NARRATIVE AND DRAMATIC SOURCES OF SHAKESPEARE

Edited by
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Volume III
EARLIER ENGLISH HISTORY PLAYS:
HENRY VI RICHARD III RICHARD II

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PREFACE

READERS will be surprised, but, I hope, not aggrieved, to find that this volume contains material for only half the number of plays promised for Volume III. The others will be treated in Volume IV, so that there will be six volumes in all, instead of the five originally intended. This has been necessitated, not by any change of plan but by the amount of material accumulated in accordance with the original scheme.

In W. G. Boswell-Stone's *Shakspere's Holinshed* and the abridgement by A. and J. Nicoll, *The English Chronicles as used by Shakespeare*, the excerpts follow the order of events in the plays. This makes for easy reference and the economical use of the sources. But the method has disadvantages: it does not provide an interesting and consecutive story of the several reigns involved, nor does it show the working of cause and effect as the chroniclers saw them. Above all the method prevents our seeing the chronicles as Shakespeare read them, and examining how and why he rearranged events and relationships in accordance with his dramatic design. Any attempt however to present the reign of Henry VI, Richard III or Richard II in the historians' order and words brings its own difficulties, the extent of which I did not realize until I was immersed in the detailed task.

Ideally one would print a complete parallel text of Fabyan, Hall (or Grafton), Holinshed and Stow for each reign, to enable the reader to make up his own mind about the degree and nature of Shakespeare's indebtedness to these authors. This would require a volume for each play and bar out any other material. Obviously only a selection could be given.

Selection involved summarizing extraneous events and linking passages together so as to preserve the general pattern. A certain fullness of treatment was desirable not only to show the quality of the chronicles cited but also to throw light on the

dramatist's handling of them. Thus the long account of the chivalric trappings of the Hereford-Mowbray quarrel illuminates the ritualistic treatment characteristic of *Richard II*; and Hall's moralizing comments and character-portraits throw into relief Shakespeare's superior use of such material.

I have allowed maximum space to each major Chronicle source, with briefer extracts or footnotes from others. In particular I have given liberally of Edward Hall (for *Henry VI* and *Richard III*). *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre famelies* has not been reprinted in full since 1809, and though Hall is now recognized as a major source for the early Histories and passages have been cited (e.g. by H. H. Furness in the *Variorum Richard III* and A. S. Cairncross in the *New Arden* 2 *Henry VI*) fuller reproduction brings out his value as a writer and the limits of Shakespeare's dependence on his work.

The chronological method has necessitated frequent footnotes referring to passages in the plays. These are by no means exhaustive, but should help the reader to keep track of the dramatist. They are particularly necessary for *1 Henry VI*, which departed widely from the order of events in dealing with the war in France.

Literary analogues presented another problem. One might reprint most of *A Myrroure for Magistrates* and Daniel's *Civile Wars* for a start; and what about the several non-Shakespearian plays dealing with the reigns of Richard III, Richard II, etc.? As I worked through the ten Histories I found myself with an overwhelming accumulation of material; but was saved from despair by the ready willingness of both my American and English publishers to add another volume to the series. I am indeed grateful to them for enabling me to carry out a laborious but fascinating task without the added anxiety of crippling cuts. As it is, the 'analogues' have been reduced to a minimum, and the old plays in this volume are not given in their entirety. [Some comic scenes in *Woodstock* included here, though not significant for *Richard III*, have a bearing on *Henry IV* in the next volume.] I have drawn little on MS authorities and foreign works which Shakespeare could scarcely have known.

My thanks go out as before to all predecessors from whose work I have profited. These include C. L. Kingsford for his investigation of historical authorities, W. G. Boswell-Stone and

A. and J. Nicoll for their annotations of Holinshed; E. M. W. Tillyard and Miss L. B. Campbell for their fine work on the Histories and historical ideas; W. G. Zeeveld and E. Begg, who showed Shakespeare's debt to Hall; G. B. Churchill who traced the Richard III legend up to Shakespeare; the *Arden* editors Old and New; above all J. D. Wilson for his valuable notes and Introductions.

