NARRATIVE AND DRAMATIC SOURCES OF SHAKESPEARE

Edited by
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Volume IV

LATER ENGLISH HISTORY PLAYS:
KING JOHN HENRY IV HENRY V
HENRY VIII

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PREFACE

THE major historical source for the plays discussed in this volume was Holinshed, but Shakespeare referred sometimes to Hall, Foxe or Stow. As in Volume III, the excerpts from Holinshed are given here in the same order as in his *Third volume of Chronicles*, so as to provide as far as possible a consecutive story of events and to let the reader see how Shakespeare altered chronological sequence for dramatic purposes.

The chief literary sources and analogues include *The Troublesome Raigne* and *The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth*, both of which are printed here in their entirety from the earliest editions with some modernization of punctuation and spelling. *The Famous Victories*, which is a debased version of a major source for all the Henry V plays, is printed in the material for *Henry IV, Part 2*. Shakespeare's debt to Daniel's *Civile Wars* seems to have diminished after *Richard II*, but several relevant passages are cited. I am indebted to the Council of the Malone Society for permission to base the excerpts from *When You See Me, You Know Me* upon the Malone Society reprint.

Analogues for Falstaff are given mainly from the Interludes in order to suggest how greatly Shakespeare transcended the Vice of the old comedies and also how far English comedy had progressed in the sixteenth century.

My debt to previous scholars who have written books and articles about sources, plots and characters grows apace. It is impossible in these volumes to discuss every theory with which I disagree or even to give full reasons for my own conclusions (e.g., that *King John* came after *The Troublesome Raigne*). I am obliged to state briefly my point of view and leave students to make up their own minds by studying the plays

themselves and the authorities I refer to. The Bibliography is cumulative and some reference back to that in the previous volume is necessary to save space. I have extended the list of historical works on the Middle Ages and the Tudor period.

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
Boas	*The Taming of A Shrew*, edited F. S. Boas
Camb	The New Cambridge edition, edited by 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

FV	*The Famous Victories of Henry V*
5ActS	T. W. Baldwin, *Shakspere's Five-Act Structure*
Genetics	T. W. Baldwin, *On the Literary Genetics of Shakspere'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.
MLN	*Modern Language Notes*
MLR	*The Modern Language Review*
MPhil	*Modern Philology*
New Arden	The Arden Edition of Shakespeare (revised and reset)
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
ShQ	*Shakespeare Quarterly*
Sh.Soc. Trans.	*Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society*
SPhil	*Studies in Philology*
Texas	*University of Texas Studies in English*
TLS	*The Times Literary Supplement* (London)
TR	*The Troublesome Raigne of King John*
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)

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INTRODUCTION

KING JOHN was not printed before the First Folio of 1623, in which it is the first of the Histories. The text there is reasonably good, but there is some confusion in scene headings and speech prefixes which Sir W. W. Greg ascribed to the carelessness of the author's MS, used as F1 copy and containing some annotations made by the book-keeper in the theatre. J. D. Wilson sees evidence of revision and considers that a play first written in 1590 was revised in 1594.

The date of composition is hard to decide. The play was mentioned by Francis Meres in 1598, and several internal allusions place it between 1590 and 1597. Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (1589?) refers at I.2.170–2 to a man in a dead lion's skin and a cowardly hare which plucks a dead lion's beard; cf. *King John*, II.1.137–8. This has been taken to suggest an early date; but Shakespeare's memory was long. The jesting mention of 'Basilisco' at I.1.244 refers to *Soliman and Perseda*, a play written between 1589 and 1592 and possibly played later. Parallels have been drawn between the reigns of John and Elizabeth, and they were probably intentional, but we must beware of making them too close. Queen Elizabeth defied the Pope and was excommunicated; she was attacked by a Romish monarch, Philip II of Spain, who tried to invade England; the enemy Armada was wrecked in a storm and the danger averted by the unity of her subjects. But it is hard to believe that the audience was intended to see much further resemblance between the weakling John, whose own mother called him a usurper, and the Queen who got the throne rightfully as the third heir of her father; or between Mary, Queen of Scots, and Prince Arthur. It would have been highly dangerous to remind the audience that Elizabeth had wished to have her rival quietly assassinated rather than formally executed, especially since the dramatic parallel would have made the Queen a murderess in fact as King John was only in intention.

