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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Phillip Jay Gibson entitled "A Stage Mirror of Richard II: Shakespeare's Play Produced at Stratford-upon-Avon." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

Norman Sanders
Norman Sanders, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Albert J. Warner
Lori Hall Burghardt
Bain T. Stewart

Accepted for the Council:

Cuminkal
Vice Provost
and Dean of the Graduate School

A STAGE MIRROR OF RICHARD II:
SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY AS PRODUCED
AT STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Phillip Jay Gibson

March 1986

ABSTRACT

A critical appraisal of a Shakespearean play is complete only with the inclusion of its stage history. Richard II, particularly as produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company and its predecessors in Stratford-upon-Avon, has seen a wide variety of interpretations over many years, strong testimony to its vitality and universality for generations of audiences. Most of these productions have clearly been influenced by contemporary political and scholarly ideas, as well as by the current theatrical tastes and techniques.

The play was popular and controversial largely for its topical politics as long as there were reigning and ruling monarchs, although authorities tended to discourage the play. After nearly 150 years of neglect and virtually unrecognizable adaptations, in the 1850's the play began to make its way into the theatrical repertoire of major actors and companies as a chance for antiquarian spectacle. Later, echoing the trend in academic criticism exemplified by E. K. Chambers and A. C. Bradley, Frank Benson, the "father" of Stratford-upon-Avon Birthday Festivals, set the pattern for most twentieth-century interpretations of the title role: Richard is an artist whom Fate has tragically miscast as a king. Benson's concept reached its pinnacle in productions with John Gielgud and Maurice Evans, respectively, in productions in London and New York in the 1930's.

Variations upon the pattern of alienated romantic-artist tragedy began to appear after World War II and drew upon such scholars as John Palmer and E. M. W. Tillyard, who emphasized the play's political and

ethical themes. Productions in the 1950's and 1960's either followed the traditional concepts or attempted to realize on stage Shakespeare's history plays as a multi-part historico-socio-political epic of England or as a timeless mythic saga concerning ambition, war, and political power. Most recent productions, more dependent on academic "readings" of the play than ever before, have tried to combine the best of both worlds: exciting and moving theatricality as well as consistent, conceptually unified presentation.

"Production concepts" successfully re-interpret Richard II to both new audiences and experienced ones, ensuring that the play continues to be good theatre. However, the most moving and effective performances continue to be those which embrace a tragic aesthetic, carefully crafted so that an audience identifies with Richard in his struggle against his Fate and, through his fall, his recognition of his essential, individual humanity.

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INTRODUCTION

TEXT, SCRIPT, AND PERFORMANCE

The Tragedy of King Richard II, although infrequently performed in the post-Renaissance theatre before the middle of the twentieth century, typically has created a sensation when it has been produced. Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men apparently played it frequently, and it was a popular play, going into five quarto editions before the 1623 First Folio, with recorded performances as late as 12 June 1631 in London's Globe, and even aboard the East India Company's ship Dragon in 1607. Six passages from the text were anthologized in England's Parnassus (1600). According to William Lambard, the Keeper of the Tower of London, Elizabeth herself was familiar with the play and was aware of its popularity. He claimed that she asserted that she "was" Richard II and that she angrily resented its popularity, the play having been performed forty times "in open streets and houses."¹

The play's first performance has been dated no earlier than 1595, largely based upon the fact that Samuel Daniel's poem The Civil Wars was one of Shakespeare's sources. Daniel's work was registered on 11 October 1594 and was available in London in the following year; it was mentioned as a "new" work in a letter dated 3 November 1595. Also, a private performance of Richard II may likely have been the

¹Quoted in a memorandum dated 4 August 1601 by William Lambard, first published in Nichols, Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, 1823; quoted in Peter Ure, ed., Introduction to King Richard II (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1961), p. lix.

entertainment referred to in a letter by Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Cecil for the evening of 8 December 1595, presumably after the play had already had a successful public run. The script was released to the company's printer in 1597; it was entered in the Stationer's Register 29 August 1597, and Francis Meres included it in his list of titles in Palladis Tamia as a major tragedy of the day. Perhaps the most well documented performance of the play in Shakespeare's lifetime was at the command of the Earl of Essex on the eve of his rebellion, 7 February 1601; the company was afterwards called to testify in the trials of the conspirators. Presumably Essex's group ordered the play because it dealt with some of the most volatile issues of the day, especially since the text offered the justification of an abdication/deposition by appeals to political expediency and the good of the commonwealth.

The text of the play both benefitted and suffered from its popularity and topicality. The First Quarto (Q1) was printed by Valentine Simmes for bookseller Andrew Wise in 1597. Presumably due to the popularity of the play or to its controversial subject matter, the company seems to have taken some care in seeing it through the press: this is a "good" quarto, especially in comparison with those of other early Shakespearean plays. Two reprints, Quarto Two (Q2) and Quarto Three (Q3), followed in rapid succession in 1598, again indicating that the text was in demand. Q2 was the first of the plays published with Shakespeare's name on the title page, perhaps indicating pride of ownership. All three of these quartos omitted the central section of Act IV, the "deposition" sequence (ll. 154-317), presumably because of the Master of the Revels' objections to the sensitive political

repercussions of the subject matter. Reigning monarchs seem to have been wary of popular spectacles and tracts which depicted successful rebellions, regardless of the professed political point of the piece. Although it was deleted from the quartos, there is no indication that the matter was not performed in full; apparently spoken words were less to be feared than printed ones, or at least more difficult to control.

When Quarto Four (Q4) was printed in 1608 by the new owner of the copyright, Matthew Law, the deposition material was included, although the remainder of the text was derived from Q3. It is generally accepted that the additional text in Q4 was a hasty transcription or a memorial reconstruction.² The text in the First Folio (F), on the other hand, seems to have been a collation of Q4 and some version of a playhouse copy, as discussed in more detail below. In 1615 Matthew Law issued a Fifth Quarto (Q5), simply re-set from Q4. The text of the deposition sequence in Q4 is significantly inferior to that in the First Folio (F), leading most modern editors to follow F for this portion. Editors since John Dover Wilson (1939) have used Q1 as the copy text, supplemented by F for IV.i.154-317. Their purpose has been to get as close as possible to Shakespeare's original autograph; Q1 is

²Discussions of the text of Richard II are summarized most fully in the following editions of the play: John Dover Wilson, ed., *The Cambridge Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939); Peter Ure, ed., *The Arden Shakespeare* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1961); Andrew Gurr, ed., *The New Cambridge Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). The account here is drawn almost exclusively from them and from their respective sources, notably W. W. Greg, A. W. Pollard, A. S. Cairncross, Richard E. Hasker, H. F. Brooks, and J. K. Walton.

presumed to be set from Shakespeare's manuscript (foul papers) while F has "theatrical authority" only. Figure I.1 describes these early editions in abbreviated form. If it is indeed correct that the Folio text reflects stage practice as a result of its collation with a promptbook, it then offers a rare glimpse at the life of a script in Shakespeare's theatre. Recent editors have conjectured either (1) that the Folio editors used a copy of Q3 (with two final leaves from Q5) which was the actual promptbook or which had been somewhat haphazardly corrected by reference to the promptbook, or (2) that the editors had access to a manuscript promptbook.³ Regardless of which theory is correct, all acknowledge that the Folio editors consulted some "theatrical" authority in order to establish a text. For example, the stage directions and speech prefixes in F are much more systematic and complete than those in Quartos (Qq), and, as one might also expect from a production copy, there are cuts (of about 50 lines) and several alterations in phrasing and word choice that might come about through different actors' interpretations of roles or through practical concerns of staging. However, upon closer examination, it seems clear that these variant readings in F are the result of more than simple "preference" on the part of the editors; rather, as "production" changes, they may indicate more fundamental alterations in interpretation of the play over the years of its revivals by Shakespeare's company.

³ Andrew Gurr, ed., offers a cogent analysis of this issue in his introduction to *The New Cambridge Edition of Richard II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

	<u>Date, Printer Bookseller</u>	<u>Contents, Characteristics, Comments</u>
Q1	1597 Valentine Simmes Andrew Wise	Source: Foul Papers (Pollard), transcript of Foul Papers (Cairncross, Brooks, Ure); Contains 50 lines more than F; Omits F: IV.iv.154-317.
Q2	1598 Valentine Simmes Andrew Wise	Source: Reprint of Q1, adds compositor errors, few corrections.
Q3	1598 Valentine Simmes Andrew Wise	Source: Reprint of Q2, further compositor errors, few Q2 corrections.
Q4	1608 William White Matthew Law	Source: Reprint of Q3, further compositor errors from Q3; Addition of F: IV.iv.154-317 (deposition scene) from memorial reconstruction (Ure), transcription (Gurr), or rough player's copy (Pollard).
Q5	1615 William White Matthew Law	Source: Reprint of Q4, additional errors from Q4.
F	1623 Isaac Jaggard Edward Blount	Source: Q3 and two last leaves of Q5 (Hasker), or Q3 as collated with independent source, presumably used by the playhouse (Ure, Gurr).
F2	1632 Thomas Cotes	Source: Reprint of F; used extensively as copy text in acting editions before 20th century.

Figure I.1. EARLY EDITIONS OF RICHARD II, 1597-1632.

For example, it is fairly widely acknowledged that in Richard II Shakespeare may have tried to capitalize on a currently popular anonymous play, Woodstock, which dealt with the murder of Thomas Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester and Richard's uncle, events antecedent to Richard II. By 1623, however, when the old play was quite forgotten, F predictably changes references from "Woodstock" to "Gloucester," a much clearer title to that audience. Similarly, F, anticipating subsequent theatrical practice, cuts some passages which are obscure or unnecessarily lengthy. Richard's elegant but very convoluted metaphor of the realm as a sleeping infant whose slumber is disturbed by Bolingbroke and Mobray (I.iii.129-133) is cut. Most productions also follow F's lead in changing Gaunt's exit in I.i. to an earlier point allowing for a smoother transition to I.ii., in which Gaunt opens the scene; and in cutting the part of "Another Lord" in the Deposition scene (IV.i.), thus quickening the pace and eliminating one minor speaking role. However, not all of F's changes can be attributed so simply to good stagecraft.

It seems obvious that F records a subtle evolution in the play's interpretation over years of revivals. Terminology describing the rebels used in the scripts reveals that by 1623 a "darkening" of characters' motives seems to have occurred. In the F reading, Bolingbroke seems more a usurper, more callous and self-serving in motive, and overall less "human"; Richard's character also appears to have evolved, so that he is less compliant in his fall. In both Q1 and F, Bushy, for example, refers to Northumberland and the others as a "revolted faction, traitors" (II.ii.57). However, while Q1 softens the

description to "party" (e.g., III.ii.203), F continues to use throughout the more pejorative term "faction." When Northumberland himself uses "party" (III.iii.115), it is in reference to an established, organized, legitimate thing--the royal prerogative as enfranchised in Richard's court. In contrast, "faction" has a more divisive, self-serving connotation.

The self-interested nature of the conspiracy is also accentuated by F's substitution of the word "friends" for various Q1 words. In Q1, Aumerle describes Bolingbroke's conspiracy as "great in substance and power" (III.ii.35), while F substitutes "friends" for "power"; later, Richard warns Bolingbroke about the problem with conspiracies, referring to rebellion as springing from the "love of wicked men" (V.i.66) in Q1, yet F changes the wording to "wicked friends." The sarcastic, bitter use of this word to describe the conspirators' doomed alliances ascribes to them an unwholesome, self-serving motivation. As a result, Richard is less the agent of his own downfall and more the victim of a world in which self-interest is the barometer of morality.

Other Folio readings suggest a heightened pathos for Richard alongside a harsher picture of the usurper. A large section of Gaunt's consoling, parental advice to his son Bolingbroke (I.iii.238-241, 267-292) is removed from the F version of the scene, and the dramatic effect is clear: it deprives the audience of one of its very few opportunities to see Bolingbroke in anything other than a formal, political context prior to Act V, when he has already taken the throne. Thus without a scene displaying his boyish petulance and stubbornness, Bolingbroke is more obscure and less "human" than he might have been.

In contrast, the Folio Richard is slightly more appealing than the Q1 characterization. In F, Carlisle no longer reprimands him about compromising his duty to God if he abdicates (III.ii.29-32), nor chides him for his "follies" (III.ii.182); Richard himself no longer has the Q1 line about his negligent "wandering" while Bolingbroke invaded England (III.ii.49); and, finally, Richard does not call himself a "coward" as he does in the Quarto, but merely a "sluggard" king (III.ii.84). These and other "preferences" in wording and editing in the Folio, if they indeed reflect practice in the theatre, suggest that the play underwent a change in the dramatic realization of its central characters.

Even such scant textual information as these isolated alternate readings bear witness that the life of this--or indeed any--play, and consequently its "universality," may partake of the fluidity of its interpretation on stage over time. With more complete documentation of this process than mere conflicting textual readings alone can provide, individual productions, when reconstructed and examined in detail, reveal the play as a living, evolving aesthetic experience. The study of a play requires an analysis of its theatrical realizations over time as well as of its printed text: the script becomes the play only when it is "played." Beginning with this assumption, this dissertation examines stage representations of Richard II by major companies in Britain through 1981, emphasizing those in Stratford-upon-Avon Shakespeare Festivals.

The stage tradition of Richard II before the twentieth century is fragmentary. There were relatively few professional productions after

the closing of the theatres in 1642. The play, like most of the "histories," was not a regular part of most companies' repertoires. Additionally, the subject matter--the deposition of a crowned monarch--could get one in trouble with the sitting government, for example, especially in the periods of strict crown patent control over the theatres. Later, the play was thought to be poorly written, and the pathetic character of Richard not an appropriate role for dashing actor-managers who saw themselves as great tragedians. In addition, performers were convinced that there was insufficient female interest and no real "action." However, with Charles Kean's opulent production in 1857, the play began to rise in estimation until it has become, along with other history plays, highly regarded both on the stage and in the study.

E. K. Chambers, in his introductory analysis of the play in 1889, summed up from a scholarly critic's point of view what preceding actors, directors, and critics had toyed with over the years. The topical applications of the play and its doctrinal issues aside, the major aesthetic and psychological concerns were, as with all histories, determining the proper mixture of the "epic," the "tragic," and the political and ethical "problems" in the play.⁴ The story of Richard II is "epic," in that it is a part of the great struggle of the English Wars of the Roses in which the modern state began to evolve

⁴E. K. Chambers, ed., The Tragedy of King Richard II (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891), pp. vii-xxvii. The fact that Chambers' choice of Shakespeare's original title which classifies the play as a "tragedy" enforces his interpretation and consequently the bias of most scholars through the 1930's.

from its feudal forebears, and more particularly the first part of Shakespeare's eight-part saga of the era. But the play is also "tragic," dealing with the essentially human "sense of tears in mortal things" which makes the fall of this prince a tragedy of character. And Richard II is yet more: it poses a political and ethical "problem" about the relationship of a ruler and his subjects, exploring the nature of kingship, from Shakespeare's Tudor point of view as well as from more contemporary concepts.

Chambers pointed the way for many twentieth-century scholars, who have scrutinized each of the broad areas he mapped out. During the twentieth century, the "Chronicle Play" as a genre, and indeed the entire sociological milieu in which Tudor historians worked, have been examined, and some stage productions have emphasized the epic view of English history which was a part of the original intent of Tudor chronicle history. As psychological theories and terminology have been refined and popularized, Richard's brooding, non-heroic character has become more appealing to major actors as well as audiences, the role becoming one of the central dramatic parts in a Shakespearean's repertoire, a preliminary sketch for both Hamlet and Lear. Increased scholarly attention to original texts and Shakespearean stage conditions have emphasized early Shakespeare as more than historical portraiture and led to overall reevaluation of texts; directors, convinced of new depth in the history plays, attempted to translate them into new, strikingly individualized forms. Over the century following Chambers, the relationship between scholars and performers has been, of course, neither in direct correlation nor in direct

confrontation, but general trends and emphases have created a rich foundation upon which Shakespeare in general and Richard II in particular have thrived. From such fundamental points as staging nearly full texts and maintaining consistent, non-anachronistic costuming to such esoteric interpretive schemes as the doctrine of "The King's Two Bodies" (John Barton's productions in 1973-1974), the potentials as well as the limits of the play have been, and continue to be, prodded and stretched on the stage and in the study.

Tracing the growth and development of the theatre and festivals in Stratford-upon-Avon from their beginnings as a one-week civic labor of love to the current centrality of the Royal Shakespeare Company in classic as well as innovative works provides an overview of the theatrical realizations of rich new viewpoints on both old texts and new.⁵ After a few false starts, a theatre building and annual Festival began under the influence of Charles Edward Flower, a wealthy brewer in Warwickshire, who was the first benefactor and the first Chairman of the largely local Board of Governors. In 1879 he oversaw the first Birthday Festival with director Barry Sullivan. The Festivals, originally scheduled for the week of April 23, the customary date of Shakespeare's birth, gradually swelled to several weeks; a "Summer Festival," originally intended principally for American tourists and for schoolchildren to see plays which were studied in the

⁵The account here is based largely upon two histories of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre/Royal Shakespeare Company: Ruth Ellis, The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre (London: Winchester Publications, Ltd., 1948); Sally Beauman, The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History of Ten Decades (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

classroom, was added in 1910; inevitably, the two successful festivals had merged by 1933, at which point they encompassed six full months. Finally, after decades of toying with the idea, the organization became one of the first British subsidized theatres. Throughout their performance history the Festivals and their acting companies carried forward a commitment to the full Shakespearean canon and to the scholarly establishment, with each season's centerpiece "Birthday Play" typically a play seldom enacted professionally.

The early Stratford tradition was thus a combination of unflinching ardor for the Bard and academic scrutiny. The theatrical establishment from London's West End had little interest in "countryside" Shakespeare, although from time to time major performers would make special appearances. The Festivals would wax and wane in prestige and quality as performers, directors, and tastes changed. After World War II the West End came more regularly to Stratford, and by the 1960's the direction of influence had reversed, with the Royal Shakespeare Company showing the way to conservatives, innovators, and sceptics alike throughout Britain. Especially in staging the histories, the Stratford companies were leaders in bringing into the active repertory and making "popular" these unique plays.

After a general introduction of its production history before the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford, this dissertation examines the Festivals' Richard II stagings, their interpretive underpinnings, and the milieu--both theatrical and scholarly. It is difficult, but not impossible, to attempt to reconstruct productions of a play; for shows performed by the now Royal Shakespeare Company, however, the task

is simplified. In addition to the usual sources of reviews and memoirs, the Shakespeare Centre Library in Stratford has a catalogued collection of scrapbooks, promptbooks, photographs, and other records for many productions. These have been examined and have revealed in Richard II a play both classic and perennially contemporary in style and concept.