I am grateful to the Malone Society for permission to use its texts as a basis for excerpts from *Jack Straw*, *Woodstock* and *The True Tragedy of Richard the Third*. In these I have modernized the punctuation, and occasionally the spelling, but have tried to keep the line numbers of the Reprints so that readers may see at a glance how much has been omitted from the plays.

I wish also to thank Mr John Crow and Professor W. Clemen for the loan of books, Mr J. B. Hainsworth and Mr J. R. Knight for help with Latin texts, Professor H. Scullard for information about 'Sejanus horse'. My debt to Miss R. Jackson (for typing) and to my wife (for copying and checking) grows with each volume.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. *Shakespeare's Works and Apocrypha*

Ado	*Much Ado about Nothing*
AFev	*Arden of Feversham*
AShrew	*The Taming of A Shrew*
AYL	*As You Like It*
CE	*Comedy of Errors*
Cor	*Coriolanus*
Cym	*Cymbeline*
Ham	*Hamlet*
1H4	*Henry the Fourth, Part I*
2H4	*Henry the Fourth, Part II*
H5	*Henry the Fifth*
1H6	*Henry the Sixth, Part I*
2H6	*Henry the Sixth, Part II*
3H6	*Henry the Sixth, Part III*
H8	*Henry the Eighth*
KJ	*King John*
LComp	*Lover's Complaint*
Lear	*King Lear*
LLL	*Love's Labour's Lost*
Luc	*The Rape of Lucrece*
Mac	*Macbeth*
MM	*Measure for Measure*
MND	*A Midsummer Night's Dream*
More	*Sir Thomas More*
MV	*The Merchant of Venice*
MWW	*The Merry Wives of Windsor*
NobKin	*Two Noble Kinsmen*
Oth	*Othello*
Per	*Pericles*
PhT	*The Phoenix and the Turtle*
PPil	*The Passionate Pilgrim*
R2	*King Richard the Second*
R3	*King Richard the Third*
RJ	*Romeo and Juliet*
Son	*Sonnets*
TA	*Titus Andronicus*
Tem	*The Tempest*
TGV	*Two Gentlemen of Verona*
Tim	*Timon of Athens*
TN	*Twelfth Night*
TrC	*Troilus and Cressida*
TSh	*The Taming of The Shrew*
VA	*Venus and Adonis*
WT	*The Winter's Tale*

2. *Modern Editions and Other Works*

Arden	The Arden Shakespeare, 1889–1944
Boas	*The Taming of A Shrew*, edited F. S. Boas
Camb	The New Cambridge edition of Shakespeare, edited J. Dover Wilson, A. Quiller-Couch, &c.
Coll	*Shakespeare's Library*, edited J. Payne Collier, 2 vols.
ELH	*English Literary History* (Johns Hopkins University, Washington D.C.)
ElSt	E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols.

EngHist Soc	English Historical Society
5ActS	T. W. Baldwin, *Shakespeare's Five-Act Structure*
Genetics	T. W. Baldwin, *On the Literary Genetics of Shakespeare's Poems and Sonnets*
Hol.	Holinshed's *Chronicles*
JEGP	*The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*
Jest Books	*Shakespeare Jest Books*, edited W. C. Hazlitt
Lee	Sir Sidney Lee, *Life of Shakespeare*
MalSoc	Malone Society Reprints
MedSt	E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, 2 vols.
MLR	*The Modern Language Review*
MPhil	*Modern Philology*
New Arden	The Arden Edition of Shakespeare, re-edited 1950–
N&Q	*Notes & Queries*
Oxf.	The Oxford Edition of Shakespeare, text by W. J. Craig; Introductory Studies by E. Dowden
PhilQ	*Philological Quarterly*
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
RES	*The Review of English Studies*
SAB	*Shakespeare Association Bulletin* (U.S.A.)
ShJb	Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare—Gesellschaft
ShLib	*Shakespeare's Library*, 6 vols. 2nd Edn. 1875, edited J. P. Collier and W. C. Hazlitt. (Also Collier-Hazlitt)
SPhil	*Studies in Philology* (U. of N. Carolina)
ShQ	*Shakespeare Quarterly*
Sh.Soc. Trans.	*Transactions of the (New) Shakespeare Society*
Texas	*University of Texas Studies in English*
TLS	*The Times Literary Supplement* (London)
Var.	*The New Variorum edition*, ed. H. H. Furness, &c.
WSh	E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, 2 vols.