There were resemblances between the situations of Hubert de Burgh and Secretary Davison, who had persuaded Elizabeth to sign Queen Mary's death-warrant and had later been made a scapegoat, although he had taken no other part in the execution. Imprisoned and heavily fined, he was released through Essex's efforts in 1589 and retired into poverty for a time. To have recalled that affair (which reflected no great credit on the Queen) in 1590, when Essex and others were vainly trying to obtain for Davison the Secretaryship left vacant by Walsingham's death, would have been most inopportune. The parallel tells against an early date for the play.

If *King John* was written soon after the Armada and with topicality in mind, it is strange that more was not made of the destruction of Lewis's supply-vessels, which is dismissed in two brief references (V.3.9–12; V.5.12–16). Both repeat a deviation from Holinshed made in *The Troublesome Raigne* (Part II, 957–63). The allusion, like other resemblances between past and present, would have point at any time in the nineties. The French sieges, topical in 1590–2 (cf. 1 *Henry VI*), were not forgotten later; and the backsliding, after much inconclusive fighting, of a French king from his anti-papal fraternity with England, occurred in 1593 when Henry of Navarre turned Catholic. The parallel between him and Philip of France goes a little further. Elizabeth continued to help Henry IV with a few troops, though with diminished enthusiasm; and in 1595/6 the French monarch was said to be intriguing with Albert of Austria, Philip of Spain, and Pope Clement. England itself was in renewed peril in 1595 when Spanish galleys from Brittany made landings in Cornwall and Penzance was burned. King John's submission to Rome and the delay before he got his crown back may have reminded the audience of Navarre's submission and the two years' delay before he was absolved (17 September, 1595), and then only on condition that he restore Catholicism throughout France, observe the decrees of the Council of Trent, and build a monastery in every province. These and other parallels with the events of 1594–6 seem more striking than the parallels peculiar to 1590–2.[1] Disillusionment

[1] The poisoning of John would be topical after the Lopez affair in 1594 (possibly mentioned in *MV*). The bad weather in *KJ* has been referred to the bad seasons of 1594–6 (cf. *MND*); but it is described in the chronicles. Constance's grief for Arthur reminds some critics that Shakespeare's son Hamnet died in 1596, but did

with the war and with political manœuvres for and against peace was rife in 1596, but Essex's party was all for continuing the struggle against the Catholic powers. This would explain why Shakespeare departed from the order of his Histories to rewrite *The Troublesome Raigne*. On 3 June, 1596, Essex sailed with Raleigh and Howard against Cadiz. That this exploit may be obliquely referred to in *King John* suggests that the play was possibly written after that date (cf. II.1.56–75).

The reputation of King John had undergone some changes before the fifteen-nineties.[1] Most of the medieval chroniclers were churchmen who regarded him with disapproval, even horror, because he opposed the Pope and laid heavy exactions on the monastic orders. The *Chronicle of Radulph of Coggeshall*, built up gradually soon after the events related, illustrates how differently an East Anglican monk would regard Richard Cœur-de-Lion and his brother. Polydore Vergil in the early sixteenth century also took a hostile view. But the Protestant John Foxe in his *Actes and Monuments* (1563) praised John for his opposition to the Pope, and while reproving him for surrendering his crown to a papal legate treated him as a martyr because he was poisoned by a monk. The poisoning episode is given below [Text II] because it influenced Shakespeare either directly or indirectly through *The Troublesome Raigne* or through Richard Grafton's *Chronicle* (1569) which incorporated much of Foxe's narrative.