CHAPTER 1

A TRADITION OF TRAVESTIES AND NEGLECT

Richard II was apparently quite popular, if unsettling to crowned heads, during most of Shakespeare's lifetime. There are more than 50 documented performances before 1660, with more than 40 of these prior to 1600.¹ Peter Ure asserts that the play held the stage continuously on a regular basis in the Globe company up to 1615.² The two most famous early productions are those associated with the Earl of Essex's attempted rebellion in 1601, with both sides ironically using the play for its topical value. The rebels asked the Lord Chamberlain's Men to perform the play in London on the eve of Essex's march on the city. Then, after the rebellion was crushed, with a delighted touch of sardonic humor, Elizabeth herself ordered a performance for her court on the eve of Essex's execution.

There is evidence that there were full-scale revivals in 1608 (after James I's court had become corrupt due to sycophants, at least

¹For the applicable time periods, see Arthur Colby Sprague, Shakespeare's Histories: Plays for the Stage (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1964), the best general work; and Richard O'Connell, Jr., "A Stage History of Richard II: 1800-1920" (unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1958), a very detailed collection of factual material, reviews, and memoirs. Several modern scholarly editions of the play contain stage histories in their introductory material; however, these should be used sparingly; e.g., the Cambridge Edition (1939), ed. John Dover Wilson, which includes a history contributed by Harold Child which has passed on its errors to subsequent editors and historians.

²Introduction to King Richard II [Arden Shakespeare](London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1961), p. xx.

in the view of many Members of Parliament), in 1631 (after two years of Charles I's "Eleven Year Tyranny" in which purveyance, wardship, and other long-disused feudal obligations were brought to bear on the nobility for Charles' coffers), and in 1738 (when Sir Robert Walpole was maneuvered into war with Spain--the War of Jenkins' Ear--and a very unpopular domestic funding crisis). It seems clear that the chief interest was in Richard II's subject matter: the successful rejection of current authority on the grounds of its "farming" the realm for questionable foreign or dynastic reasons. Character study or personal tragedy seemingly were not primary considerations to audiences in these productions.

With the political implications of the story still paramount, the first documented production after the re-opening of the theatres with the Restoration attempted to resolve any subversive themes through wholesale textual adaptation. In addition, editor/adaptor Nahum Tate set out to "correct" Shakespeare's rough style and clumsy dramaturgy. In his 1681 adaptation, however, he also removed any possibility of tragic impact and substituted simple pathos: gone was Richard's own culpability in his fall, the idea that a flaw in character or an error in judgment which sprang from his personality itself was responsible for his--and the realm's--slide from grace into death and civil wars. Richard's struggle with Fate and his tardy probing into his own identity were similarly transferred to the area of coincidence. Tate's Richard was severely limited in potential for a tragic aesthetic. The necessary lines and the situations were simply not there anymore; and without them, the "tragedy" of King Richard would have been a

misleading title. Indeed, Tate's printed version was entitled The History of King Richard the Second, avoiding Shakespeare's own title of "Tragedie," The emphasis in Tate's reading was political, condemning the act of usurping, not upon Richard's character flaws.

Apparently, Tate tried to ensure that no one could use the presentation of Richard's deposition as a precedent for action against the newly-restored King Charles II's frivolities and pleasure-seeking court. Tate carefully changed all the characters' names and set his stage production in Sicily under the title The Sicilian Usurper. Perhaps the word "usurper" was an unacceptable indiscretion; at any rate, it was "forbid to tread the stage. . . on the third day."³ By altering the play's setting to some neutral location, Tate was trying to palliate its dangerous topicality. The Glorious Revolution was only seven years away, and royal authorities took a different view of the theatre than Charles II's registrars. Tate also cleaned up some of Shakespeare's crudities while expunging the coarse, vilifying language of the conspirators. Even in their mouths such talk could have besmirched a noble Richard in the ears of a sensitive audience. A totally new scene was added for the Queen, in which her devotion to Richard and unquestioning love emphasized his good qualities in a more passionate and less mannered way.

³Nahum Tate, ed. and adapter, "Dedicatory Epistle" to The History of King Richard the Second (1681; facs. rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), n.p. Subsequent references to Tate's adaptation are to this reprint and are noted within the text.

As he explained his changes in the character of Richard in the "Epistle Dedicatory" to the printed text of his production, "I have everywhere given him the Language [and behaviour] of an Active, Prudent Prince, Preferring the Good of his Subjects to his Private Pleasure."⁴ Richard's complex character and his personal accountability for the rebellion and consequent civil wars disappeared. His fall became a mere sequence of pathetic, undeserved coincidences in the de casibus tradition, cranking out some vague, nearly pointless destiny which destroyed kings and set up new dynasties. What we now recognize as Shakespearean tragedy, the tragedy of character and consistent patterns of motive and event, simply was not present in Tate's intended aesthetic. He re-wrote, cut, and restructured Shakespeare's text to emphasize bad fortune rather than personal incompetence or ulterior, self-seeking motives. The wheel of fortune rather than individual motivation was the prime mover of events.

In Richard's opening speech one can see Tate at work on his various goals: Richard does not mention his "leisure" being interrupted to take care of the Bolingbroke-Mobray dispute. A few changed words trimmed Richard's ingenious Renaissance conceits to grand Baroque catch phrases. The King throughout the scene is less harsh, less sarcastic, less ironic, less bitter, less quirky--indeed less himself--than in the original. In modernizing and re-characterizing, Tate changed the entire tone of the interchanges:

⁴Tate, "Dedicatory Epistle," n.p.

Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be rul'd by me,
 Let's purge this choler without letting blood--
 This we prescribe, though no physician;
 Deep malice makes too deep incision.
 --Shakespeare (I.i.152-155)⁵

Rash men, thus long we have giv'n you the hearing
 Now let the pleasure of your King be heard;
 And know our wisdom shall prescribe a way
 To purge this Choller without letting Blood,
 Forget, forgive, conclude and be agreed.
 --Tate (p. 4)

In Tate's reworking of Richard's conceited character and Shakespeare's dense poetic style, the King is more placid and decorous, and less smug and priggish. Tate continued in this pattern throughout the play. He also altered events, not the least of which was cutting all references to Richard's possible involvement in the death of Thomas of Woodstock.

When Tate's Richard decides to go to Ireland, it is not the result of an abrupt fancy or because of advice from sycophants, but rather because of his responsible, Kingly sense of duty:

Now for the Rebels that hold out in Ireland,
 And turn our mild forbearance to contempt,
 Fresh forces must be levi'd with best speed,
 Ere farther leisure yield them further strength,
 We will our self in person to this War,
 And quench this flame before it spread too far.
 (pp. 10-11)

Neither the speech nor the sentiment is in Shakespeare. The most fundamental change was to make Richard a victim of circumstance (Fall of Princes-de casibus) rather than of his own weaknesses (Tragedy of

⁵ All references to Shakespeare's text are to Peter Ure, ed., King Richard II, [The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare, gen. ed. Harold F. Brooks and Harold Jenkins] (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1961). Ure's copy text is the First Quarto, 1597, supplemented by the First Folio, 1623, for IV.i.154-318.

Character): Tate's Richard merely borrows Gaunt's revenues and does not seize the absent Bolingbroke's prerogatives. Far from wishing Gaunt hastened to his grave, as he does in the original, he orders his courtiers to "attend him well." Following the death, Richard reluctantly collects the revenues "for a time" and only "In Herford's absence":

we mean him nothing foul
But shortly will with interest restore
The Loan our sudden streights make necessary.
(p. 15)

In fact, as it turns out, the whole change of dynasty could be traced to the simple fact that no one thought to tell Bolingbroke that the "seizure" was actually a loan.

Some of Tate's basic cuts, as opposed to his massive re-interpretation, made good theatrical sense, and they became accepted ones whenever the play was performed over the next two centuries. The Bushy, Bagot, and Green scenes were almost completely gone; only their necessary plot functions were retained. York became the role assigned to the company clown, a prosaic buffoon who combined comic characteristics of Polonius, Bottom, and Falstaff. Non-Shakespearean comic speeches replaced York's choric function as a spokesman for the last medieval generation of nobility and knighthood. His response to the ensuing threat to the realm while the King is in Ireland is ludicrous, both in content and style. To his credit, he does realize his own weaknesses, as he tells the Queen:

Comforts in Heav'n, and we are on the Earth, nothing but crosses
on this side of the moon; my heart stews in the Choller, I shall
dissolve to a Gelly. That your husband shou'd have no more wit
than to go a Knight Erranting whilst Rogues seize all at home, and

that I shou'd have no more wit than to be bid Deputy at such a proper time: to undertake such a crazy Government, that can scarce carry my own Fat: Well, Sirrah, have you given my Son orders to Strengthen his forces? If he prove a flincher too.--

(pp. 17-18)

Not only is the diction a far cry from Shakespeare's blank verse, but the idiom is more that of Sir John Falstaff than of the last of Edward II's sons.

Tate recognized the lack of female interest and fleshed out the Queen's role by giving her an additional scene with Richard, in defiance of time and geography, on the Welsh shore. She is also given a scene with a letter from Richard at the close of the play. The scenes of the Aumerle conspiracy were so severely truncated as to be nearly irrelevant. Their only real contribution was comic relief. Finally, the character of Bolingbroke, obscure enough in the original, becomes little more than a prop to the events rather than a consistent characterization of a future King. He is unquestionably a usurper, but at the close of the play he is so contrite as to negate his former lines and actions.

The thrust of Tate's adaptation was to offer a historical episode, an interpretation of historical events. It is a tale told with a moral, which Richard himself speaks, in non-Shakespearean lines:

How think ye my good friends, will not
Succeeding Ages all this Day to witness
What changes sway the world; your King must pass
A spectacle of scorn through crouded streets,
That at the same time view th'usurpers Triumph;
Heav'n shut thy eye till this dire Scene be past,
The light that sees it sure will be the last.

(p. 44)

Simplified characters and events made the moral unambiguous enough to serve as a lesson to all usurpers, regardless of their motives or levels of success. Tate did in a heavy-handed way what many more contemporary producers and directors have done in much subtler ways. Resolving ambiguities, delicious in the study, is a necessary evil of mounting a production which cannot have the luxury of infinite ambiguity.

A production in 1719-1721 with text prepared by Shakespearean editor Lewis Theobald and one in 1738 "from the original text" occupy two conflicting extremes of Shakespeare in the theatre. Theobald's version had even less of the original than Tate's, while the 1738 production emphasized historical accuracy and antiquarian details within the bounds of the original text. Theobald's production of the story was performed variously in 1719, 1720, and 1721 at Lincoln's Inn Fields, with ten stagings documented, according to Scouten's The London Stage.⁶ Theobald's stated purpose in adaptation was largely structural, but the effects were far-reaching: all scenes were unified in time and place, set before or inside the Tower of London, including Richard's "Welsh Shore" scene (III.i.). Almost all of Shakespeare's Acts I and II were omitted except for a few set speeches inserted at odd points. To add a female element that was perceived to be

⁶A promptbook presumably prepared for this travesty is in the collection of the Folger Library (Rich II, 7). It has a few markings for textual changes, entrances, exits, and curtain notes. The version as performed is discussed in some detail, without analysis, in Arthur H. Scouten, The London Stage: 1660-1800 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961), III, 375ff.

absent, Theobald invented a new character, Lady Percy, and a romantic subplot between her and Aumerle. For once in Richard II's performance history, the Aumerle conspiracy loomed large. The eventual outcome, however, was far different. Aumerle was executed by a ruthless Henry IV, over the protests of York (who in the original puts forth an opposite argument) and of Lady Percy, who later dies of grief.

The 1738 production, a revival instead of an adaptation, emphasized the history instead of the drama. A promptbook accepted as being the basis for this production, now in the Folger Library, uses the 1632 Second Folio text with cuts marked, indicating some "theatrical" cutting and some emendation through collation with Pope's edition of the play.⁷ Cast lists and stage plots indicate a large production, but little besides a commitment to the original text can be confirmed in attempting to reconstruct the show. There were no invented scenes nor any wholesale re-interpretation of characters or events. These two productions indicate two differing approaches to staging Shakespeare, both of which were apparently successful in the theatre. On the one hand, modernization through adaptation, and on the other, antiquarian research, each pleased audiences. And the two approaches, not necessarily incompatible, became a part of the tradition.

⁷The promptbook, in the collection of the Folger Library (Rich II Covent Garden), is ascribed to Stage Manager John Roberts of Covent Garden, and contains sketches of staging and business, perhaps the earliest examples of such documentation of production, along with detailed textual cuts.

Division over Richard II was also prominent in the academic community. Both Dryden and Johnson were serious detractors of Richard II, criticizing its form, style, consistency, and weak plotting. Theobald's adaptation was actually a simple application of current taste and demands to the original script, and serious critics would have applauded some of his motives and goals if not the final product. Dryden, a man of the theatre himself, attacked Shakespeare in general for "ill-sounding" and "improper" words, "solecism of speech," "notorious flaws in sense," and the "lameness" of plots.⁸ Later, and more seriously, Johnson, while granting Shakespeare much, attacked him on aesthetic grounds:

What he does best, he soon ceases to do. He is not long soft and pathetick without some idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no sooner begins to move, than he counteracts himself; and terrour and pity, as they are rising in the mind, are checked and blasted by sudden frigidity.⁹

Johnson applied his general comments to Richard II specifically, and went on to note that Shakespeare was too often "enslaved by rhyme," and "inartfully" organized scenes contrary to maximum dramatic effect: "Shakespeare is very apt to deviate from the pathetic to the ridiculous."¹⁰

⁸ John Dryden, "The Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age," [1693] in Dramatic Essays, ed. William Henry Hudson (1912; rpt. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1928), pp. 97-98.

⁹ Samuel Johnson, Johnson on Shakespeare, ed. Arthur Sherbo (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 74.

¹⁰ Johnson, p. 443.

After a contemporary, James Goodhall, had prepared an acting text to present to David Garrick, Johnson wrote to the actor in 1773, congratulating him on having declined the project, assuring him that it was not without reason that "successive audiences of more than a century have respectfully slumbered over it."¹¹ Francis Gentleman, annotator and editor of Bell's edition of the play, published in 1774, lamented that Garrick had never tried the role, but also scrupulously marked in a full Folio text all sections which should be cut or altered for the stage--a kind of theatrically Bowdlerized edition. Some of Gentleman's footnotes are particularly revealing of the attitudes which kept the play from the stages of the century; Richard's speeches characterize him as a victim of "royal imbecility," given to "far-fetched, strained, rather unworthy" expressions, and overall "irregular, judging, techy." Gentleman also advised needed corrections for "feebly introduced and rather ludicrously executed" stage action--in short, taste and style. His comments were often very specific: the Garden Scene was "totally unessential to the fable, however poetically beautiful"; Gaunt's famous England speech "would be heavy in public repetition"; Richard's intense mirror speech struck Gentleman as "odd, inferior," and in need of cutting at least by half; finally, the scene in Pomfret, which is the high point of Richard's self-examination and the centerpiece for many twentieth-century actors,

¹¹ Sprague, pp. 29-30.

was "trifling," and of "unnecessary length."¹² From this unrelenting, tough theatrical evaluation of the script, Romantic Shakespearean "bardolators" among men of letters initiated a full about-face.

Instead of harshly judging Shakespeare's dramatic skills on the basis of contemporary tastes and audiences, many Romantic critics, preferring the plays in the closet to on the stage, defended the poet at the expense of the audience. Shakespeare also gained perhaps his most influential admirer, who set the pattern for attitudes toward Shakespeare as the great psychologist for at least a century--Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He changed the perception of history plays in particular from being what Gentleman had called "useful, instructive mirrors, wherein the upper class of life should frequently and attentively look."¹³ In Richard II, Coleridge proposed instead that the text, the full text, offered an intriguingly complex study of an alienated individual. Most of Coleridge's ideas, recorded in marginalia and disseminated to his contemporaries through popular and highly publicized lectures, were psychological studies of Richard. In 1811 he praised Shakespeare's "masterly delineation of the principal character,"¹⁴ and the psychological "rightness" of Richard, not as

¹²James Goodhall, ed. and adapter, King Richard II (1772; facs. rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969).

¹³Francis Gentleman, ed. and adapter, Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's Plays, Vol. VII (King Richard II, King Henry VI) (1774; facs. rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1969).

¹⁴Gentleman, p. 5. This note referred specifically to the opening scene in which Bolingbroke and Mobrai exchanged florid insults to each other and flattery to Richard.

a model or mirror of Kingship, but as an individual personality. As he said in Bristol in 1813:

The play throughout is a history of the human mind, when reduced to ease its anguish with words instead of action, and the necessary feeling of weakness which such a state produces.¹⁵

As critical perspectives changed, the center of the play was no longer seen as Gentleman's "fable" nor Dryden's "lame" plot nor Johnson's variation in aesthetic effect, but was the personality of the king, which must be analyzed and understood in its full complexity.

Coleridge's basic analysis of Richard forms the kernel of almost every actor's interpretation from that point on:

He scatters himself into a multitude of images, and in conclusion endeavours to shelter himself from that which is around him by a cloud of his own thoughts. Throughout his whole career may be noticed the most rapid transitions--from the highest insolence to the lowest humility--from hope to despair, from the extravagance of love to the agonies of resentment, and from pretended resignation to the bitterest reproaches.¹⁶

Were there an actor able to play Richard, Coleridge called for him to step forward onto the stage and do so.

In 1815 an actor specializing in those very "transitions" and "flashes" which Coleridge had seen in Richard answered the call. Edmund Kean mounted a production at the Drury Lane with a script prepared by fellow actor Richard Wroughton. It was unquestionably an actor's text, made to order for the day of the Actor-Manager. There

¹⁵In Thomas Middleton Raysor, ed., Shakespearean Criticism, 2nd ed. (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1960), II, 232. This comment was reported by The Bristol Gazette (18 November 1813) as part of Coleridge's Fifth Lecture, 11 November 1813.

¹⁶Raysor, ed., II, 146. This comment is from Collier's transcription of Coleridge's Twelfth Lecture in Bristol, 1811.

was much less non-Shakespearean material than in Tate's or Theobald's versions, but there was also not much Richard II. According to a tally by Leah Skagg, almost 1000 lines were cut from the 1632 Folio text, and over 200 lines were interpolated from other Shakespearean plays not then holding the stage. For example, the Queen appeared with Richard's corpse at the close of the show, speaking Lear's farewell to Cordelia, unfamiliar lines to audiences who were used to the Colley Cibber version of King Lear which had a happy ending.¹⁷

Other editing included the deletion of almost all rhymes, wordplay, and stichomythia. Anything not directly related to the struggle between Bolingbroke and Richard was omitted: the Duchess of Gloucester scene (I.ii.), the entire Lists scene (II.i.), the Aumerle plot (IV.i., in part, and V.ii-iii.), and most references to past action and future events, such as the Bishop of Carlisle's indictment of the Lancastrian usurpation. The play, thus gutted of any distractions, was a vehicle for Edmund Kean, or whoever happened to be playing Richard. The struggle between him and Bolingbroke was largely military, and Richard became almost heroic in a Romantic artist way.