3. *Other Abbreviations*

Arg	Argument
Chor	Chorus
Prol	Prologue
Rev.	Review
F	Folio edition
Q	Quarto edition
n.d.	No date
S.R.	The Stationer's Register
STC	*A Short-Title Catalogue of Books printed . . 1475–1640* (1950)

CONTENTS OF VOLUME III

HISTORICAL AUTHORITIES AVAILABLE TO SHAKESPEARE

IT IS no part of this work's purpose to discuss the historical accuracy of Shakespeare's history-plays in the light of modern research—though the reader may find the Chronological Tables of some value in this respect—but only to provide material to facilitate comparison between the plays and their major sources. As the labours of C. L. Kingsford have shown,[1] much more material on the reigns covered in the English Histories survived than either Shakespeare or the chroniclers on whom he drew can possibly have known. But many Tudor chroniclers used manuscript sources, and writers such as Hall, Stow and Holinshed were inheritors of a long tradition of chronicle-writing, research into which has shown the growth of many legends, the accretion of anecdotes, the ascription of motives, which Shakespeare used probably without caring whence they came. Until recently editors underestimated his attention to authorities and assumed that he depended almost entirely on Holinshed. Those days are past, and there has grown among scholars an opposite tendency to regard the Histories as British Museum pieces, creative research-papers. If scholars cannot be great playwrights at least there is some satisfaction in finding that the great playwright was himself a scholar with a liking for the rare, unprinted authority. There is no sure proof of this, however. Shakespeare may have consulted a few manuscripts, but he seems to have worked almost entirely from the printed sources popular in his day. So this sketch will be concerned with works published from Caxton onwards which he could without much difficulty have consulted.[2]

[1] C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*, O.U.P. 1913.

[2] For fuller accounts of Tudor historians and Tudor views of history, see E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays*, 1944; L. B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's Histories: Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy*, 1947; H. Butterfield, *The Englishman and his History*, 1944.

One of the earliest chronicles which Shakespeare is likely to have seen was the *Brut*, 'the first of our printed histories', much used by writers such as Polydore Vergil, Hall, Stow and Holinshed. This history of Britain from the days of legend was originally written in French in two versions, one perhaps composed by the Black Prince's Treasurer, William Pakington, and translated into English in the last quarter of the fourteenth century with a continuation to 1377. Later extensions took it to 1419, 1430, 1461 and 1475.[1] The version available to Shakespeare was that adapted and first printed by William Caxton in 1480 as *Chronicles of England*. Most of the *Brut* was in prose, but some versions include crude verses by John Page on Henry V's siege of Rouen, and elsewhere verse-accounts of Agincourt and Harfleur seem to have been paraphrased. One of the most popular history books in the early sixteenth century, it was often reprinted.

Another work made accessible by Caxton was the translation in seven books by John Trevisa in 1387 of the *Polychronicon* of Ranulf Higden, a Benedictine monk of Chester whose universal history ended at 1342 and was continued by others down to 1357. Caxton modernized somewhat Trevisa's 'rude and old Englysshe' when he printed it in 1482, and continued the story to 1461. Wynkyn de Worde reissued the work in 1495 and Peter Treveris in 1527, and there were many later editions.[2]

Another person, himself not a historian, who had great influence on the knowledge of history was Matthew Parker (1504–75), Archbishop of Canterbury, who preserved many important ecclesiastical manuscripts for posterity, and who was responsible for the publication in 1571 of the *Flores Historiarum* of Roger de Wendover and of the *Chronica Majora* of Matthew Paris. These useful Latin works were part of the great corpus of chronicle material put together in the scriptorium of the abbey at St Albans between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries.