A friend of Foxe's, Bishop John Bale, after being converted to Protestantism, wrote during the reign of Henry VIII his *King Johan*, a violently anti-Catholic play which he revised under Edward VI and again in 1561, probably so that Queen Elizabeth might see it at Ipswich, where it remained in manuscript until the nineteenth century. It was first printed by J. Payne Collier in 1838.[2] Shakespeare can hardly have

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he need personal bereavement to write like that? Perhaps the dramatist omitted the story ascribing the poisoning of John to the monk's fear that he intended to raise the price of bread, because bread was at famine prices in 1596 and there were riots. Shakespeare would not wish to cast any shadow of blame on the Queen.

[1] Cf. R. Wallerstein, *King John in Fact and Fiction*, University of Pennsylvania [1918].

[2] *Kynge Johan. A Play in Two Parts*, by John Bale, ed. J. P. Collier, Camden Society, 1838. Summarized here from this and the Malone Society Reprint, ed. J. H. P. Pafford, 1931.

known this work, but a summary is given below [Text V] because it started the dramatic tradition to which *King John* belongs. One of the first plays to show 'the history play emerging from the morality'[1] *Kynge Johan* describes the King's campaign against the political and religious abuses caused by bad churchmen, and contains passages of chronicle material, with characters such as Stephen Langton, the Pope, Pandulphus (a Cardinal as in later plays), the monkish poisoner. But all the historical figures except John are aliases or incarnations of clerical vices, Sedition, Usurped Power, Private Wealth, Dissimulation, etc., so the reign of John becomes an illustration of moral dangers facing Henry VIII or Elizabeth. There are many statements of the Tudor attitude to kingship and some topical references.

The year 1591 saw the publication of an anonymous play, *The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England*, which was printed in two parts,[2] quite unnecessarily, for it was obviously written as one piece. The two parts were printed together in 1611 by Valentine Simmes for John Helme, as 'Written by W.Sh.'. A third edition in 1622, printed by Aug. Mathewes for Thomas Dewe, asserted that the play was 'Written by W. Shakespeare'. It has often been suggested since that the play was Shakespeare's in whole or in part. Pope attributed it to Rowley and Shakespeare; Fleay thought that Marlowe had made the plot and Greene, Peele and Lodge wrote the scenes. On the other hand Malone ascribed it to Marlowe alone, and Dugdale Sykes has argued more cogently that it may have been by Peele.[3] Most critics have regarded it as Shakespeare's source-play, and Boswell Stone declared that he relied entirely on *The Raigne* 'without making any independent use of historical sources'.

[1] Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare*, Princeton U.P., 1957, pp. 37–40.

[2] *The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England, with the discoverie of King Richard Cordelions Base Sonne (vulgarly named, The Bastard Fawconbridge): also the death of King John at Swinstead Abbey. As it was (sundry times) publikely acted by the Queenes Majesties Players, in the honourable Citie of London. Imprinted at London for Sampson Clarke, and are to be solde at his shop, on the backeside of the Royall Exchange. 1591.*

The Second part of the troublesome Raigne of King John, conteining the death of Arthur Plantaginet, the landing of Lewes, and the poysning of King John at Swinstead Abbey. As it was (sundry times) publikely acted by the Queenes Majesties Players, in the honourable citie of London. . . . 1591.

[3] H. Dugdale Sykes, *Sidelights on Shakespeare*, Stratford, 1919, pp. 99–125.