¹⁷ Here, and in the discussion following, the text for Kean's production is assumed to be that one published by Richard Wroughton, ed. and adapter, Shakespeare's King Richard the Second (1815; facs. rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1970). Leah Skagg contributed an analytical introduction which contrasts the abridgement to the original and identifies sources for some interpolated lines. A promptbook, incompletely annotated, prepared by G. C. Carr of Kean's staff at the Drury Lane, is in the Folger Library and is catalogued for this production. Stage business, cuts, and stage settings are outlined for several scenes. Playbills of the first night (9 March 1815) and eleven subsequent performances are in the Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum, along with an engraving of Kean in his dashing full armor, carrying his trademark truncheon.

An engraving for the frontispiece of the Kean-Wroughton acting text depicted Richard in full armor, clearly a warrior, with Kean's omnipresent truncheon, which he used to punctuate stentorian speeches to make his "points" (Figure 1.1). Kean presented the character as fast-moving and decisive, not given to crippling self-indulgent despair, without any malice, the victim of the weakness of his supporters and of Bolingbroke's military superiority. He was defiant in the Deposition scene (IV.i.), passionate with fits of extreme melancholy, and simply valiant in the final murder scene, where he very nearly dispatched all five murderers before he was stabbed from behind. The running time noted in the promptbook was "2 hrs 45 min," certainly brisk and intense for the theatre in 1815.

Most contemporary reviewers of the Kean effort were impressed with his usual "flashes" of emotional brilliance. Yet in an analysis of the reviews, biographer Fitzsimons concluded:

His conception of Richard II was not that of a weakling but of a man of courage, and he played the part with all the fire and vigor he had shown as Richard III. Those who did not know the play--and this included the greater part of the audience and most of the critics--were delighted.¹⁸

William Hazlitt, writing for the Examiner (16 March 1815), was apparently a little more familiar with the play and was not so delighted. Although he ironically praised the acting version, Hazlitt maintained that the "force of passiveness" and not of ferocity was needed to portray Richard, and Kean did not have it. "He has too much

¹⁸Raymund Fitzsimons, Edmund Kean: Fire from Heaven (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976), p. 83.



R. Crankshaw, Del.

G. H. Bonner Sc.

King Richard II.

King Richard. Up, cousin, up—your heart is up, I know,
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

Act III. Scene 1.

Figure 1.1. **THE HEROIC RICHARD.** Kean's Flint Castle scene (III.iii.) was a confrontation, not a weakling's capitulation. Source: Engraving used as the frontispiece in the 1822 publication of Edmund Kean's acting text (Cumberland's Acting Edition of Richard II, text prepared by Richard Wroughton; also used by Edwin Booth), Birmingham Reference Library.

of that strong nerve and fibre that is always equally elastic."¹⁹

The story of Richard II became a little more popular as a stellar vehicle after the Kean revival. The production, through the graces of James W. Wallack, Kean's Aumerle, was exported to Philadelphia in 1819, and the Cumberland Acting Edition published in 1831 was essentially the Wroughton abridgement. William Macready the elder mounted a successful provincial production in Bristol which toured England, and in London a spectacle-show entitled Wat Tyler and Jack Straw (1831, 1834) was remarkably successful at the Coburg, incorporating sections of Richard II and Henry VI. In 1834 a Drury Lane production had Vanderhoff as Richard II, and in 1836 a pageant entitled Richard Plantagenet, complete with live horses and antique armor, had a run of twenty-one performances. The subject-matter was very popular, it seems, and Richard was most often the hero, paradoxically the King and a spiritual rebel, while Bolingbroke was an agent of the established order.²⁰ In all of this popularization, Shakespeare's and Coleridge's psychologically complex Richard II was gradually eliminated.

Although William Charles Macready performed the role only twice, using Bell's Edition as the text, his production was almost as large as the pageants. The promptbook has cues for many groups of dancers and supernumeraries, an actual ship from which Richard disembarked upon the Welsh shore, a moving porticullis at Flint Castle, and numerous

¹⁹ William Hazlitt, Criticisms and Dramatic Essays of the English Stage, 2nd ed. (London: G. Routledge and Co., 1851), pp. 217-221.

²⁰ O'Connell, I, 166.

original painted drops, suitable for Macready's farewell performances, which was the original intention of staging the revival. However, Macready's focus had clearly returned to Shakespeare's Richard, and not on simple spectacle itself. Macready's interpretation was pathetic in the extreme, with Richard wearing simple, almost monkish robes instead of armor (Figure 1.2), one of the first attempts at full period costuming in the history of the play. According to an enthusiastic review in the Athenaeum, (7 December 1850), "in the power of actualising hopeless wretchedness, Mr. Macready seems. . . to have exceeded himself."²¹ Macready, though, was not fond of the play, longing for a clear textual opportunity to create a "grand historical picture"²² in order to exploit his sumptuous staging.

Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre in London (first night, 12 March 1857) combined the kind of extravagant spectacle of eighteenth-century pageants with Macready's attention to detail in the best of the Victorian scenic style. The production was a monumental affair, quoting numerous current fashionable authorities on history and heraldry to verify the action, settings, and costumes as truly representative of the fourteenth century.²³ The most striking thing

²¹ Athenaeum (7 December 1850), p. 1287. A promptbook using Bell's Edition is in the Victoria & Albert Theatre Museum. Many of the ideas recorded there became "standard" after the turn of the century.

²² William Charles Macready, The Journal of William Charles Macready 1832-1851, ed. J. C. Trewin (London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1967), p. 283.

²³ A promptbook ascribed to Kean's production is in the Folger Library (Rich II, 2 [1857]), with massive cuts and spectacular effects.



Figure 1.2. **THE PATHOS OF DEPOSITION (IV.i.)**. William Charles Macready's 1850 enactment set many patterns, including consistent period costuming and elaborate sets in a lavish production, as well as the pathetic interpretation of a much-abused Richard who was overcome by self-pity. Macready as Richard never lost the sense of heroic stature, however; even in his self-pity and acquiescence to Fate he was never entirely passive. Source: Engraving, Birmingham Reference Library.

was a pageant-scene interpolated between Acts III and IV which depicted Richard's humiliating entry into London on his way to the Westminster audience where he was deposed. The scene depicted the wretched contempt with which the people viewed him, contrasted with the general hurrahs for the man of the hour, Bolingbroke. However, it seemed that the real thrust of the scene was not furthering Shakespeare's design but the recreation of festive city life in London's late medieval age as seen through Victorian eyes:

The acting, however powerful, is thrown into the shade by such accessories as Mr. Kean delights to surround himself with; indeed the success of the interpolated scene showed that the Princess's Theatre might dispense with Shakespeare himself.²⁴

This ironic dig at Kean's production may not have been unwarranted; Shakespeare's text did indeed seem to be of secondary importance. Basing his "Historical Episode" on chronicle sources and Shakespeare's own narrative descriptions in Richard II (which had been cut from the script to allow more time for staging) and Henry IV Part I, Kean's production contained one of the grandest spectacles of a theatrically extravagant age (Figure 1.3). According to one account, there were "500 to 600" people on the stage,

all moving in trained regularity or organized disorder, according to the varying incidents. The music, the joy-bells, the dances, the crowded balconies and windows, the throngs in the streets, the civic processions, the mailed warriors, . . . the scrupulous accuracy with which every dress and movement is portrayed;--all this completed a picture which brought back to the present, and

²⁴Athenaeum (14 March 1857), p. 348. The production is well documented (see Scouten, op. cit.), and Kean himself published his acting text in 1857 (facs. rpt. London: Cornmarket Press, 1970). David Rittenhouse contributed an analytical introduction to the reprint.

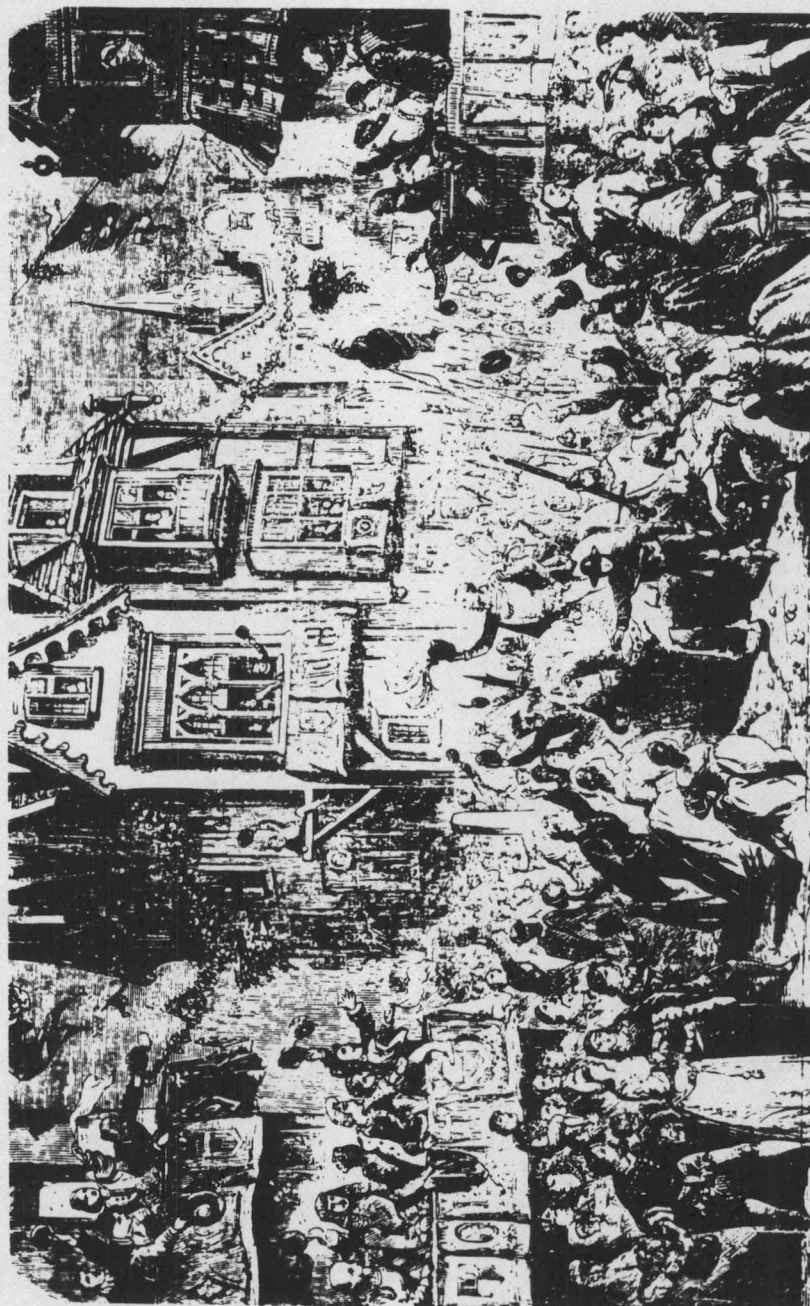


Figure 1.3. **RICHARD II AS SPECTACLE.** A rendering of Charles Kean's "Historical Episode" of Bolingbroke's entry into a jubilant London, interpolated between V.i. and V.ii. in his 1857 production. Costuming and business for "Chaucer's London" were "authenticated" by noted antiquarians. Source: Engraving, Birmingham Reference Library.

bewildered the spectators with a mingled sensation of astonishment and admiration. . . the resuscitation of a memorable passage from our domestic chronicles.²⁵

Apparently a good deal of the "admiration" was for the clever scenic artists and not for the playwright.

The "Historical Episode" was not the only scene in which the visual impact of the stage picture was crucial. A copy of Kean's promptbook calls for massive casts which were arranged in tableaux--many chairs, much kneeling--and live horses. Kean restored the Lists scene (II.i.) as another opportunity for pageantry. Other stunning effects included a working drawbridge and porticullis for Flint Castle (similar to Macready's). To allow the stage crew to assemble the large practical sets required, a good bit of the acting text was cut and replaced with intermissions. Kean followed the Wroughton-Edmund Kean model: the Duchess of Gloucester, the Aumerle conspiracy, the executions of the favorites, Carlisle's confrontation, and the Welsh Captain all were absent. Also, Richard's character was simplified by deleting Shakespearean psychological complexity, which one suspects was beyond Charles Kean's acting ability to portray effectively. For example, Richard's prison soliloquy shrank from the original 66 lines to a mere 17. What Charles Kean did, however, he did very well. He apparently captured the "wretchedness" of Richard II at least as well as Macready had, and gave a more sympathetic character reading. Walter Pater, writing after many years' remembrance, was much impressed:

²⁵ John William Cole, The Life and Theatrical Times of Charles Kean (London: Richard Bently, 1860), p. 210.

The grace, the winning pathos, the sympathetic voice of the player, the tasteful archaeology confronting modern London with a scenic reproduction, for once really agreeable, of the London of Chaucer. In the hands of Kean the play became like an exquisite performance on the violin. . . . The play of Richard the Second does, like a musical composition, possess a certain concentration of all its parts, a simple continuity, an evenness in execution, which are rare in the great dramatist.²⁶

In praising Kean's performance, Pater, writing in 1889, echoed Coleridge, whose analysis emphasized the alienated Romantic king who was made sympathetic by virtue of his suffering.

Edward Dowden, a central Victorian critical voice, praised the play for its "delicate cunning in the rendering of character." Dowden had described Richard as "a graceful phantom," a sentimentalist, a dreamer, and a "dilettante" with a "taste for pseudo-poetic pathos."²⁷ The type matched Kean's gift for portrait characters, realistic and unheroic, with no mannerism or exaggeration, and was a far cry from the actor-centered productions of Edmund Kean, Macready, or the later Henry Irving, who came after Charles Kean and who was the undisputed master of the late Victorian theatre in London with its penchant for actors as "personalities" in and of themselves. Kean's reviews glow with appreciation but not with emotional warmth or excitement; photographs of him in the role show a dignified but pitiful personage, hardly a dashing one (Figure 1.4).

²⁶Walter Pater, Appreciations [1889] (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1910), pp. 195-202.

²⁷Edward Dowden, Shakspeare: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art (1872; rpt. New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), p. 202.



Figure 1.4. **HARDLY A HERO** (CHARLES KEAN, 1857). Extending Macready's interpretation, the later Kean personified the pathetic portrayal of Richard, costumed from the deposition onwards as a monk, submissive and utterly defeated, capable only of empty words in his defense. This visualization, in less extreme form, has been followed by almost every production since then: Richard's finery is progressively stripped from him as the play proceeds, engaging the audience's pity but not necessarily its identification with the passive King. Source: Photograph, Birmingham Reference Library.

Dowden, Pater, and Charles Kean's audiences appreciated Richard II and Chaucerian London, but not all Victorians liked the play. In 1902 Algernon Charles Swinburne found it completely unmoving: "The third scene, full of beautifully fluent and plentifully inefficient writing, reveals the protagonist of the play as so pitifully mean and cruel a weakling that no future action or suffering can lift him above the level which divides and purifies pity from contempt."²⁸

Kean spared no efforts to depict Chaucer's England on the stage of the Princess's in 1857; in the later part of the Nineteenth Century, a different kind of historical research was bearing fruit in different circles. William Poel and the Elizabethan Stage Society, instead of striving for historical authenticity of setting, sought authenticity of staging.²⁹ He and his group advocated abandoning the scenic style of Kean and Irving in favor of what he and several other academics called "Elizabethan" production methods. E. K. Chambers' work on the Elizabethan Stage had uncovered a great deal of information on what it was like to be in a Sixteenth or Seventeenth Century audience, and Poel was determined to reproduce it for modern audiences. As one of his demonstrations, Poel produced Richard II for one performance only

²⁸Algernon Charles Swinburne, Three Plays of Shakespeare (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1902), p. 66. Swinburne also contrasted Richard II to Marlowe's Edward II; the former was rhetorical, eloquent, beautiful, and artificial, the latter dramatic, passionate, tragic, and convincing.

²⁹Robert Speaight, William Poel and the Elizabethan Revival (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1954) is the principal study of Poel's theories and influence.

(11 November 1899) in the lecture room of London University in Burlington Gardens, with Harley Granville-Barker as Richard. There were few if any set pieces, and costumes were Elizabethan instead of Medieval. Claiming historical evidence, Poel costumed Richard in a monk's robe for Act III, and the Duchess of Gloucester was a nun. There were, however, some unlikely "Elizabethan" production elements, such as a choir which sang madrigal-like music as bridges between scenes and underscores, accompanied by a harpist.³⁰

The space was treated as if it were an outdoor Elizabethan theatre, as described in current scholarship, with platform stage, upper balcony, and inner stage for performers, and with galleries and a "pit" for spectators. Poel's dicta on speech, settings, and costuming were followed so that a "pure" version was staged with nearly incantatory speech and virtually no scenic adornment. The correct order of scenes was observed. However, in defiance of his professed requirements for a full text, Poel was far from timid in cutting the Folio text. In essence, except for an abbreviated, almost cursory restoration of the Aumerle conspiracy scenes, Poel's text was not greatly different from Charles Kean's. For example, Richard's soliloquy in the Pomfret scene had a total of 47 of the 66 lines cut out. In the places where Poel's text differed from Kean's, however, a pattern is discernible: the historical politics and complex dynastic

³⁰ Poel's promptbook is in the Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum, with "O. D. Savage" written on the flyleaf. It indicates staging, music cues, and extensive cuts in an interleaved text based on the Second Folio.

issues were downplayed while Richard's personal tragedy was accentuated. Interpretively, then, Poel remained in the Romantic mainstream, concentrating on character and pathos instead of political problems.

For example, Poel's York, while not quite Tate's fussy buffoon, had few opportunities to struggle with his Shakespearean dilemma of divided loyalties--those to his king and to his sense of English law. He did not visibly try to solve whether a divinely-ordained king could be above the law and his responsibilities to be a good steward of the realm. These rich functions of York's character were regularly sacrificed whenever York was played by a company clown, but Poel did not restore them in his production. York also did not question his personal loyalties; his lines about both Bolingbroke and Richard as "kinsmen" (II.ii.111-116) were cut. Additional deletions, which relegated political and dynastic concerns to second place, included Richard's prophetic speeches in the Flint Castle scene (III.iii. 143-172) and his warnings to Northumberland in the Farewell scene (V.i.55-65). Other cuts seem almost cavalier; in the opening scene virtually all lines except those absolutely required for the plot were cut, and almost half of Northumberland's lines throughout the play were deleted.

