays, when cited in this edition, are abbreviated in a style modified slightly from that used in the *Harvard Concordance to Shakespeare*. Other editions of Shakespeare are abbreviated under the editor's surname (Rowe, Eccles) unless they are the work of more than one editor. In such cases, an abbreviated series title is used (Cam.). When more than one edition by the same editor is cited, later editions are discriminated with a raised figure (Collier²). All quotations from Shakespeare, except those from *Richard III*, use the lineation of *The Riverside Shakespeare*, under the general editorship of G. Blakemore Evans.

<i>Ado</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>
<i>AWW</i>	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>
<i>AYLI</i>	<i>As You Like It</i>
<i>Cor.</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>
<i>Cym.</i>	<i>Cymbeline</i>
<i>Err.</i>	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>
<i>Ham.</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
<i>1H4</i>	<i>The First Part of King Henry the Fourth</i>
<i>2H4</i>	<i>The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth</i>
<i>H5</i>	<i>King Henry the Fifth</i>
<i>1H6</i>	<i>The First Part of King Henry the Sixth</i>
<i>2H6</i>	<i>The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth</i>
<i>3H6</i>	<i>The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth</i>
<i>H8</i>	<i>King Henry the Eighth</i>
<i>JC</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>John</i>	<i>King John</i>
<i>LLL</i>	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>
<i>Lear</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Mac.</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Measure for Measure</i>
<i>MND</i>	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
<i>MV</i>	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>
<i>Oth.</i>	<i>Othello</i>
<i>Per.</i>	<i>Pericles</i>
<i>R2</i>	<i>King Richard the Second</i>
<i>R3</i>	<i>King Richard the Third</i>
<i>Rom.</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
<i>Shr.</i>	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>
<i>STM</i>	<i>Sir Thomas More</i>
<i>Temp.</i>	<i>The Tempest</i>

TGV	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>
Tim.	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
Tit.	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>
TN	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
TNK	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>
Tro.	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>
Wiv.	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>
WT	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>

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Dent	R. W. Dent, <i>Shakespeare's Proverbial Language: An Index</i> , 1981 (references are to numbered proverbs)
Dyce	<i>The Works of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Alexander Dyce, 6 vols., 1857
Dyce ²	<i>The Works of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Alexander Dyce, 9 vols., 1864–7
Eccles	<i>The Tragedy of Richard the Third</i> , ed. Mark Eccles, 1964 (Signet Shakespeare)
ELR	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
F	<i>Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories and Tragedies</i> , 1623 (First Folio)
F ₂	<i>Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories and Tragedies</i> , 1632 (Second Folio)
F ₃	<i>Mr William Shakespear's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies</i> , 1663–4 (Third Folio)
F ₄	<i>Mr William Shakespear's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies</i> , 1685 (Fourth Folio)
Greg	W. W. Greg, <i>The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare</i> , 3rd edn, 1954
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Hall	Edward Hall, <i>The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York</i> , 1548, reprinted 1809, reprinted 1965 (cited here)
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- NQ* *Notes and Queries*
- OED* *Oxford English Dictionary*
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- RES* *Review of English Studies*
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Rowe	<i>The Works of Mr William Shakespear</i> , ed. Nicholas Rowe, 6 vols., 1709
Rowe ²	<i>The Works of Mr William Shakespear</i> , ed. Nicholas Rowe, 2nd edn, 6 vols., c. 1709
Rowe ³	<i>The Works of Mr William Shakespear</i> , ed. Nicholas Rowe, 3rd edn, 8 vols., 1714
SB	<i>Shakespeare Bulletin</i>
SD	stage direction
Seneca	Lucius Annaeus Seneca, <i>Seneca's Tragedies with an English Translation</i> , trans. F. J. Miller, 2 vols., 1917
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subst.	substantively
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Tillyard	E. M. W. Tillyard, <i>Shakespeare's History Plays</i> , 1944; reprinted 1962
TLN	Through line numbering (from Charlton Hinman, <i>The Norton Facsimile of Shakespeare</i> , 1968)
TLS	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i>

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Unless otherwise specified, biblical quotations are given in the Geneva version (1560).

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INTRODUCTION

In the histories section of the First Folio, only *Richard III* is called a ‘tragedy’.¹ It unites the chronicle play, a form Shakespeare had developed in the three parts of *Henry VI*, with a tragic structure showing the rise and fall of a single protagonist. Like Christopher Marlowe’s *Dr Faustus*, written at about the same time, Shakespeare’s play concerns the damnation of an unrepentant soul, but Shakespeare also grapples with the problem of determinism. In his opening soliloquy, Richard says he is ‘determined to prove a villain’ (1.1.30), and the play develops this ambiguous statement into an exploration of determinism and choice appropriate to both history and tragedy.²

History and meaning in *Richard III*

Richard III is the last in a series of four plays – following three about the reign of Henry VI – that dramatise the English Wars of the Roses. As he had in the *Henry VI* plays, Shakespeare used the chronicles of Edward Hall and Raphael Holinshed as sources of historical material for *Richard III*.³ Hall’s *Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York* (1548) incorporated a version of Sir Thomas More’s *History of Richard III* (written about 1513). Holinshed’s *Chronicles of England* (second edition, 1587) adapted More’s *History* from Hall, so that More should be regarded as the primary historiographic source for Shakespeare’s *Richard III*. More’s unfinished work, however, deals only with Richard’s rise to the throne. Shakespeare relied on Hall and Holinshed for Richard’s decline and final defeat at Bosworth, and those chroniclers had relied on the early Tudor historian Polydore Vergil. Nevertheless, it is More’s ironic attitude toward Richard that pervades both the chronicle sources and Shakespeare’s play.

Much has been made of the tendency of early Tudor historians to vilify Richard III in order to glorify Henry VII (Richmond) and his descendants.⁴ It is true that the concept of history writing in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries included the selective use of historical events to teach political and moral lessons, a practice most modern historians would reject. However, many of the stories of Richard’s villainy

¹ The play is called *The Tragedy of Richard III* on its first page in the Folio, but subsequent pages carry the running title ‘The Life and Death of Richard the Third’. The word ‘tragedy’ may have been taken from the printed quartos, all of which use it.

² On Richard’s pun as a play on providential determinism, see David S. Berkeley, “‘Determined” in *Richard III*, 1.1.30”, *SQ* 14 (1963), 483–4.

³ Shakespeare may also have used the *Chronicle At Large* of Richard Grafton (1569), but this repeats Hall almost word for word, making it impossible to tell which one Shakespeare employed.

⁴ See Tillyard, Campbell and Ribner.