P. Alexander and E. A. J. Honigmann have taken another position, and the latter, suggesting 'that three early Shakespearian plays—*John*, *The Shrew* and *Richard III*—may have been re-written for one company, the Queen's, in the early nineties,' has argued that the two King John plays were written within a few months of each other in 1590 or 1591, and that *The Raigne* was written second.[1]

Our views about the date of *King John* and about Shakespeare's approach to the historical material must depend on the relationship between his play and *The Raigne*. The problem, as Mr Honigmann states in his excellent edition, is 'obscure and elusive', and I cannot go into detail here. My own view (reached after some vacillation) is that *The Raigne* came first in 1590–1, and that Shakespeare rewrote it in 1596, using the original plot but changing the emphasis, and above all the style, adding features to give it new topicality, reducing its length from 3081 lines to 2715, but expanding the first part of *The Raigne* (from 1840 lines to 1987) at the expense of the second part (from 1196 lines to 728). As Sir E. K. Chambers thought, he probably kept the book of *The Raigne* before him and consulted it frequently, so although not many lines are kept in their entirety, 'in some 150 places a few words from *The Raigne* are picked up and used, by no means always in the same context'.[2] Shakespeare worked rapidly, and it may well be that some of the surprising omissions he made, particularly towards the end of the piece, were to prevent the play's becoming too long. Others were caused by the shift in emphasis already mentioned. To help readers make up their own minds about the relationship between the two plays and the major historical sources I give the relevant passages from Holinshed [Text I], and Hall [Text III], something of Foxe [Text II], two passages from Radulph of Coggeshall [Text IV] and the whole of *The Raigne* [Text VI].

The text of *The Raigne* as it has come down to us is greatly marred, but the outlines of story and character are clear enough, and the play as a whole is more satisfactory than *The Famous Victories of Henry V* on which Shakespeare drew for his later trilogy. It seems to have been built on Holinshed and on Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (though most of the latter's

[1] E. A. J. Honigmann, *New Arden*, 1954, Introduction, lvi. [2] *WSh* I.367.

material was taken over by Grafton in his *Chronicle at Large* (1569)). John Elson, who examined the sources of *The Raigne*,[1] believed that Bale's *Kyng Johan* was known to the author. But perhaps he knew Matthew Paris's *Historia Majora* (1571), which was more accessible, and found there the comparison of John with King David which appears in Bale (1104–7; 1630–3) and *The Raigne* (II.viii.1078–80). Polydore Vergil's chronicle may have inspired the Bastard's account of his escape from the Wash:

> My selfe upon a Galloway right free, well pacde,
> Outstript the flouds . . . (II.836–7)

For Vergil wrote that John 'ordered one of his men, who had a spirited and active horse, to explore the shallows' and that 'this man got over because he accidentally found the ford whereas the rest of the army plunged in indiscriminately and got into difficulties'.

Obviously the author of *The Raigne* went to some pains to consult several authorities, as did other historical dramatists before Shakespeare.[2] Like Bale he makes John a victim of clerical intrigue and French ambition. The Catholic clergy are his natural enemies, his exactions are excused, his seizure of their goods is made comic, with broad satire on their alleged unchastity; the story of his death by poison is given in detail. On the other hand, perhaps because Holinshed's less favourable account is combined with Bale's, he is made a weak and violent man. He orders the blinding of Arthur, presumably meaning the boy to die of it, and he has little sense of the morality of his actions, though when forced to submit to Rome he says:

> Thy sinnes are farre too great to be the man
> T'abolish Pope and Popery from thy Realme (II.278–9)

and when dying he sees his life as 'a catalogue of sin/Wrote by a fiend in marble characters'. After he yields to Pandulph nothing goes right for him. Troubles beset him; he fails in war, and falls ill with a fever before he is poisoned by the Monk.

[1] 'Studies in the King John plays' (*J. Q. Adams Memorial Studies*, ed. J. G. McManaway, Washington, 1948).

[2] Thus *Jack Straw* was based on Grafton, Holinshed and Stow, according to H. Schütt.

The inconsistencies of his character are not harmonized in any coherent moral view.