The limited scope of this production, as well as the fact that Poel's theories were only partially attempted, ensured that its influence was slight at the time. However, Poel's theories themselves, through his many disciples, not the least of which was Granville-Barker, eventually became as much of the underpinning of the Twentieth

Century's production credo as grand scenic naturalism was of the Nineteenth Century's. If nothing else, Poel demonstrated the possibilities in the full use of any performing space, unadorned, and the dynamism of rapid scene shifts without the fall of a curtain on a proscenium stage. It took many years for Poel's influence to penetrate the London theatrical establishment. Only four years after Poel's Richard II, an adoring production much in the operatic style of Charles Kean was mounted at His Majesty's in London. There were many falls of the act curtain, scenes were shuffled in order to accomodate the stage sets, and the style was worthy of Italian Grand Opera. A replica of Kean's "Historical Episode" was the centerpiece in Herbert Beerbohm Tree's popular staging, which was revived in four seasons, 1903-1910. Although the production concentrated on scenic coups de théâtre, including Morris dancers, dogs, horses, pipers, and even a small pipe organ to accompany the ladies' songs in the Garden scene, Tree attempted much more character portrayal than did Kean. While the 1857 Kean program offered a long list of the historical authorities consulted for stage business, decoration, and costumes, Tree's souvenir program offered character analysis: Richard II is an enigma, a prototype for Hamlet, in that both characters find themselves "surrounded by barbarism and corruption, both incapable of grappling with the stern facts of life."³¹ The interpretation, bolstered by

³¹ Souvenir program dated 10 September 1903, in the Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum, not specifically catalogued.

its being in the hands of each spectator with a program, apparently worked well. It was one of Tree's more successful shows.

In addition to the delights for the eye, each character was sharply if simply defined. The Illustrated London News described each of them with an epithet: Bolingbroke was "sombre," Gaunt "vehement," the Gardener "sententious," York "bustling," Carlisle "fiery," and the Queen "impassioned." Of Tree's Richard: "such a figure, half-weakness, half-dignity--suits Mr. Tree's instinct for character, and his Richard, though theatrically rather than spiritually realized. . . , has many finely imagined moments of pathos."³² Tree played Richard as a betrayed Christ-figure, the illustration in the souvenir program picturing a pitiful, robed martyr, fully equipped with a blonde wig. Tree's interpretation was clearly influenced by a provincial actor, Frank Benson, who had been performing the play throughout England since 1899, and Oscar Asche, once with Benson's company, who played Bolingbroke to Tree's Richard. Benson had even gone so far as to don a blonde wig for his performance at the Lyceum in 1900. Benson, anchored in Stratford-upon-Avon and having worked with William Poel, represented that doubly odious thing to the London theatrical establishment--a provincial and an academic.

However, in London there was clearly some sort of change in the offing. Eveline Godley, critic for The National Review, was not alone when she demanded that Shakespeare be saved from operatic over-

³²The Illustrated London News (19 Sept 1903). In Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum, clipping in scrapbook not specifically catalogued.

production like Tree's. She pleaded that the full and unadorned text be used. She railed against excessive business which did not appreciably carry forward the action: Tree had included supernumeraries playing at bowls, a dumb-show, the interpolated scene of Richard's humiliating entry into London, Bolingbroke and Richard in an argument over Richard's deerhound, and two live horses "forcibly dragged to the stage." And, Godley claimed, until this sort of travesty, "deliberately theatrical," was banned from the respectable stage, reading the full, unscrambled text in the closet was preferable.³³

Of course, Shakespeare was not removed from the stage until the "deliberate theatricalism" was purged. Rather, as might be expected, the eventual evolution of staging Shakespeare in general and Richard II in particular took not one road or the other, neither the operatic nor the academic, the West End nor the provinces, but rather forged a new hybrid influenced by all methods, and not simply based on theory, scholarship, critical taste, or box-office receipts alone.

³³Eveline Godley, "A Plea for the Protection of Shakespeare," The National Review, 42 (December 1903), 582-590.

CHAPTER 2

RICHARD II JOINS THE REPERTOIRE: BENSON TO GIELGUD

In his memoir Shakespearean Playgoing 1890-1952, Gordon Crosse echoes the loving sentiments of many Shakespeareans in praising Sir Frank Benson and his company of "Bensonians" who formed the nucleus of Shakespeare Birthday Festivals at Stratford-upon-Avon from 1886 through 1916.¹ Benson toured the British Isles and even North America throughout the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, carrying with him standards and methods of staging and diction and developing young actors' skills in a demanding repertory system. He was young but not altogether unknown when he was recruited for Stratford in 1886, having been the manager of his company for two years.

Although he is sometimes portrayed as a disciple of the William Poel school, in that he allegedly restored full texts to the stage, revived seldom performed plays, and promoted "simple and unobtrusive" scenery with the stage "undecorated and Elizabethan,"² upon closer examination Benson clearly belongs in the mainstream of the scenic tradition along with his predecessors Kean and Irving. His simplified productions were more often the result of their being road shows than of a commitment to Poel's dicta. Benson did indeed mount 35 of the 37 plays in the Folio, and he did tend to employ more of the actual text

¹Gordon Crosse, Shakespearean Playgoing 1890-1952 (London: A. R. Mobery & Co., Ltd., 1953), p. 22.

²George C. D. O'Dell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), II, 392.

and original order of scenes in his staging. However, Benson was no rabid reformer or experimenter. In Cornhill Magazine in 1900, he and Sidney Lee published a kind of production credo, vowing

that Shakespeare's plays should be acted constantly and in their variety; that a manager should change his program often, allowing no play to have a disproportionate run; that every part should go to an artist trained in the speaking of blank verse and with some knowledge of the Shakespearean range; that no play should be adapted for the sake of one part; and that settings--"scenic embellishment"--should be simple and "subordinate to the dramatic interest."³

In practice, however, Benson's productions were not always so scrupulously pure, and his Richard II was no different.

Benson's company was famous for its ability to speak the language and preserve its rhythms and diction, although letter-perfect line-reading was not a part of the Benson style. Gordon Crosse stated that the company's almost chronic ad-libbing was a function of the constant variation which Benson demanded in the repertory, but that the careful attention to diction more than compensated for the lack of textual fidelity: "The Benson company, unlike some modern actors, seemed thoroughly at home in Shakespeare, and spoke the verse as if it came naturally to them."⁴ Benson in particular had a voice well-suited to declamatory speeches such as abound in the history plays.⁵ Finally, the style benefitted from a certain "gusto," as contemporary critic

³As quoted in J. C. Trewin, Benson and the Bensonians (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1960), p. 120.

⁴Crosse, p. 22.

⁵The Scotsman, 1 January 1940 (an obituary article, Benson having died 31 December 1939).

Monkhouse put it: "His high spirits and athletic exhuberance affected the others until the dry bones of the play were shaken into some kind of barbarous music."⁶

Benson's staging was certainly less distracting than the interpolations of Charles Kean and the scene shuffling of Beerbohm Tree, but it was just as far from William Poel. One reason Benson's shows were less ornate was budgetary and practical--a cast of 500 was difficult to take on tour--but he did attempt more modest spectacle, largely through props, costumes, energetic stage movement, and music.

In the mounting of the plays Benson did his best to carry Lyceum methods around the country. In the histories we had scaling-ladders, battering rams, and in general as much as he could give us of the pomp and circumstance of medieval warfare. This was done partly because in those days audiences expected Shakespeare to be thus embellished, but mainly to provide a kind of pictorial commentary on the plays.

Instead of elaborate box sets, live horses, and "stars," Benson used stock backdrops, detailed and historically accurate costuming and business, and mood music in his Richard II, which was perhaps his favorite play and probably his most successful role.

Richard O'Connell, Jr., discusses the Benson Richard II in some detail, noting that in the provinces and abroad he performed the role at least 200 times, producing it as a part of the Stratford Festival frequently from 1896 through 1916. It was a popular production, and it is no surprise that Benson's panel in the stained-glass window at the

⁶As quoted in Richard Prentiss, John O'London's Weekly (12 January 1940)[obituary tribute].

⁷Crosse, p. 33.

Shakespeare Memorial Library in Stratford depicts him in costume as Richard II. Although his promptbook is lost, memoirs and reviews allow a reasonable reconstruction of the text, staging, and interpretation.⁸ In short, Benson showed the theatrical establishment that Richard II was not a weak play, and that the central role was of sufficient complexity to be a worthy undertaking for a leading actor or actor-manager.

Benson's text, far from the complete Shakespearean work, followed Charles Kean's. However, in Benson's hands the evening moved at a fairly brisk pace. Although Benson allowed for intervals between each act, timings recorded in the program for a 1904 staging log a total of only 35 minutes, during which a small orchestra played. Benson's acting version (discussed in The Sketch, 17 March 1897) cut in full:⁹

- I.iv.: Richard, Aumerle, and the favorites discuss Bolingbroke's departure and Gaunt's illness.
- II.iv.: Salisbury and the Welsh Captain desert Richard and foretell his fall.
- III.i.: Bolingbroke offers the rationale for his return and orders the execution of Bushy and Green.
- IV.i.1-107 (to entrance of York): The nobles exchange gages and threats before the deposition.
- V.ii.: Duke and Duchess of York discover Aumerle's treason and vow to plead their cases to Bolingbroke.

⁸ Certain factual information concerning this production is based upon Richard O'Connell, Jr., A Stage History of Richard II: 1800-1920 unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1958; and upon corroborating contemporary reviews.

⁹ Although there is no promptbook available for exact examination of Benson's text, his cuts as discussed in The Sketch are corroborated elsewhere, notably in The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald reviews.

- V.iii.: Bolingbroke eventually pardons Aumerle after much discussion with York and his Duchess.
- V.iv.: Exton decides to act upon Bolingbroke's suggestion and murder Richard.

Not all of the details from these scenes were lost, however; as O'Connell reports, Benson as usual transferred favorite lines from cut scenes to enacted ones. For example, Richard's "oyster wench" insult to the absent Bolingbroke (I.iv.24-34) was given to the Queen in I.ii. Benson also set a pattern of moving York's description of Richard's ignominious entry into London from the cut V.ii. to the end of the Garden scene. This was continued in many productions thereafter whenever the Aumerle conspiracy scenes were cut. The pace of production was lively, thanks to such healthy cuts and the use of easily changed drop scenes. Benson's Stratford programs 1896-1911 call for a total of twelve scenes, of which probably only five were deep sets (Figure 2.1).

One of the objects of the liberal cutting of Richard II was the excision of the Aumerle conspiracy scenes. Charles Kean and most producers before him had seen omitting the sequence as a simple way of reducing playing time and number of actors; Benson followed their lead. There have been varying opinions about the purpose and impact of the Aumerle material. Many recent productions, working from scholarly complete texts, include the plot. Historically, in terms of performance, however, the decision to include or delete was often dictated as much by practical concerns as by interpretive ones. First, there was the mere question of time: if the play must be cut in order to achieve a reasonable running time, Aumerle and the Yorks were

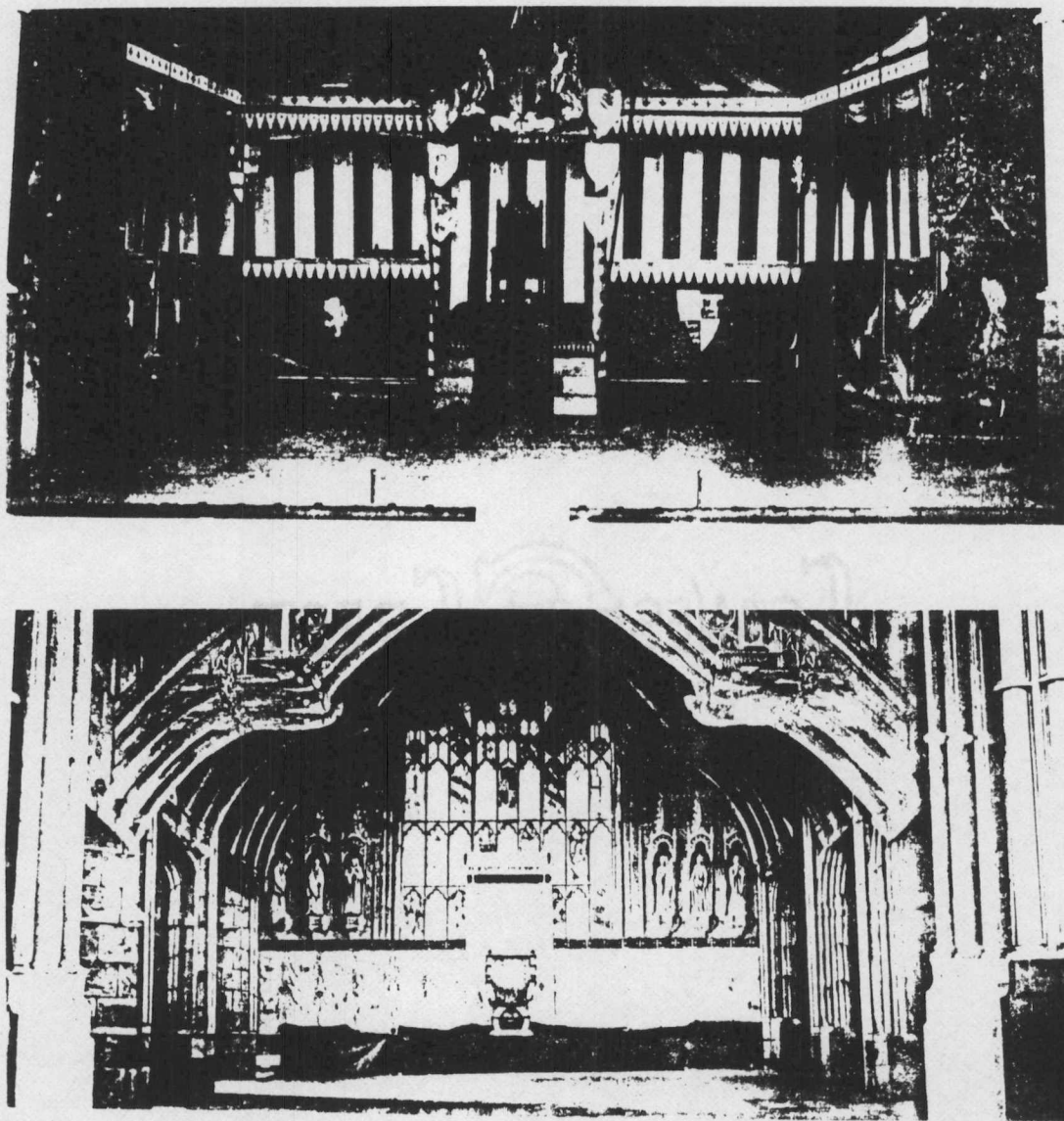


Figure 2.1. **EARLY FESTIVAL STAGING.** Relatively simple but historically appropriate drop sets from stock and few set pieces allowed for Stratford Festival flexibility, which often required eight plays to be produced in eight days. The Stratford stage was quite small, but a few grand scenic coups-de-theatre, such as an operating fountain in the garden scene, were attempted from time to time. Top: Lists Scene (I.iii.), 1896. Bottom: Deposition Scene (IV.iv.), 1896. Source: Photographs S-1408, Shakespeare Centre Library.

expendable, as was the case in other Bensonian cuts, such as the execution of Bushy and Green. Second, in the theatre there are always casting problems: a difficulty with what to do with the chief comedian of the company sometimes resulted in the scenes being played for laughs, with York a buffoon. Nahum Tate used the ploy. But typically in Benson's productions, George Weir, the clown, was cast as the Gardener, leaving no comedian to play the role of York. It was then logical to remove York's late scenes with their problematical comic effects, and thereby to relegate the role to minor status. Finally, the presence of Aumerle and the conspiracy delayed the denouement of Richard's tender farewell to his Queen and his death. When the scenes were omitted, the pathetic focus tightened on Richard personally, with no distractions.

Benson's cuts speeded up the action, unified the pathetic effect by eliminating comic and political distractions, and concentrated the play on Richard's hapless fall from the scene on the Welsh shore (III.ii.) to his soul-searching in Pomfret. The cuts had many other, perhaps unintended, effects. The most important and pervasive of these was the virtual elimination of Bolingbroke as a character interesting in his own right. He was reduced to little more than a foil for Richard, and the larger political implications of the play were downplayed or ignored. Although when played by Frank Rodney (1896-1903), Bolingbroke made a creditable impression, almost the full thrust of any review or memoir was an analysis of Benson's Richard.

Bolingbroke, and of course York, his Duchess, and Aumerle were greatly diminished in the cuts; but there were more subtle shadings

lost as well. In deleting the early court scene of Richard alone with his favorites (I.iv.), Benson removed rich background and complex motives in characterization. For example, there was no suggestion of the existence of two distinct parties at court, and no evidence of a long-standing conflict between Richard and Bolingbroke. Gone was Richard's nearly paranoid analysis of Bolingbroke's early intentions: Richard was not granted the bitter lines about how Bolingbroke courted the commoners' favor on his way to exile: "As were our England in reversion his,/ And he our subjects' next degree in hope" (I.iv.35-36). Also lost was the important background for some of the nobles' motives in the conspiracy, Richard's "farming" of the royal realm with blank charters, and Richard's flippant remark upon hearing of Gaunt's illness, that his physician "help him to his grave immediately!" (I.iv.60) Benson thus increased the tempo from the banishment (I.iii.) to Gaunt's death (II.i.), at the expense of remarks and actions which would deepen the conflict between the potentially heroic, sympathetic Richard and his dynastic foe.

Excising the Welsh Captain scene (II.iv.) reduced some of the rich symbolic resonance of the play. Richard is, in the view of the Welshman, not just an individual but rather a symbolic victim of the cosmic will. The scene also serves as a lyric interlude between two scenes which depict Bolingbroke in his military persona, a break which Benson--and many others--found easy to do without. The movement, then, was away from a more general political confrontation and towards a personal crusade; Richard and Bolingbroke in Benson's text are more personal foes than political opponents or representatives of divergent

political points of view. Benson also cut the next scene (III.i.) in which Bolingbroke orders the execution of Bushy and Green, a scene which has often been pruned. The loss of the actual executions is of no particular significance to most in the audience, except in saving their sensibilities; but in ordering their deaths, the actor portraying Bolingbroke also has the opportunity to develop his motivations and his assessment of Richard. The issue of Bolingbroke's awareness of the implications of his actions could be clarified here, but the opportunity is lost when the scene is cut. With this arrangement it is easy for Bolingbroke simply to be a military man with a personal affair of honor to settle. Without this scene and the additional speeches outlined earlier, Benson's Bolingbroke was far less complex or enigmatic than he might have been. Until his "silent king" performance in the Deposition scene (IV.i.), Bolingbroke was merely the blustering boy of I.i. grown up into the curt military adventurer with a shallow, publicly conciliatory attitude in II.iii. and III.iii.