In taking over the chronicles made by his predecessors Roger

[1] See F. Brie, *Geschichte und Quellen der mittelenglischen Prosa chronik 'the Brute of England'*, 1905; and his edition of the complete work, E.E.T.S., 2 vols., 1906–8.

[2] *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis, together with the English Translations of John Trevisa and of an unknown writer of the fifteenth century*, ed. J. R. Lumby, 9 vols., 1865–86.

of Wendover extended his account to the year 1235. When Roger died in 1236 Matthew Paris, who had entered the monastery in 1217 and had since greatly assisted his master, continued the work. His *Chronica Majora* comprised the old St Albans compilation to the year 1188, Wendover's continuation after 1189 (which he edited), and his own narrative down to 1259, when he died. The version printed for Parker by Reginald Wolfe in 1571 is marred by a confused use of manuscript versions and many errors,[1] which was unfortunate, for it served as a source-book for many later writers.

Hostile to King John because of his anticlerical behaviour, the *Chronica Majora* gave a full account of his dealings with France, Prince Arthur and the Church, but it is unlikely that Shakespeare found much in it to use. It did not suggest that Queen Eleanor was captured at Mirabeau; nor did it describe the manner of Arthur's death ('modo fere omnibus ignorato'), though (following Roger of Wendover) it declared that universal rumour blamed the King ('Quasi illum manu propria peremissit'). Nor did the good monk ascribe John's death to poison; the king died of a fever brought on by eating peas and peaches and by drinking.

In 1574 was published another St Albans Chronicle, the *Historia Anglicana* of Thomas Walsingham,[2] who was head of the scriptorium during the reigns of Edward III and Richard II and died early in the reign of Henry VI. His History extends from 1272 to 1422 and was largely a compilation from earlier writers, but he had some original information about the wars of Henry V, for whom in 1419 he penned a history of Normandy, *Ypodigma Neustriae*, from the time of Rollo to its capture by the King. This work was also printed in 1574.[3]

Such writers as Roger, Matthew Paris and Walsingham were typically mediaeval in their attitude to history as the chronicle of events which affected the Church, accumulated year by year with little attempt at organization. This does not mean that the writers were parochial, and interested only in what went on in

[1] Matthaei Paris. *Monachi Albanensis, Angli, Historia major, a Guilielmo Conquaestore ad ultimum annum Henrici tertii*, 1571.

[2] *Historia brevis ab Edwardo primo ad Henricum quintum*, ap. H. Binneman.

[3] *Ypodigma Neustriae vel Normanniae, in aed. J. Daii.* A second edition came out in 1576. H. T. Riley edited both works in the Rolls Series, 1863; 1876.

their monastery. Their scope was wider than that of the well-known *Chronicle* of Jocelyn of Brakelonde which inspired Carlyle's *Past and Present.* Anything striking would be set down, from freak weather to battles, the vicissitudes of foreign kings and the progress of the Turks. They were biased in favour of the Church, and interested in heresies (such as the Lollard movement) and in any striking examples of virtue or vice. Of them all perhaps Matthew Paris came nearest to breadth of vision. A friend of Henry III, he did not hesitate to censure the king and his policies; he condemned ecclesiastical abuses; and he substituted for the laborious plainness of Wendover a Ciceronian style and a fondness for classical allusions which anticipated the Humanist historians of the sixteenth century.

Shakespeare may have glanced through these Latin works and taken a hint or two from them,[1] but he is unlikely to have seen the many chronicles, annals and royal Lives which remained unprinted but were occasionally cited by scholars, e.g. the *Register* of Abbot Whethamstede (friend of Duke Humphrey) used by Stow and Holinshed.[2]

The London Chronicles, 'perhaps the most important for the student of sources of all the original authorities for English history in the fifteenth century' (Kingsford), were annals of the City, arranged in years according to the dates of the Mayors and Sheriffs, whose names appeared at the start of each year.