The Bastard Faulconbridge is introduced for comic effect but also to show that despite the failure of the erring monarch the spirit of his brother Richard I—that is, the true spirit of England—still survives. Philip has indeed the geniality and dynamic energy of his father. His introduction was probably initially suggested by Holinshed's statement that 'Philip, bastard sonne to king Richard . . . killed the vicount of Limoges, in revenge of his father's death' (*inf.* 28). But why was he called Philip Faulconbridge? Later writers also imagined a connection between Richard I and the Faulconbridge family. In *Looke About You* (1599), a piece related to the Robin Hood plays, Prince Richard assails (in vain) the virtue of Sir Richard Faulconbridge's wife; and in the romance *The Famous History of George, Lord Fauconbridge, Bastard Son to Richard Cordelion* (1616), the hero is the offspring of an affair with Austria's daughter Claribel. These pieces came after Shakespeare and may derive from our plays, but there may have been some tradition behind the connection. The 'discovery' and choice in *The Raigne* probably came, however, from Hall's account of Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans [Text III]. Shakespeare may have given added point to his version of the scene (I.1) by referring back to that source, which he must have read when writing *1 Henry VI*.[1] There is a reference to a bastard of Lord Falconbridge in *3 Henry VI*, I.1.239, as keeping the narrow seas against Edward IV. This man was 'the valyaunt capitayne, a man of no lesse courage than audacitie (who for hys evyll conditions was such an apte person, that a more meeter could not be chosen to set all the world in a broyle . . .)' (Grafton). In making Philip a worshipper of Commodity, Shakespeare may have recalled this celebrated pirate, Thomas Nevill. But Nevill came to an evil end.

It was long ago suggested by W. Lloyd[2] that Faulconbridge may be partly based on 'a man of great stomach and more rashnesse' (Hol.), Faukes de Brent (Falco in Latin), who was held in great estimation by King John and helped him first

[1] Peele has been thought by some critics to have had a hand in *1H6*. If so, and if he wrote *The Raigne*, this incident is a link between them.

[2] Watkiss Lloyd, *Essays on Shakespeare*, 1875, p. 196.

in the Marches of Wales and then in the civil war, being rewarded for his ferocious energy by the gift of many castles, including Bedford. Later he rebelled against Henry III and was besieged in Bedford. He was pardoned but exiled in 1224, and died of poison a year later on his way from Rome to England, 'making an end of his unconstant life, which from the time that he came to years of discretion, was never bent to quietnes' (Holinshed). The portrait of this man in Radulph of Coggeshall is translated below [Text IVb]. The parallel with Faulconbridge is remote, though a hint may have been taken from this loyal, bellicose follower of King John.

Faulconbridge has a romantic heroic quality, indicated in his determination to retrieve from Austria the lionskin which Richard I was said to have got when, as a captive, he killed the beast by thrusting his hand down its throat and tearing out its heart.[1] He speaks heroically, encourages John against his clerical and secular enemies, and when John collapses he takes command, pleads his uncle's cause before the nobles, and tries to hearten him with the significant words:

> God cheere my Lord, King *Richards* fortune hangs
> Upon the plume of warlike *Philips* helme . . . (II.715–6)

The conception is vigorous and rugged, but the Bastard is not the hero of the play, and England's final salvation is brought not by him so much as by Melun's revelation, the sinking of the French supply ships, Pandulph's support and the accession of Henry III. The author of *The Raigne* was willing to embroider historical facts but not to romanticize them so far as to turn Faulconbridge into the complete epic hero. The main purpose is to show the need of unity, and this doctrine is stated at the close by both the Dauphin and the Bastard.

History in *The Raigne* is arbitrarily rearranged to suit the main topics, which are: the treacherous ambitions of France, the Pope's enmity, the falling off of the barons (ascribed to the King's treatment of Arthur), and the consequent shameful invasion of England. Magna Carta is not mentioned. The issues are simplified to a degree not found in *Henry VI* or *Richard II*, yet they are scarcely made clear enough—another reason for believing that Shakespeare did not invent the plot.

[1] Cf. *KJ* I.1.265–7.