The infamous gage scene which opens Act IV, developing the complex Woodstock political background as well as the growing Aumerle conspiracy, was another Benson cut. The theatrically awkward, often unintentionally comic ritual of gage-tossing was of course avoided, but the aesthetic impact of the deposition as a whole was also affected. Instead of a stark view of Westminster as a site for violent political expedience, thinly masking the ambitious motives of the lords, Benson's act began with Carlisle's vehement defense of Richard and divine right. The effect, once again, was to emphasize Richard's fall, to present him sympathetically, cruelly surrounded by self-serving barbarians, and to

obscure the issues raised by the increasing waves of rebellion. The cut further decreased the character of Bolingbroke; demonstration of his ability to control the nobles was sacrificed along with the gage-throwing. Finally, Bagot's reappearance in IV.i. as a turncoat from Richard to the new faction, was lost.

Removing the Aumerle conspiracy scenes is often a function of theatrical practicality, but their absence also serves to obscure the character of Bolingbroke. The audience is never really allowed to see him being "kingly." His fatherly and kingly troubles with Prince Hal, "as dissolute as desperate" in V.iii., are gone, as is the lengthy scene in which the Yorks argue before his judgment. As King Henry IV he sternly deals with traitors and yet pardons Aumerle for his Aunt's sake. Although Bolingbroke has few lines to speak in the Aumerle scenes, a good actor could certainly make much of the stage time, and an audience would be granted the privilege of seeing him in his royal capacity, no longer a youthful rebel. Additionally, omitting the scene denies the audience the opportunity to see the Duke and his Duchess at odds over the fate of their son--however comically overstated. That Richard's fall has set off a series of intra- and inter-familial conflicts as well as a realm-wide civil war is a point not made in Richard II without the Aumerle scenes. The play is swifter, tighter, more aesthetically consistent, and more concentrated on Richard's character without them, but the concentration comes at the cost of the breadth of the play as a political study.

Following Charles Kean, Benson continued to simplify the character of Bolingbroke and deify Richard. In the final scene as Richard's body

was brought to the stage in a coffin, Bolingbroke sobbed over the corpse, and his terse lines to Exton were cut. There is little doubt that this Bolingbroke was indeed overcome with grief and guilt; his feelings were not nearly so ambivalent as they might be. As The Birmingham Gazette (24 April 1896) noted, Bolingbroke was a "manly" contrast to Richard's "impotence," but the portrayal was more a series of striking impressions than a symmetrical characterization. Only when Frank Rodney undertook Bolingbroke to Benson's Richard were some of the limitations overcome; Rodney cast a hypocritical air of chivalry over his "cold and crafty Bolingbroke."¹⁰

The center of Benson's production, then, was his Richard--not necessarily forcing the play into being a stellar vehicle along the lines of Edmund Kean's, but rather greatly extending Charles Kean's vaunted psychological study of the effete Richard. The cuts eliminated some of the burden of extraneous material such as Richard's complicity in the Woodstock murder (Benson's Richard was innocent) and possible homosexual overtones. They decreased the links between Richard II and the other history plays. And they made the final third of the play virtually a one-man show. Several critics recognized Richard as Benson's best role, and indeed one of the most influential essays in theatrical criticism in modern times was written in praise of one of his performances. According to C. E. Montague in The Manchester Guardian (4 December 1899), Benson revealed the true character of

¹⁰Crosse, p. 24.

Richard as an artist manqué, a poet pathetically miscast in the role of King:

[W]e wonder whether any one who hears Mr. Benson in this part with an open mind can doubt that Shakspeare meant to draw in Richard not only a rake and muff on a throne and falling off it but, in the same person, an exquisite poet: to show with the one hand how kingdoms are lost and with the other how creative imagination goes about its work; to fill the same man with the attributes of a feckless wastrel in high place and with the quite distinct and not incompatible attributes of a typical, a consummate artist.¹¹

Montague went on to suggest that Richard's inability as King is caused by his artistic temperament. Benson, including almost in full the long, involved speeches in the deposition (IV.i.) and at Pomfret (V.iii.), which Charles Kean nearly omitted, claimed Montague, revealed Richard's artistic tendency to fondle word and image at the expense of action. Benson's portrayal of Richard for the first time on the stage, "was brilliant in its equal grasp of the two sides of the character." That Benson used the text and business which Montague claimed he did is corroborated in memoirs and reviews; but whether all of it was the result of a consistent interpretation of the play by Benson himself is not so clearly evident. His characterization of the King mixed the levity, frivolity, callousness, and charm of an intelligent young prig in the first two acts with the distracted, languid, bitter, and pathetically weak defeatist in the last three. He took ideas for business from chronicles, including the anecdote in Froissart about

¹¹This famous essay/review is most readily available in the collection Specimens of English Dramatic Criticism: XVII-XX Centuries, comp. A. C. Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945), pp. 222-230. It is summarized in several other articles, notably in A. C. Sprague, Shakespeare's Histories: Plays for the Stage (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1964).

Richard's dog which deserted him for the new King. He took his costuming from portraits of Richard as a blonde popinjay with a tiny beard. He interpolated on-stage songs. He also invented some startling stage business worthy of Charles Kean and Herbert Beerbohm Tree. In the opening scene courtiers played at bowls, a piece Tree later incorporated in his own production. Richard, the Queen, and the favorites were quite jolly with sweetmeats in the Lists scene (I.iii.). When he began to despair in the Welsh Coast scene (III.ii.), he sank to the ground, trembling, put dead leaves on his head, and traced the word "sorrow" in the empty air with a shaky finger. One of the most effective scenes, mentioned in many reviews, was the end of the Deposition (IV.i.), which Benson presented without the Abbot and Aumerle's final lines (IV.i.320-330). Richard concluded the act alone on the stage, leaning against a pillar, absent-mindedly keeping time with the exit music by waving his finger.

No other contemporary reviewer made the weak king/artist connection in Benson's interpretation as cogently as did Montague. The Birmingham Gazette (29 April 1910) contains the most complete account of the general impression of Benson's Richard as childish, vacillating, near-hysterical, and "artificial":

The dreamy king, alternating between long periods of fantastic revery bordering on madness and spasmodic efforts to assert himself, the King who is only a king in so far as he is a creature of habit, is utterly broken when he has to face a real need for strong action. . . a man of shadows, existing only as the reflex of a mind, which, though not exactly unhinged, wanders from fancy to fancy like a child picking flowers. Nothing set in the play gets nearer to the true inwardness of his character than the remark to Bolingbroke when the King smashes the mirror, and observes in the havoc which grief has in his face, "The shadow of a sorrow destroys the shadow of your face." Here his grief is a

shadow, for the loss of a kingdom is no great matter to a man to whom the pride of pomp and circumstance is a vital thing in his life. Even the King's sorrow at parting with the Queen is artificial, or as the melodramatists have taught us to say, theatrical.

It may be, then, that what Montague read as Benson's "artistry" was no more than puerile egoism. Whichever is correct, the Montague interpretation became increasingly popular and soon the goal which actors strove for and the epitome by which critics judged performances.

In 1901 Benson used the second week of the then two-week Festival to present the first of his "History Cycles." Performed in order were King John, Richard II, Henry IV, Part II, Henry VI, Part III, and Richard III. The box office sought subscriptions for the whole series and was sold out quickly. Benson took most of the name parts, except that Frank Rodney was Bolingbroke and Henry IV throughout, while Benson was Prince Hal and Henry V. The productions were not necessarily unified in any other way, simply revived from the existing repertory. However, the mere experiment of playing them in chronological order had significant effects, both in terms of their reception and their method of presentation. Literature (4 May 1901) flatly stated that this was "the method in which the histories ought to be acted." Benson altered the plays in order to provide a few links which Shakespeare had carelessly omitted, the most glaring of which was at the opening of Richard III: Richard murdered Henry VI by his own hand and on stage, certainly at odds with Shakespeare's original conception. The same type of project was attempted, with an altered list of plays in 1905, 1906, 1908 and 1913. In 1905 the Shakespearean list was expanded to

include Marlowe's Edward II.¹² Cuttings and transpositions were large and frequent, especially in the little known Henry VI plays, all three parts of which were played in 1906. In 1901 William Butler Yeats was in Stratford for the series. He wrote fervently of the effects of the serial presentation: "the theatre has moved me as it has never done before." He went on to propose that without Shakespeare's Renaissance Italian influences, his English Kings would have become like the great mythic Greek dramatic personae: "These nobles with their indifference to death and their immense energy seem at times no nearer the common stature of men than do the gods and heroes of Greek plays." He also praised Benson's Gordon Craig-like style of "decorative," not "naturalistic" scenery.¹³

Yeats was not nearly so impressed with Benson as an actor as he was by the overall effect. However, numerous critics saw Benson as quite effective, especially as Richard II. As he aged he developed mannerisms, and his declamatory style became less and less well received (John O'London's Weekly, 12 January 1939). However,

¹²In 1913 a Handbook to the Festival was prepared by Benson, Arthur Hutchinson, Reginald R. Buckley, and Cecil J. Sharp, which tried to provide audiences historical background and continuity for the series (that season King John, Richard II, Henry IV, Part II, and Henry V). The theme was simple: the rise of the House of Lancaster. The Handbook offered Edward Dowden's Victorian theory about Shakespeare's moral purpose in the plays: rebellion versus progress. However, there was little evidence that the productions themselves had been altered to any great extent by virtue of being presented as a series, and without the Henry VI plays and Richard III, the full pattern was not examined.

¹³Originally published in Ideas of Good and Evil; reprinted in Essays and Introductions, ed. Mrs. W. B. Yeats (New York: the Macmillan Co., 1961), p. 97.

especially in the earlier days, Benson virtually created the role of Richard from the mists of long-lost performance history. And his interpretation became international in a way few others had become. His Richard was played all over Britain and as far away as Oregon and San Francisco. After Montague's review and analysis, most critics followed that interpretation of the character, and the standard scholarly interpretation was E. K. Chambers', which fit nicely together. He introduced the histories to audiences as viable theatre, and he started responsible critics thinking. Max Beerbohm saw Richard II on tour at the Lyceum (first night, 15 March 1900) with Benson in the title role. Hard to please though he was, Beerbohm warmly complimented Benson, whose production may have been the inspiration for Beerbohm's brother's (Herbert Beerbohm Tree) in 1903. In place of the typical, puppet-like character portrayals in the histories, Benson's Richard from the Flint Castle scene onwards was "a masterpiece of psychology--an analysis of that weak and morbid, yet never quite ignoble, temperament" at which Shakespeare so excelled in creating (Saturday Review, 24 March 1900).

Also from London, The Academy (26 April 1913) gradually if grudgingly accepted Benson as "the" Richard, although Benson became too much like Hamlet in his interpretation:

In the abdication scene, for example, Mr. Benson rather too much exaggerated the mental lack of balance in the King. He made it almost as though the king were wandering in his mind; whereas he was not wandering at all--he was very much preoccupied with one theme, that one theme being himself. There had been no radical change in him: the man who soliloquized with himself in the mirror was the same man who capriciously threw his warder down and exiled the two men whom he had permitted to undertake the joust of honor.

He played with life all the way through; and life, in the not very gracious person of Bolingbroke, set out to sweep him aside.

Echoes of Chambers and Bradley ring through this analysis of the play, and Montague's artist king interpretation was still the judgement criterion for characterization (Figure 2.2).

The review went on to praise the new neutral staging of the play in Stratford, designed and executed by "Scenic Advisor" Randle Ayrton:

A simple permanent arrangement. . . enabled the forestage to be used constantly for interiors and unqualified scenes, with differing "drops". . . . The whole paraphernalia of painted cloths and "realistic" scenery that gives no illusion of reality was banished.

Benson's Richard II had joined the movement away from the scenic tradition inherited from Charles Kean and Herbert Beerbohm Tree. William Poel had been in Stratford in 1907, performing Measure for Measure in Elizabethan dress with no stage settings or props; Ayrton and Benson did not go nearly this far, but compromised scholarly and theatrical camps.

Together with his colleague George Bernard Shaw at the Saturday Review, Max Beerbohm, with Harley Granville-Barker, Johnston Forbes-Robertson, and even Ellen Terry, had formed a theatrical wing of a movement to present Shakespeare "whole"--in complete texts, original order, and staging in the spirit of the aesthetic experience as interpreted for the current age. The scholarly counterpart of this movement, perhaps begun by William Poel and his Elizabethan Stage Society, gained impetus and direction from A. W. Pollard, whose open-minded examination of quartos as acting scripts rather than corrupt early drafts built bridges between the stage and the study.



Figure 2.2. **BENSON AS RICHARD (1899)**. Benson's interpretation of the distracted, nearly mad artist-king who was unable to lead and rule attracted attention from London critics and set a standard interpretation of Richard. The Stratford-upon-Avon Festivals were typically precise in period costuming and business, with Richard progressively changing from the medieval grandeur of crown and ermine in the Lists scene to a simple light blue robe in the Deposition. Source: Photograph S-1408, Shakespeare Centre Library.

The two sides encouraged "experimentation" with fuller texts: producers were excited to try the stageworthiness of "new" texts, and audiences had their interest similarly piqued. W. W. Greg went on to link bibliographical alterations in early texts with Elizabethan theatrical practice, enlightening the scholarly community and laying down an implicit challenge to the theatres. E. K. Chambers' cogent editing and encyclopedic knowledge of sociological and philosophical issues in Tudor England offered new viewpoints for interpreting formerly inscrutable passages in fuller texts. Granville-Barker, with a foot in each camp and a pen eloquent enough and informed enough, was at the forefront of new developments in the London scene, and his work at the Savoy stretched both production concepts and audience sensibilities.

All of this had repercussions in Benson's repertory Richard II, which, when redesigned by Randle Ayrton along simpler, more fluid lines, minus excessive attention to scenic "realism" like the functional fountains in the Garden scene, was brisker, with total intervals reduced to twenty-one minutes. Ayrton also tore out the false apron pillars in the theatre in Stratford and replaced them with a simple proscenium arch. The whole impression was less cluttered and scene shifts less cumbersome. It seems, however, that these changes in staging were not accompanied by alterations in the text. The script with all its cuts was not greatly expanded: the Aumerle scenes were still absent, as were such richly textured scenes as the Welsh Captain's.

Benson had always been noted for his use of music as underscore and for entr'acts, and the 1913 Richard II featured new music composed or arranged by a young apprentice composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams. The musical score was substantial, with no fewer than 32 cues, including a full scene underscore of "Greensleeves" in a scene with the Queen and the favorites (II.ii.), a piece which became the germ of Vaughan Williams' later "Fantasia." The music, however, did not necessarily improve the streamlining of the production; in a very un-Shakespearean way, the orchestra often made the actors inaudible (The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 25 April 1913). Several reviewers, while noting that the play in Stratford was no longer commanding the audiences it once did, commented on the modernization of the staging and on the similarity between Benson's Richard II and Hamlet (e.g., The Academy, 26 April 1913). This similarity was to become a part of the interpretation of Richard throughout most of the twentieth century--Richard as a Hamlet prototype, intellectual and ineffectual, almost cursed in his own articulateness. After 1913 Richard II was mounted only in short Summer Festivals in 1914 and 1916 with Benson in the role. The decrease in popularity was due as much to the audience's fatigue with the Benson group as a whole as to the play in particular (The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 14 September 1914). The next major production of the play was under a new director, William Bridges-Adams. Murray Carrington, who had played Bolingbroke as a ruthless activist since 1913, was the new Richard.

Sir Philip Ben Greet had once called him "Mr. Unabridges-Adams," and an examination of his Richard II, produced in 1920, 1924, 1926,

1929, and 1930, bears witness to the new director's commitment to restoring text. The old Memorial Theatre was destroyed by fire in 1925, and with it went some of the old style of production.

Bridges-Adams oversaw productions in the Stratford cinema from the fire until the present theatre opened in 1933. Ayrton had already simplified the settings for Benson's Richard II in 1913; by 1929 Bridges-Adams' own production had taken full shape in terms of text and costumes in spite of the temporary nature of everything in the festivals conducted from a movie-house. Relatively full documentation is available on the 1929 production, which seems to represent Bridges-Adams' concepts most fully.

He had worked with Poel and with Granville-Barker at the Savoy in London, and at first he seemed to be evidence of the victory of the new designer school over the scenic realists in conservative Stratford. However, in practice he turned out to be more middle-of-the-road than revolutionary. For example, in Richard II, he retained the use of some scenic stock backdrops complemented by Ayrton's curtains; but he also added the Savoy school's "decor" by using huge tapestries as drapes for such forestage scenes as Ely House (II.i.). The Observer praised him for eschewing the "outworn, 'representational,' and sham-realistic" in favor of production "precious near the Elizabethan system of an open stage" (25 April 1920). In truth, the simplicity of the staging was partially inherited from Ayrton and also a part of his philosophy of Shakespearean production. He claimed at the beginning of his period as Stratford Festival director:

My general principle will be continuous action with only one interval, as little fall of curtain as possible, and, quite frankly, whatever setting is in my opinion calculated to make the average audience at home with the plays with the shortest waste of time and effort.¹⁴

In his Richard II the act curtain was lowered only at the interval and at the close of the play. The continuous flow of action was probably the most startling change over the Benson/Ayrton version; next in importance was the omission of almost all visual distractions from a simple, clean stage and backdrops.

His setting in 1929 was indeed simple--the stage was a stark range of steps and massive, plain columns. Scenes which required set pieces were pre-set behind tapestry drops while front scenes were played in front of them. Never did the audience have to wait for a noisy stagehand to create an illusion behind the curtain. In the pattern of Granville-Barker and Gordon Craig at the London Savoy,¹⁵ the costumes were designed to complement the tapestry-motif and were as detailed and sumptuous as the stage was simple and plain. One of Bridges-Adams' costuming experiments was Richard's black armor--supposedly inherited from the Black Prince. This fundamental visual change from Benson's Richard, who had never been either military or dark, was effective in setting forth a new vision of the king. Bridges-Adams also solved the

¹⁴"A Chat with Mr. Bridges-Adams," The Birmingham Mail (16 April 1920).