[1] e.g. for his account of the loss of John's army in the Wash with one survivor.

[2] Ed. T. Hearne in *Duo rerum Anglicarum Scriptores,* 1732. Other examples included: Thomas Otterbourne's *Chronicle* (ed. T. Hearne, 1732), half of which discusses the period 1370–1422; and tells the 'tennis-balls' story about Henry V as of Lent, 1414; the *Vita Ricardi Secundi* by the Monk of Evesham (ed. T. Hearne 1729) which is valuable for Glendower and the Welsh Border; Adam of Usk's *Chronicle* (ed. Sir E. M. Thompson, 1904), written in a copy of Higden as a continuation to 1421, contains personal observation of Richard II's fall, of the London celebrations after Agincourt and Rouen; John Capgrave's *Liber de Illustricis Henricis* (*c.* 1444) (ed., with his *Chronicle of England,* by F. C. Hingeston. Rolls Series, 1858); includes a character of Henry IV and his dying exhortation to the Prince; John Strecche's *Historia Regum Angliae* (in BM. Add. 35295, never printed fully; extracts in *The First Life of Henry V,* ed. Kingsford, 1911); the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* (ed. J. A. Giles, 1846, B. Williams (*Eng. Hist. Soc.*) 1850), probably by Thomas Elmham, Chaplain to Henry V at Agincourt, ends in 1416 (Hardyng knew it, but apparently Stow and Holinshed did not); Thomas Elmham's *Liber Metricus,* an uncouth verse-chronicle, known to Stow (ed. C. A. Cole in *Memorials of Henry V,* Rolls Series, 1858); the important *Vita Henrici Quinti* by Titus Livius of Forli (*c.* 1437, ed. T. Hearne, 1716): an English translation of this (ed. Kingsford, *supra,* 1911); a wordy *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti,* wrongly given to Elmham by Hearne (ed. 1727).

Naturally these records gave prominence to events of importance to the citizens of London, but national matters were included, and the details given often reveal the City's attitude to great personages, e.g. they favour Humphrey of Gloucester and are hostile to Richard III.

The New Chronicles of England and France, by Robert Fabyan, published by Pynson in 1516 three years after the author's death, must be viewed in the light of this tradition. Fabyan was an Essex man, a clothier, who became a member of the Drapers' Company and an alderman, as well as the father of sixteen children, ten of whom died before him. He has been called 'the first of the citizen chroniclers of London who conceived the design of expanding his diary into a general history' (*DNB*). He himself called his work *The Concordance of Histories*, and he summarized the history of England from Brut to the Norman Conquest in six short Books, becoming more expansive in the seventh, which extended to Henry VII. His purpose, he declared, was to

> lynke in fere
> The storyes of Englande and France so dere
> That to the reder it may well be sayne
> What Kynges togeder ruled these landes twayne . . .
> And for that London, that auncyent Cytie
> Hath ever perseveryd in vertuous noblesse . . .
> Therfore I think somwhat to expresse,
> Of theyr good ordre, and Cyvyle polycy . . .
>
> (*Prologus*)

For his French material Fabyan consulted French authorities, chiefly Robert Gaguin's *Compendium* (printed in 1497), but he did not bring the foreign matter into close relationship with the British. Nor indeed did he show a desire to weld his miscellaneous information into any kind of whole, moral, religious or even patriotic.