¹⁵Many of Bridges-Adams' theories on production and his relationship with Granville-Barker at the Savoy Theatre are covered in Robert Speaight, A Bridges-Adams Letter Book (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1971).

awkward staging problems in the Flint Castle scene (III.iii.) by the daring, bold stroke of defying literal scenic distinctions by playing the Welsh Shore, Flint Castle walls and "base court" all as continuous action on a neutral ground. Reviewers, while noting the innovation, saw nothing to blame. In general, Bridges-Adams held to his principles without being as dogmatic as Poel.

He staged perhaps the most complete text since Shakespeare himself, cutting substantially less than Poel. Although trimmed here and there, his surviving promptbook, which was used for all Stratford stagings during 1920-1930, indicates a very generous text. Richard and his favorites have their scene (I.iv.) restored; the Welsh Captain (II.iv.), however, remains deleted. The gage scene preceding the Deposition (IV.i.) was played with only minimal cuts; and the Aumerle scenes (V.ii., V.iii.), although severely curtailed, were present. Bridges-Adams, in addition to using what has come to be regarded as "modern" continuous action staging, set a pattern for "modern" cutting in producing acting texts of Shakespeare. His cuts were not dictated by time constraints, staging difficulties or even external dramatic conventions, but rather sprang from an interpretive direction for the production: an informing "concept" beyond the mere characterization of the hero or the leading actor who portrayed him.

An example of the process can be seen by analyzing Bridges-Adams' transformation of Benson's version of the short scene with the Queen and courtiers (II.ii.). Remove the wit and camaraderie from Benson's version, add some tears and different music, reveal a prayer desk instead of flower garlands, and quite a different mood can be struck.

In Bridges-Adams' production, Richard's court was not peopled with sunny, frivolous dilettantes whose collapse was a pathetic confrontation with a harsher, almost incomprehensible but irresistible power. Instead, Bushy and Green comforted a very distraught Queen and were quite disturbed themselves, not by something they could not understand but by a familiar set of opponents. Similarly, although the Act V Aumerle scenes are included, the boots business, the awkward lines, and the comic bluster of the Duchess were cut. The little that was left put forward the situation but in as solemn a way as possible. The Yorks appealed to a worldly wise King Henry who resolved the situation with a speedy pardon to Aumerle and uncompromising justice to the other conspirators.

Thus, an examination of text and business noted in Bridges-Adams' promptbook indicates a much more rounded and yet much harsher play than Benson's. Many laughs--of the cruel, mocking, sarcastic type--are called for, as is such violent action as Richard's striking the ailing Gaunt with a whip. Swords are mentioned as necessary props and are drawn frequently whenever the language becomes confrontational. In a highly-charged Deposition scene, the newly-restored gage sequence sets the tone for what follows: Bolingbroke must forcibly stop a brawl among high-tempered war lords. What had been avoided by many previous directors as unintentionally comic--the multiple casting of gages--was now in deadly earnest. Bolingbroke also had to deal with Carlisle, who was called on to prevent Bolingbroke from sitting on the throne. Bolingbroke must forcibly thrust him aside before ascending the throne. One final example from the promptbook further demonstrates the more

intense and less pathetic interpretation of Bridges-Adams. Richard, in heavy chains in the Pomfret dungeon (accompanied by chain-noise sound cues from offstage), uses them to strangle the Keeper who is the first to attack him.

Although the text and promptbook remained constant throughout his productions, Bridges-Adams directed a diverse assemblage of Richards. He began by inheriting the staging of Benson and Ayrton, although the text made different demands. Murray Carrington was a departure from, but not a rejection of, Benson's portrayal. The Stage (29 April 1920) reported that Carrington's Richard was still an enigma--a French fop one moment and a martyr the next. However, the Athenaeum (7 May 1920) disagreed, claiming that in this Richard, "act and irresolution alike came from one living centre." The Daily Chronicle (23 April 1920) saw in it a "new" interpretation of Richard, in which the efforts to "conquer the weakness of his tortured temperament were clearly evident. Similarly, The Leamington Spa-Courier (30 April 1920) remarked on Carrington's Richard as a departure from Benson's "rollicking, devil-may-care" dilettante. Almost all mention Richard's artistic temperament as contrasted to Bolingbroke's unflinching, pitiless directness.

In the 1924 Summer Festival Arthur Phillips was Richard and Baliol Holloway was Bolingbroke. The contrast was even stronger and more developed--Richard's rhetoric was that of a headstrong Romantic, while Bolingbroke's was a cover for cold calculation. In 1926 most of the attention was given to the refurbishing of the Stratford cinema after the theatre had burned. Randle Ayrton as Richard was the aesthete

surrounded by effeminate sycophants, a return to earlier models; he was not well received by critics, both for the interpretation and for his age--too old for Richard.

The 1929-1930 productions with the new terraced set and lush tapestry costumes starred George Hayes as Richard. Instead of the impetuous Romantic, Hayes was almost serenely and stoically intellectual in his acceptance of his destiny, a true believer in Divine Right who became a martyr surrounded by over-zealous, self-righteous, and excessively ambitious, violent men. Gone were Benson's violent and hysterical outbursts; serenity replaced madness and distraction. Hayes' more lyrical and gentler voice was also an important factor. Richard was revealed as a role best played by actors with near-operatic vocal control. In Bridges-Adams' production the play was seen not as complex or enigmatic, but rather as the simple story of the tragic fall of a delicately aristocratic king through no particular fault of his own, save his insulated lack of awareness. A beautiful voice and dignified bearing were overwhelmed by a kind of selfish magnetism magnified beyond reason. The Birmingham Mail (17 April 1929) and The Stage (25 April 1929), in this season of the six-hour uncut production of Hamlet, remarked on Hayes' plain pattern:

Bland, smooth-toned, unsusceptible to any emotion save egoism in prosperity, his Richard became almost a sainted martyr in the days of his betrayal, unyielding with an air of gentle resignation to the worst demands of Fate and his enemies until goaded into the outburst of kingly anger in the deposition scene.

--The Birmingham Mail

[N]ever ruffled, never touched by emotion or sentiment, he is the embodiment of belief in the divine right of royalty, . . .
[reacting in] a repressed tone of gentle resignation.

--The Stage

Hayes continued rather successfully in the role, even on an extended tour in America. However, no single actor seemed to have replaced Benson as the epitome of the role in the minds of audiences. Bridges-Adams had broadened the play, making Bolingbroke more interesting in his own right, and had complicated the last half of the play by restoring action which was not specifically focused on Richard.

By the end of the 1920's Richard II was no longer an unfamiliar play. Benson had carried it throughout England and abroad. And with new emphasis on scholarly and critical analyses coming partially from the teaching of Bradley on Shakespearean tragic heroes, Richard as a character was more intriguing. A kind of Hamlet in his intellectual and artistic sensitivity, he was also more distant and less accessible than the Prince--a challenge from an earlier period of Shakespeare's imagination, different but not necessarily inferior, more lyrical and mannered, but certainly no less painstakingly drawn. Temptingly modern and Romantic, Richard was also strangely medieval and unappealingly frivolous. The role became and remains almost irresistible to minds and talents fascinated with its paradoxes. Following and probably surpassing Benson's initial interpretations and Montague's analysis, the first of several great performers essayed Richard in the mid-Twentieth Century. John Gielgud appeared for this first time in the title role in 1929 in a production directed by Harcourt Williams, opposite Ralph Richardson as Bolingbroke, with designs by Motley. Richard II finally had arrived in the world's Shakespearean repertory, from the seeds nurtured in Stratford.

CHAPTER 3

STRATFORD AND THE MAINSTREAM: GUTHRIE THROUGH HUDD

While John Gielgud developed his interpretation of a brooding, effete, intellectual Richard in London, George Hayes, Bridges-Adams' last Richard, held the stage in Stratford for twelve years. Under three individualistic directors, his interpretation of the role held quite consistently in the dignified, distant, alienated poet-king mold. Instead of experimenting with readings of Richard's Hamletesque tragic tendencies, most of the Stratford energies in the years 1929 through 1941 went towards finding a balance between innovative staging, especially with lighting effects, and traditional touring-company production methods, highly dependent upon stock settings and larger-than-life postures and declamatory diction.

Taking an opposite tack, young John Gielgud and Maurice Evans offered increasingly detailed psychological studies of Richard as a proto-Hamlet, written while Shakespeare was still in his most lyrical formative years, the period of Romeo and Juliet. Gielgud, by 1937, had achieved pre-eminence in the role, at least in Britain; and Evans, after early London acclaim, brought the role to New York in a stunning Margaret Webster production with a very successful long run in New York. Both actors were supremely well equipped to handle the lush and convoluted lyrical speeches of the young king, and they set a new standard for naturalistic yet gorgeously elevated diction in the part. By 1947 the role was one of the "test" roles for aspiring actors in the Shakespearean canon, a vocal and interpretive hurdle which few could

resist. It was a difficult test; the young Alec Guinness, in a production directed by Ralph Richardson at the Old Vic, was one of its victims.¹ In most productions 1930-1950, the basis for characterization was a development of the concepts of Benson-Montague: a pathetically unqualified ruler is swept away by a sharp, ambiguously opportunistic, scheming, consummate politician. The beauty and elegance of one king is replaced by the efficiency and vitality of another. The doomed but perversely attractive fin-de-siècle king gradually aroused the pity of the audience through his self-analysis and his poetic abilities to visualize himself and put that self into words. For audiences who had endured the Great War and the world-wide Depression, the mood was especially poignant, perhaps even legitimately tragic. Modern audiences could identify more with Richard's sudden loss of self-assurance about his position in the world than their Victorian and Edwardian predecessors, and could, with great performances, not be "blasted" by the sudden changes which Johnson so deplored in Shakespearean tragedy.

In Stratford, changes in audience and interpretation were much less pronounced. Tyrone Guthrie's 1933 production for Bridges-Adams exploited scenic effects rather than offering new insights through character portrayal. In many ways, it was a refinement of Bridges-Adams' own production in 1929. George Hayes was Richard once again, and many of the sets and costumes used were drawn from the 1929

¹Old Vic productions are discussed in detail in Audrey Williamson's two-volume survey of the company, Old Vic Drama (London: Rockliff, 1948); Old Vic Drama 2 (London: Rockliff, 1957).

scene dock and wardrobe. The new theatre, built to Bridges-Adams' specifications, was being inaugurated by a succession of guest directors, some of whom were more spectacular than others. In general, the new theatre was larger and less intimate, had weaker acoustics, but was equipped with almost every imaginable staging device and capability. The visiting directors were to fill the spectrum of possibilities in the new facility, and each tried his own experimental mode. The Festival in 1933 was shocked and stimulated most by a soon-infamous Macbeth directed by Komisarjevsky; it was in the words of J. M. K. Jeffries, "a harrowing Slav 'Macbeth' with the plaid blown out of it by the winds of Siberia" (The Daily Mail, 22 April 1933). In comparison with putting Macbeth into clearly Hitler-esque terms, with Howitzers, modern dress, aluminum sets, hallucinations instead of ghosts, and a stage littered with war engines of all ages, Guthrie's treatment of Richard II was quite conventional.

Guthrie used virtually the same simple set of steps and platforms that had been used in the Stratford cinema by Bridges-Adams. Expressionistic and symbolic visual icons such as Komisarjevsky's were the opposite end of the spectrum from Guthrie's impressionistic style. One year before the production he had written Theatre Prospect, in which he stated the need for theatre to confront its threat from film. Far from seeing movies as a replacement for the stage, Guthrie contended that cinema once and for all had liberated the theatre from audiences who sought mere diversion and from their demands for cumbersome stage naturalism. Cinema quite rightfully could absorb those needs, while the stage should then devote itself to exploring the

subtle emotional involvement between performers and audience, especially in re-interpreting the vast body of drama already written specifically for the stage. Motifs, total stage-picture movements and arrangements, and most particularly lighting to accentuate images and to create moods and impressions--these should all be more than handservants to attempts to create a convincing image of the real world. They should strive "to form a logical, musical, and pictorial pattern of abstract significance."² Guthrie condemned experiment for experiment's sake and equally took expressionistic didacticism to task.

In practice, for Richard II Guthrie tried to strike a compromise between daring innovation and honorable tradition. His production provoked responses diametrically opposed: The Times thought George Hayes was not equal to the high quality of the production (22 April 1933); The Birmingham Mail thought George Hayes was the only interesting thing in the play. The Stage reviewed York as "fussy, harassed," and altogether tedious (27 April 1933), while The Birmingham Post noted his "personality and sincerity" (22 April 1933). As a final example of this critical uncertainty, The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald disparagingly discussed the theatrical use of a shadow on the cyclorama in the Welsh Captain scene (27 April 1933), while The Times praised how "the depth of the stage was used to symbolize in the projected shadow. . . [Salisbury's] foreboding of Richard's fall--a striking and legitimate piece of stagecraft" (22 April 1933). This kind of critical

²Tyrone Guthrie, Theatre Prospect (London: Wishart & Co., 1952), pp. 20-50.

disagreement indicates several things. First, that London critics liked the new and were jaded about the old while more local reviewers preferred a more conventional Richard II; second, that Guthrie's control over his audience's sensibilities was far from predictable; and third, that people were judging the production by different standards from those applied to Kean, Benson, or Tree.

Instead of noting correct heraldry, as some few provincial critics did, many other reactions were to one of Guthrie's professed foci for his efforts--the lighting. In the new Memorial Theatre Bridges-Adams had prescribed a highly sophisticated lighting system, and Guthrie was one of those experimenting with its capabilities. Komisarjevsky had staged the Macbeth murder scene lit only by torches. Guthrie lit the Gloucester Wilds scene in Richard II with only one key light, and Pomfret had a single, tightly focused beam on Richard, who was otherwise engulfed in blackness, from which the groom, keeper and murderers emerged almost as if they were figures within Richard's mind. Although he mixed staging media from Bridges-Adams' 1929 production with a black stage defined by light, Guthrie's costuming and visual plan called for a motif of medieval missals to be followed. Brilliantly-colored, if slightly "inaccurate" historically, the costumes against the black, strikingly lit from the sides and modeled from colored light from both back and front, broke the picture-frame boundary of the stage in a way cinema clearly could not. The more conservative antiquarians among the Stratford faithful were not pleased.

Guthrie also followed through on his points made in Theatre Prospect by carefully choreographing movement and visual groupings on

the spacious stage. Proximity and distance, accentuated by lighting and the deep Stratford stage, became important tools. As is clear from blocking noted in his promptbook, Guthrie emphasized at least three inter-related points: actors related to each other in tight and confrontational blocking, reserving full-front approaches to the audience for special moments, thus not diluting the effect from overuse; crowd scenes were lively and noisy; clear distinctions between public scenes and private scenes were created by both stage technique and business. The Stage (27 April 1933) criticized Guthrie for not using all of the stage and forcing actors to play very shallow, right on the edge of the audience. However, in another part of the same review, Guthrie was taken to task for placing clusters of actors too far upstage, especially in crowd scenes, to be seen. In spite of himself, the reviewer had been affected by Guthrie's technique: by his arrangements of actors and use of the set, Guthrie involved the audience in private conversations to which other characters on the stage were not privy. The personal aspects of the play were thus accentuated, and Richard was a more individually tragic figure.

The obvious contrast between the public and the private greatly accentuated all characters' relationships and motivations. Guthrie's opening scene was clearly a public ritual. The stage, crowded, was vibrant with brilliantly-costumed nobility, with many notes in the promptbook for crowd sounds from unnamed lookers-on. The next scene, with the Duchess of Gloucester, was in complete contrast: played on the extreme tip of the forestage before black curtains and dimly-lit, it was close, private, sincere, and touching. Promptbook business called

for much physical contact between the Duchess and Gaunt--hand-holding, embracing, comforting, the Duchess weary instead of like an avenging fury. The Lists scene went abruptly back to the public theatre, with Mobray and Bolingbroke each in possession of separate, very vocal cheering sections in the large crowd. A few lines were cut, notably Mobray's final vows before the combat (I.iii.85-96). However, as soon as Richard stopped the combat, he came downstage and the curtain dropped on the public lists. The remainder of the scene, from Richard's "Draw near" (I.iii.123), was "private" with only the King, the combatants, and other speaking characters included.

From this point, the scene continued to narrow. The King in council was still a public figure, not an individual. He was a judge, not a person. Only when he and his train left did the scene become personal and poignant, as Bolingbroke and his father Gaunt took leave of each other forever. Far from being a mere prop to events, this Bolingbroke, played by Anew McMaster, was allowed an emotional, private scene even before Richard was. It seems, regrettably, that this performer did little with his increased opportunities; he was almost never even mentioned in reviews.

Guthrie also used blocking to make clear some formerly illogical or at least paradoxical events. York's seemingly easy conversion to Bolingbroke's party was prepared for most carefully as early as in Gaunt's death scene (II.i.). Gaunt was carried onstage by Ross, Northumberland, Willoughby, and York, and the entire "sceptred isle" speech (II.i.31-68) was delivered privately to them. On the other side of the stage, Richard's party was composed of Bushy, Bagot, Green, and

Aumerle. During the interchange between Richard and Gaunt, the two came together at center stage, leaving the two groups behind them. As Gaunt accused Richard of being the ill one (II.i.93-114), he pulled the younger man to his knees. By the point when Gaunt's death was announced, York found himself no longer with Richard, whom he had been advising privately, but surrounded by Northumberland's group. It was then understandable that York was at least partially in sympathy with the budding conspiracy as he delivered his lines on "fair sequence and succession" (I.ii.186-209). After the King exited, the conspirators drew close together on a progressively darkened stage, with textual editing compressing the dialogue and simplifying historical motivations (the Woodstock material). From this point on, York was fairly drawn into the web without thinking, most of his lines revealing moral dilemmas having been deleted (e.g., II.ii.111-115, II.iii.95-105).

Guthrie made other interpretive cuts and called for business which tended to concentrate and personalize motivation and downplay purely political or historical implications. The guards who executed Bushy and Green were noticeably rough in their treatment of the prisoners (III.i.). Cuts in the gage scene preceding the Deposition (IV.i.) emphasized personal quarrels and greatly diminished Aumerle's larger involvement, as in the Woodstock murder. The later scenes dealing with the Aumerle conspiracy were cut in toto (IV.i.321-334, V.ii., V.iii, V.vi.1-29), greatly speeding the denouement and centering the last half of the play on Richard. Guthrie's production moved directly from the announcement of Bolingbroke's coronation (IV.i.319-320) to the Queen's farewell to Richard (V.i.) and then to Exton and the Pomfret scene,

played as continuous action divided only by a lighting shift. Thereby, Richard's "passion" was swift and uninterrupted by any "public" scenes.

Guthrie also cut the script to simplify staging for his bare set and to streamline the exotic language in some spots. Following B-Adams' for example, the cumbersome typical staging of the Flint Castle scene (III.iii.) with Richard on battlements and Bolingbroke in the field before the castle, later in the "Base Court," was discarded and a forest backdrop was used throughout. Richard's "Down, down I come" (III.iii.178ff.) was only figurative, without the iconic significance it was to have in later productions. Guthrie also snipped some of the more jarring couplets and highly mannered style, deleting, such mannerisms as the following exchange from the Farewell scene:

Queen. Then whither he goes, thither let me go.

Richard. So two, together weeping, make one woe.

Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;

Better far off than, near, be ne'er the near.

Go count thy way with sighs; I mine with groans.

Queen. So longest way shall have the longest moans.

(V.i.85-90)

However, sympathetic moments themselves were plentiful; the scene with the Groom was tender, calling for the Groom to kiss Richard's hand as his former King greeted him as a "noble peer" (V.v.67). Richard in turn defended him from the Keeper who attacked them both.

Reviews of the 1933 Richard II seldom discussed details of characterization, but it seems that the broad outlines followed the Benson-Montague interpretation as developed particularly by George Hayes in previous performances as Richard. Some of his moments were not unlike Benson's; he established a tone in the opening scene by "talking fantastically, toying with a rose, beautifully clad and

listening to nothing" (The Daily Mail, 22 April 1983). York was full of "personality and sincerity," Bolingbroke marked by "fiery determination," and Bushy, Bagot, and Green "astonishly effeminate" (The Birmingham Post, 22 April 1933), beginning a tradition in that regard which became more and more marked through the 1950's. The Times, not fond of George Hayes, found him not quite equal to the high level of the production; he hadn't enough subtlety to convince the audience of Richard's inner thoughts and engage much more than their pity late in the play (22 April 1933).

Guthrie's Richard II, imbued with the director's personal style, continued to develop the same interpretations of the play as had Benson and Bridges-Adams in Stratford and Gielgud in London. The piece was Richard's personal tragedy, set against a backdrop of gorgeous pretense and harsh opponents. Production styles became more immediate, if not necessarily more intimate, turning more and more of the theatre's resources to the task of affecting moods than to fooling the eye. But production concepts and interpretations generally followed the same pattern through the 1930's and 1940's: Richard was a tragic, alienated, intellectual artist, and the key to any performance was engaging the audience's sympathy for him soon enough in the course of the action for them to feel a true tragic effect rather than mere pity.

While Guthrie seemed to avoid or even to downplay the unique verbal lyricism of Richard II, Harcourt Williams' London production in 1929, and subsequent ones through the decade following, in which John Gielgud was involved, took a different approach. Gielgud became inseparable from the play:

(1) at the Old Vic, performing Richard, directed by Harcourt Williams, revived at the Queen's, 1930.

(2) for the O.U.D.S., 1936, co-directing with Glen Byam Shaw, Gielgud's favorite production, with designs by Motley.

(3) at the Queen's, 1937, directing and performing as Richard, Michael Redgrave as Bolingbroke, Peggy Ashcroft as the Queen, other "stars."

(4) at the Lyric, Hammersmith, 1953, directing Paul Scofield as Richard, Eric Porter as Bolingbroke; later on global tour.³

Gielgud was one of the great verse speakers of the century, and his interpretation made the most of this. The verse was delivered slowly and nearly elegiacally--self-consciously. Richards, for several decades afterwards, followed Gielgud's lead of approaching his longer speeches and soliloquy as operatic arias. They also fell in line with the concept of Richard as a snobbish, elegantly attired, slightly effeminate ruler. Gielgud and many after him portrayed Richard as Hamlet with less self-awareness and more wardrobe (Figure 3.1). Jewels and ermine robes, a pommander, a riding crop--these became virtually de rigueur for Richard; and Bushy, Bagot, and Green, once virtually cut out of acting versions in order to de-emphasize Richard's self-indulgent court, became important as visual evidence of the false, effeminate popinjays whose sycophantic behavior led Richard into his errors.

In his analysis of the play in Stage Directions, Gielgud centered his comments on the ceremonial and lyric aspects of the play:

Richard the Second is a ceremonial play. In spite of its long list of characters only a few are of the first importance, and most of these are very broadly treated, especially in the early

³ Stage Directions (New York: Random House, 1963), pp. 8-9.



Figure 3.1. A CEREMONIAL PLAY (GIELGUD, 1937). First in 1929-1930 and 1937 as Richard, and then in 1957 as director of Paul Scofield, John Gielgud essayed Richard II in London and elsewhere. His interpretation marked the full development of Richard as an artistic intellectual tragically unsuited to the throne. Above: Gorgeous people and settings combined with elaborate costumes to accentuate Richard's courtly attitude and detachment. Source: Photograph in Speaight, R., Shakespeare on the Stage.

scenes. The young King himself, though his personal beauty and the subservient manner in which he is treated, as he sits idly on his throne, must draw all eyes to him immediately, is only lightly sketched at first in a few rather enigmatic strokes. It is not until after his return from Ireland, almost halfway through the play, that his inner character begins to be developed in a series of exquisite cadenzas and variations. . . . He is torn between the intrinsic weakness of his nature and the pride and fastidiousness of his quality and breeding. . . . Finally, cast out into the empty darkness of his prison, he is forced to realize at last that neither his personal beauty nor the divine right of kingship can save him from inevitable horror, as he is forced to contemplate his private doom.⁴

Gielgud went on to offer a kind of handbook for performers on the plays relative strengths and weaknesses, and how to make the most of them. He came down foursquare in favor of letting the language have primary place, while taking no position on the inclusion or exclusion of the Aumerle scenes (which were cut in all Gielgud productions). These opinions were written first in 1958, long after Gielgud had perfected his interpretation of the role, and also after he had been coached in his 1937 performance, in the form of an exchange of letters, by Harley Granville-Barker, himself a former Richard:

But my chief grouse is about the verse. It is a lyrical play. . . . And I think each character ought to have his own speech. I thought during the first half of the play they were imitating each other; then I found they were imitating you and your taste for sadder sforzandi; good enough for Richard and clearly indicated for "Down--down I come--". . . but quite wrong for Augustus Caesar-Bolingbroke or Mobray or the "Tenor" gallantry of Aumerle.⁵

⁴Gielgud, p. 28.

⁵The letters are reprinted in C. B. Purdom, ed., Harley Granville-Barker: Man of the Theatre, Dramatist and Scholar (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 253-256.

At least in the opinion of these two men of the theatre, the only role of any importance was Richard--even Bolingbroke could be encapsulated as a "Caesar" type. Both acknowledged the correctness of Montague's "artist" interpretation, but Granville-Barker explained (and Gielgud staged) a more twentieth-century impatient intellectual. He also went so far as to offer the concept of Richard as a partially conscious actor, and re-iterated often comparisons with Hamlet, all of which were simultaneously descriptive of Gielgud's performance and advice on how to perfect the interpretation in theatrical terms.

In a "promptbook" ascribed to Gielgud's 1937 production, there are extremely detailed interpretive notes and textual alterations marked through the end of the Welsh Shore scene (III.ii.), which, due to their completeness, suggest a memorial reconstruction by production assistants with their analysis rather than a preparation copy which preceded the production and was used by a prompter. However, the comments in the margins do give a feeling of the play as performed, and certainly do bear witness to reviewers' comments. At III.ii.83, when Richard tries to bolster his failing courage with "Awake, thou coward majesty," the promptbook records:

With complete, even fanatical conviction. This is the key to Richard's attitude toward himself. He believes completely in his apartness--his sacred character, regardless of his actions. He speaks with dignity and pride--towering here as though to assure himself.

Later, at line 145, at Richard's "Let's talk of graves, of worms, of epitaphs," in the margin is

Grief has taken the place of anger. Richard is exhausted. . . .
The speech is a funeral oration not only for the dead favorites

but for the heartless and conscienceless Richard who has been killed.⁶

Gielgud's Richard was that type of tragic hero who overcomes himself while examining his various public personae, especially sympathetic to his twentieth-century audiences. He was easily the most successful interpreter of Richard in the first half of the century, and his influence will continue indefinitely by virtue of his involvement with the BBC's Richard II in 1978, in which he played John of Gaunt and was intimately involved in the whole of production.

Gielgud, however, was not the only one outside Stratford to triumph in the role in the 1930's. Margaret Webster mounted a production which, like Gielgud's, further explored the play as a tragedy of character. At the Old Vic in 1934, and subsequently in 1935 and 1937-1940 at the St. James in New York as well as on tour, Maurice Evans was a beautiful, elegant, artistic Richard, at odds with his surroundings and out of touch with his personal identity. Although Webster advocated returning to the full, original texts,⁷ her version was almost identical to Gielgud's. The Aumerle scenes were gone, along with various small parings throughout.

The initial Webster/Evans collaboration in 1934 at the Old Vic accentuated good verse-speaking and simple modern production values.

⁶This "promptbook" marks cuts, lighting effects, costume notes, and elaborately detailed stage business in addition to these interpretive comments. It is apparently a preparation copy or a memorial reconstruction for a re-staging; the writing is very neat and probably a transcription.

⁷Webster's basic concepts on directing and staging Shakespeare are discussed in her Shakespeare Today (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1957); Richard II occupies pp. 167-172.

In reconstructing the production, Audrey Williamson documented Evans' treatment of the King: "Richard's foppery and raillery mask a quick enough brain, and Evans made one aware of this through all the impudent glitter of his early scenes," apparently succeeding in what Gielgud was later to identify as crucial to the play. Williamson continued to claim that "all of this made his fall due to a tragic, fatal and insane trust in royalty, the Divine Right of Kings" and his artistically detached approach to life. Evans' Richard was in direct contrast to Abraham Sofaer's Bolingbroke, who personified the "brawl and swagger of the war mongers." While Evans as Richard gradually lost control and lashed out with "sardonic" scorn, Sofaer as Bolingbroke increasingly displayed an attitude of "watchful, unruffled calm."⁸

Over the years the production became more and more Evans' one man show. In Shakespeare Today (1957) Webster analyzed the play in terms of the structure it offered for building sympathy for Richard; it was "a concerto for the poet who happens to be a king. . . sweetened with exquisite melodies for his solo violin," inadvertently quoting from Pater's comments on Charles Kean's performance. Only when Richard appears as a man, not in his public image, can the audience's building appreciation for his intellect and ability with words develop into sympathy. From that point, in III.ii., the Welsh Shore scene, the play is all his.⁹ Certainly with the text used, minus the gage

⁸Webster, p. 171.

⁹Webster, p. 172.

scene (IV.i.) and the Aumerle scenes, there was little left aside from Richard's passion.

Most of the New York reviewers had praise only for Evans--but the praise was high indeed. Brooks Atkinson (The New York Times, 6 February 1937) was Evans' champion: "Although Richard II was no hero, now we know that the anguish of his soul is heroic," a far cry from Swinburne's analysis only 35 years earlier. When the play went back across the Atlantic, Atkinson contributed program-notes, which--among other things--claimed Richard II "is the cornerstone" of Hamlet. Evans as Richard was "fatuous, disingenuous, silly, remorseful, vindictive, adroit-minded, Narcissus-like in his wailing scene, yet kingly withal. . . . [Evans could] transmute weakness into histrionic force on stage. He has exhausted the part" (Figure 3.2).

While Webster, Evans, and Gielgud were constructing a Richard soon to be the accepted standard for theatre audiences, George Hayes continued to perform in Stratford. It was almost as if the two groups were unaware of each other; no influence in the characterization of the King is evident in either direction. The details of Hayes' two other times as Richard are not nearly so well documented as Gielgud's or Evans'. Hayes was repeating the role after many veteran years, in a provincial theatre which was steadily losing prestige and, hence, attention from reviewers.

One of the reasons that the theatre was losing its position as a notable interpreter of Shakespeare was its next permanent director and the administration of the Memorial, headed by Sir Archibald Flower. The difficulties the Stratford theatre experienced during this period



Figure 3.2. "THE HAMLET IN HIM" (EVANS, 1937). Maurice Evans as Richard II in the 1937 Margaret Webster production. Youthful energy and beauty in a Hamlet-infatuated period combined with skillful, simple direction to give Americans a new look at early Shakespeare. Evans took New York by storm in a play which had not been seen there since 1878. Source: Photograph in Speaight, R. Shakespeare on the Stage.

are laid out well, if in a decidedly anti-Flower slant, by Sally Beauman in her book The Royal Shakespeare Company.¹⁰ Supposedly Flower and the Board of Governors wanted to return to simpler times in Stratford, without so many controversial productions and experiments as in the final Bridges-Adams years' when guest directors were contracted with great regularity. Simpler, cheaper productions which could use some local talent were preferred by the Board, which also wished to re-assert its direction over the activities in the theatre, in addition to merely fiscal matters. The disciple of William Poel who was imported from American academic theatre to direct the Festivals 1935-1942 was Ben Iden Payne. His choice for the Birthday Play of 1941, well after he had proved unsatisfactory to both Flower and the Board and audiences, whose attendance had diminished, was Richard II.

Iden Payne, despite the fact that he was an advocate of Poel's Elizabethan methods, took the old Bridges-Adams/Guthrie production from the warehouse and revamped it in a very non-Elizabethan way--much as it had been staged by Bridges-Adams in 1929. Although there are no promptbooks and precious few reviews, some photographs survive from this production (Figure 3.3) which indicate that far from his ideal of a "modified Elizabethan stage," Iden Payne used painted backdrops, legs, and altogether pictorial methods in this last season before his resignation. Payne left with no love lost between him and Stratford; his memoirs dismiss his years in Stratford in a few transitional

¹⁰ Sally Beauman, The Royal Shakespeare Company (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982)



Figure 3.3. **FESTIVAL STAGING (1941)**. Although an avowed disciple of William Poel's Elizabethan bare-stage methods, Ben Iden Payne's 1941 style had not changed appreciably from Benson's 1913 staging; The stage space had increased, but stock drops and simple sets continued to be used through 1944 (Atkins). Compare with Benson's staging, Figure 2.1. Top: Deposition scene (IV.i.); Bottom: Pomfret scene (V.v.). Source: Photographs, Shakespeare Centre Library.

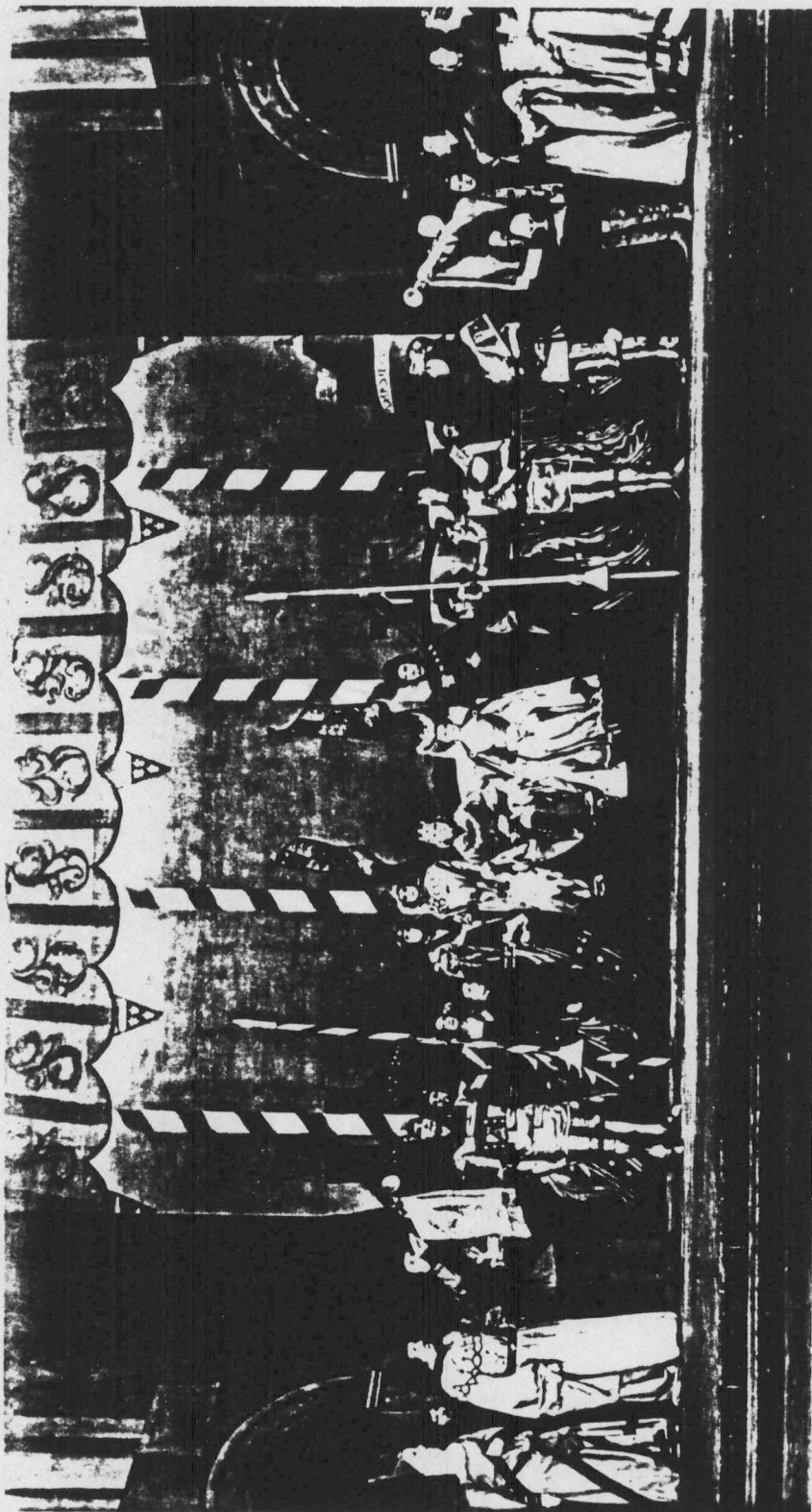
paragraphs. In addition to Payne's apparent lack of interest, the entire season was clouded by the war (the programs have large sections devoted to air-raid procedures).

The reviews that survive indicate that George Hayes as Richard continued to develop his 1933 characterization. He was not (and by this point could not be) the beautiful, boyish king of Maurice Evans, nor the lyrical martyr of Gielgud. His was a carefully worked-out, logically consistent character study, not designed to play on the emotional heart-strings, but more likely to appeal after the final curtain, to give pause to thought (Figure 3.4). Examining his reviews over the two decades he played Richard, one can detect his Richard as collapsing from cynicism and conceit to an exhausted embracing of the truth; from a superiority complex to an identity crisis; from the show of strength to a kind of wistful strength in awareness--all while retaining a continuity of character through his style of "uncanny dignity" (The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 18 April 1941).