> Unfruytfull Fabyan folowed the face
> Of time and dedes, but let the causes slip,

said the Ghost of Worcester in *The Mirror of Magistrates*, and truthfully. Fabyan is only an annalist, but his anecdotes have often a simple freshness about them, and his work was much quoted by later and better historians. It was, writes Kingsford,

'the chief medium through which the *Chronicles of London* were quoted by later writers during more than three centuries'.[1]

Relations with Scotland and France in the fourteenth century were clarified by the publication in 1523–5 of Lord Berners's translation of Froissart's *Chronicles*. Jean Froissart (*c.* 1333–1419) had a unique knowledge of the courts he wrote about, for he had been clerk of the Queen's chamber to Philippa of Hainault, wife of Edward III; he had been a guest of King David Bruce of Scotland, had gone to Aquitaine with the Black Prince, and after writing the first part of his chronicle had revisited England in 1395 and been graciously received by Richard II. Eyewitness of some of the events he recorded, Froissart had the good journalist's ear for significant anecdotes; he also possessed a keen appreciation of personalities and a good style. His long account of the reigns of Edward III and Richard II was undertaken not so much with a moral intention as to entertain, but also to enshrine the memory of great men and chivalric exploits, 'the honourable and noble adventures of arms, done and achieved by the wars of France and England . . . all noble hearts to encourage and to shew them ensample and matter of honour'.

The French work was printed in 1495 and several times later before Lord Berners, at the command of Henry VIII, made his version, which, if not so clear and well-formed as the original, has great force and fluency. Shakespeare, who probably derived something of his fairy-king Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from Berners's translation of *Huon of Bordeaux*, could find in Froissart a vivid memorial of the chivalric code in the fourteenth century, as well as the story of King Richard II's life and downfall. Froissart was freely used by sixteenth-century historians and other literary men, and the dramatist is likely to have derived more pleasure from it than from the verse-chronicle of John Hardyng (1378–1465?), well known though this was after Richard Grafton published two versions in 1543.[2]

Hardyng served as a page to Harry Hotspur and was present at the Battle of Shrewsbury when his master was slain. Afterwards he attended Sir Robert Umfreville before Harfleur and at Agincourt. Retiring to Lincolnshire he took up the study of

[1] *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*, 106.

[2] Sir Henry Ellis reprinted one edition in 1812.

history. But Hardyng was not admirable either as man or as historian. Undertaking to prove for Henry V and Henry VI that Scotland was legally subject to England he forged documents (now in the Record Office) supporting his contention. In revising his Chronicle for presentation to successive patrons, he changed its tone according to its recipient, making it Lancastrian for Henry VI, and Yorkist for Edward IV. His preface shows Hardyng's attitude to history. Holy Scripture, he asserted,

> Which abandoneth all maner vanitee
> Yet of Chronicles admitteth the lecture
> As a thing of great fruite and utilitie
> And as a lanterne to the posteritie
> For example, what they ought to knowe
> What waies to refuse, and what to folowe.

That history is a series of exampla was a conventional idea even then. Hardyng's verse was rarely better than in this specimen, and he had little new to say; but he was used by Hall, Stow and Holinshed, Shakespeare probably read him without finding him memorable, though Hardyng had lived through many of the events he described. On the other hand the dramatist is unlikely to have read the long poem, *The Battaile of Agincourt* formerly ascribed to Lydgate; it was not printed in the sixteenth century.[1] Nor could he easily know the many political ballads of the fifteenth century which lay in manuscript until modern times.[2]

The next important historiographer after Fabyan was Polydore Vergil, the Italian scholar, who came over to England in 1501/2 to collect Peter's Pence as deputy for Adriano Castelli, who had been made Bishop of Hereford. Under Castelli's patronage Vergil became Archdeacon of Wells (1508) and a prebendary of St Paul's (1513). Falling out of favour with Wolsey he spent some time in the Tower, but lived most of the rest of his life in England, where he numbered among his friends Colet, More, Linacre and Erasmus. Already known

[1] A short version was printed by T. Hearne in *Vita et Gesta Henrici Quinti* (1727), pp. 359–75; a longer version, by Nicolas and Tyrrell in *Chronicle of London*, 1827, pp. 216–33.

[2] Cf. T. Wright, *Political Poems*, 1861, and *Bp. Percy's Folio MS*, ed. Furnivall and Hales, 4 vols., 1910. See Kingsford's account, *op. cit.*, Ch. IX.