In 1944, Robert Atkins, from Lillian Baylis' London Old Vic, was the Festival Director, and another attempt at Richard II was made. At the Old Vic Atkins had advocated restoration of text, accommodation of Elizabethan staging within modern facilities and tastes, and quickened performance pace by virtue of simple settings and, like Guthrie, shifts in lighting to indicate change of scene in otherwise continuous action. Atkins' five-year directorship at the Old Vic (1920-1925) had seen his unsuccessful project to stage the histories (King John through Henry VIII), and successful alterations of the facilities to accommodate



Figure 3.4. DIGNIFIED GEORGE HAYES AND COURT (1941). Above: In contrast to the emotional, youthful, effeminate Richards of *Gielgud* and *Evans*, complete with vocal pyrotechnics, George Hayes was a mature, nearly stoically controlled character study. Next Page: The *Lists Scene* (I.iii.) in tableau. Symmetry, control, and exact attention to detail and continuity were the hallmarks of Ben Iden Payne's production with Hayes in the title role. Source: Photographs, Shakespeare Centre Library.



more closely "Elizabethan" elements such as the forestage, crucial to any attempt to present a lengthy history play in its entirety. In Stratford in 1944, the pressure from Archie Flower to exercise artistic control had eased, as had, grudgingly, the purse strings. Atkins was able to make some alterations to the stage of the Memorial Theatre to allow for a generous forestage, and he re-instated provincial touring. Pay was better, working less rigorously a labor of love and more like London; "stars" were considering roles in Stratford, and with them came critical attention.¹¹ However, all of Atkins' program was not in place in Stratford by 1944. His Richard II was traditional and uncontroversial. Sizeable cuts in the text were made, even beyond the currently fashionable Gielgud ones, and although new set designs were authorized, they bore an uncanny resemblance to the 1941 Payne ones, which, in turn, were partially from 1929. Hayes' performance as Richard was much the same, and as in productions of the period, most of the other actors were competent but unknown. The only major change in interpretation was the increased attention given to Bolingbroke.

He was generally given a much more positive character, partially by virtue of a few included lines which gave him an opportunity to engage the audience's sympathy, and by the fact that Hayes' Richard by this point was too aged and familiar to attract fully their attention. Business for Richard also increased his unattractive qualities early in

¹¹ Atkins' short directoral career at the Old Vic is discussed in Peter Roberts, The Old Vic Story: A Nation's Theatre 1818-1976 (London: W. H. Allen, 1976), pp. 122-125. For his years at Stratford, Beauman and Ellis offer only few words.

the play: in the opening scene, he ate, drank, lounged luxuriously, and exchanged barbs with his effeminate favorites bored with the serious affairs of state embedded in the Bolingbroke-Mobray dispute. Bolingbroke was clearly the crowd's favorite in the Lists scene (II.i.), and Richard a prig. Richard's callousness towards Gaunt, in contrast to his snobbish wit with his favorites, further drove a wedge between Hayes and the audience. As in Benson's production, the execution of Bushy and Green (III.i.) was deleted, thus leaving Bolingbroke's hands unbloodied. In the Deposition scene, Bolingbroke did not have to confront Carlisle; he was so popular with the lords that he wound up protecting the Bishop from the nobles who come close to running him through on the spot. Richard was the desperate, reckless one in this scene, striking Northumberland. Although Hayes' usual interpretation of Richard continued from this point, not much ennobling of the King came through. As Ruth Ellis in The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald noted (26 May 1944), Bolingbroke knew from the first that he was better fitted to be king, and nature proved him right. Richard, in contrast, seemed to enjoy his grief a little too much for audience sympathy. Bolingbroke, the virile military man of few words, resembling as he did the heroes of many wartime films, was much more immediately attractive in the England of 1944 than was the dilettante artist who ignored, gave away, and then whined over his loss of the right to rule.

Atkins offered some new interpretive directions in Stratford, and he instituted some of the emphasis on excellent verse-speaking prevalent in London. His changes to the Memorial Theatre and his recovery of some of the techniques of Tyrone Guthrie for immediacy,

such as frequent shallow staging interspersed with deep sets, greatly enhanced the "drama" in Stratford productions. The Stage (1 June 1944) called Stratford "top quality" among provincial theatres. The Atkins production of Richard II, then, although using many old elements and compromises, pointed to a much freer use of the existing capabilities of the Memorial Theatre. The issue of "Elizabethan Methodism" had given way to a hybrid of modern techniques and many of Poel's aims: fluidity of action could be achieved without absolutely bare staging; and the primacy of the language was now accepted theatre doctrine. Gielgud and Evans had set a standard for verse-speaking which few could equal but with which all were compared.

In 1947 the play was again attempted at Stratford, and the atmosphere had again changed. Sir Barry Jackson was in his second season as general director, and the Festival's links with London and the "stars" were in place. Jackson, who had made a clean break with the past in Stratford, refused to hire anyone who had been with the company before, and imported new actors and directors from London and beyond. The management, physical plant, and wardrobe were completely renovated or purged as necessary. A Stratford scene shop was installed for construction of substantial sets to replace drops and curtains, which had been the Stratford norm. While all this was happening, Jackson paid only cursory attention to the productions underway. He allowed the directors virtually free rein.

Walter Hudd, brought in from London, mounted a completely redesigned Richard II with Robert Harris in the title role. The settings were so much more elaborate than anything previous that an

entirely new idea of the capability of the Theatre emerged. It was fully the equal of any London house, and probably the only place where one could dependably enjoy good classic theatre. The sets, designed by Hal Burton, used solid, three-dimensional pieces on trucks and the revolve; drops were used in only a few scenes (Figure 3.5). The reviews of both the play and of Harris as Richard, even those from London papers, were quite favorable.

Harris and Hudd did not deviate greatly from the standard interpretation of Richard. Comparisons were inevitable. While Gielgud has developed a "brilliant but baulked artist" (The Daily Telegraph, 14 June 1947) and Evans a "spoilt boy" (Punch, 25 June 1947), Harris began to work toward some politically (as well as personally) tragic themes. Harris accentuated Richard's "nominal excellency" and inconstancy as a ruler (The Manchester Guardian, 16 June 1947). All three versions took as a starting-point the Benson-Montague interpretation, but the 1947 Stratford production slowly began to move the play away from personal pathos and Romantic alienation and towards the political and social implications of such problems. Harris' Richard was conceived not merely as a tragic or pathetic individual; he began to display the inherent weakness of divine-right monarchy. Further, in his fall, he demonstrated current thinking on the dire consequences of abandoning this--or any other--political ideology.

It is unlikely that Harris and Hudd came up with this expansion of Richard all by themselves. Among the production records of this show is a loose mimeograph, apparently once a part of program notes. Entitled "Tudor Beliefs and Medieval Facts," it paraphrases E. M. W.

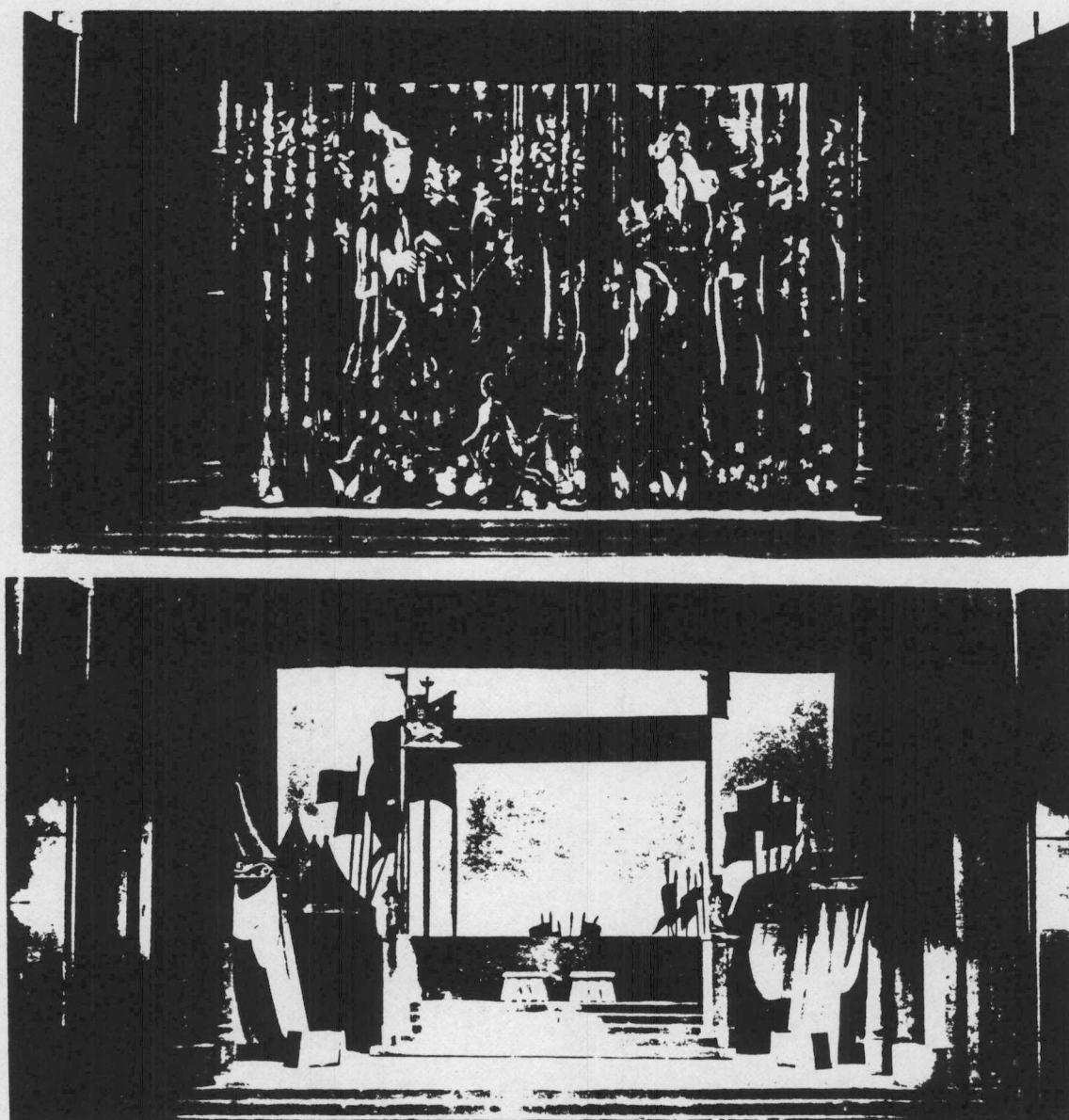
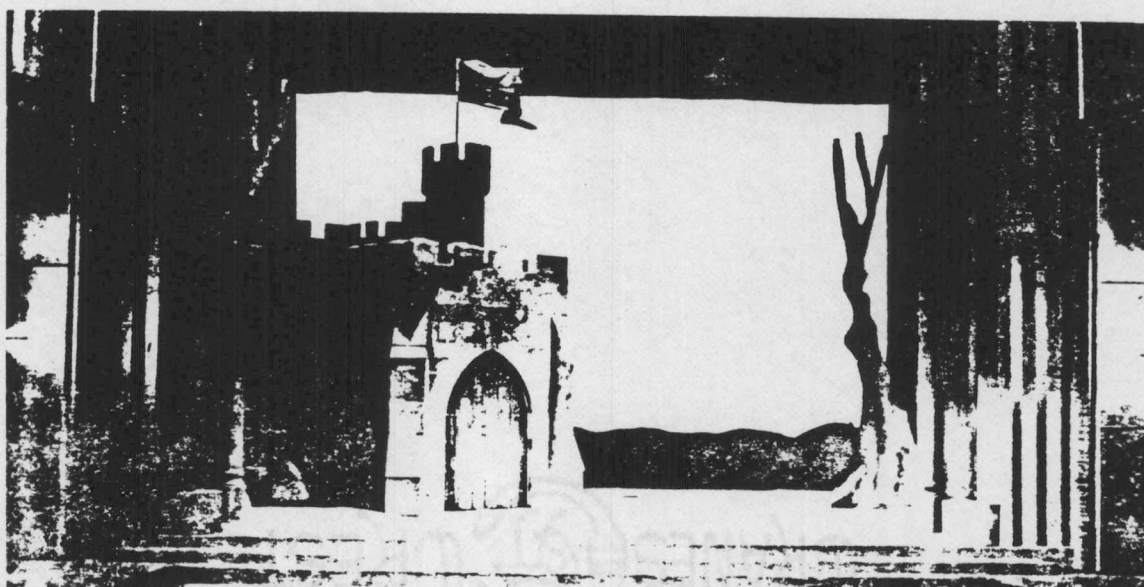
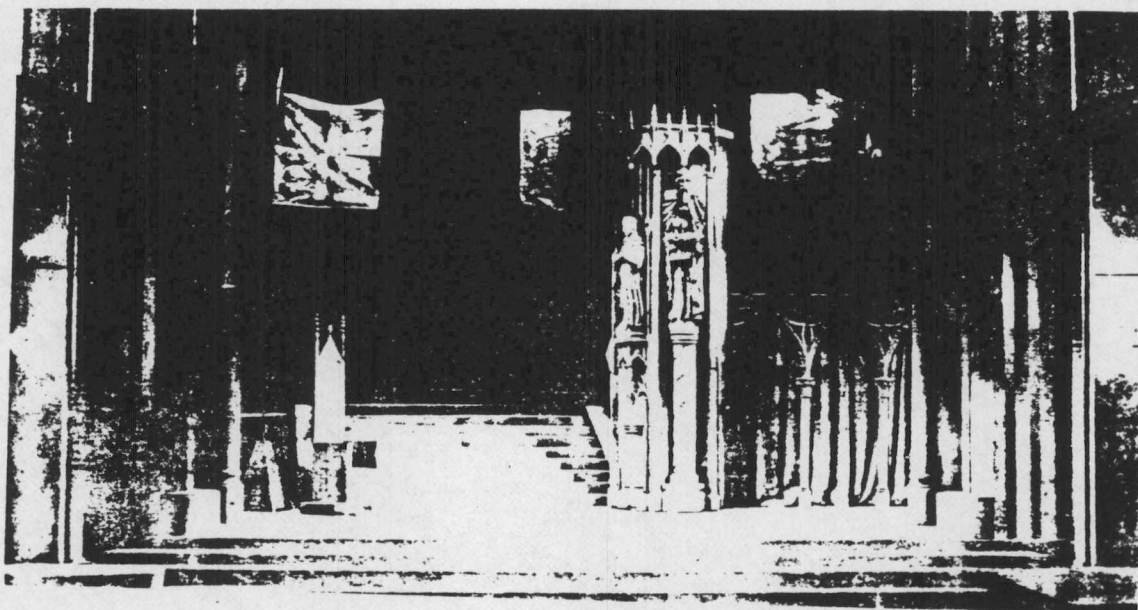


Figure 3.5. WEST-END PRODUCTION VALUES IN STRATFORD. Walter Hudd's 1947 production brought London staging standards to the festival's Richard II. Large, elaborate set pieces and impressionistic lighting slowed but also intensified the stage illusion: Barry Jackson, producer; Hal Burton, designer. Above: Top: Drop curtain in pseudo-tapestry form which was used in short front scenes; Bottom: Lists scene (I.iii.) reversed staging, with audience view actually behind the field, within the royal pavilion. Next Page: Top: Ely House (II.i.), a huge, practical set that, on a revolve, also served for Westminster in the Deposition; Bottom: Flint Castle (III.i.). Source: Photographs (Daniels Photo), Shakespeare Centre Library.



Tillyard's discussion of Richard II in Shakespeare's History Plays, published in 1944. There are even some direct quotations, unacknowledged, from Tillyard.¹² The part of Tillyard's argument which seems to have given direction to the Hudd production is that Richard II depicted not just a single tragedy of character, but additionally, two value systems in conflict, symbolized in Richard and Bolingbroke. The medieval values of Richard, almost defenseless without unquestioning faith, collapsed quickly when doubts surfaced, and Bolingbroke's Renaissance pragmatic efficiency filled the vacuum. Richard accepted, and Bolingbroke embodied, the inevitable. These program notes simultaneously reveal underlying production concepts and indicate the type of audience frame of mind sought by the director.

The concept of values, not mere individuals, in opposition came across most forcefully to reviewers. The Times went so far as to claim that the production was "designed to emphasize the importance of kings reigning by divine right in a society likely to be split asunder by the deposing of one" (16 June 1947). The Birmingham Post discussed John Dover Wilson's comments on divine right in his influential introduction to the New Cambridge Edition of the play, 1939. Dover Wilson had stressed that the potency of the political questions in Richard II

¹²E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays (London: Chatto & Windus, 1944), p. 262. Following Dover Wilson, Tillyard's discussion of the plays as political documents, along with Lily B. Campbell's discussion of their Tudor context in Shakespeare's Histories: Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy (1944) had shifted scholarly focus from seeing the plays as character studies to interpreting them as more theoretical political structures.

for a Shakespearean audience was formidable, not to be underestimated by modern audiences in a world where coups d'état were becoming increasingly commonplace. Finally, The Birmingham Evening Despatch analyzed Richard as having not enough temporal power, not the gift of playing nobles against one another; in short, Richard was a disaster as a Renaissance king, but not as a Medieval ruler. Richard's "chief offence" was that he had not learned the Tudor skill of lordly manipulation; he ignored his own strengths and alienated those who could have brought theirs to his service (14 June 1947).

The critics were convinced. The only real question is whether they were convinced by Dover Wilson and the scholars who developed his points of view, notably E. M. W. Tillyard, or by Hudd's 1947 production unaided. In order to shift interest from Richard as individual to Richard as political problem without altogether losing sympathy for him in the theatre would have required Hudd to effect many subtle adjustments to the intellectual martyr reading which then held the stage. It would also have required more subtle treatment of the contrasting relationship between Bolingbroke and Richard and their respective camps. Finally, symbolic or stylistic devices could have opened the play to broader, macrocosmic references, thereby giving resonance to Richard's personal realization of his loss far beyond the walls of Pomfret castle. Richard realizes he has lost an identity; the audience must realize that in addition a world has been lost. There is evidence in production records that each of the necessary changes in emphasis outlined above was attempted, but scarcely enough to account for the nearly universal critical interpretations of reviewers. The

reviewers, then, seem to have been reacting to current academic analyses of the play and the professed production aims at least in as great a proportion as they were reporting the stage realization. Increasingly from this point onwards, a good deal of what appears in reviews may have been planted there by program notes or knowledge gained prior to viewing the production on stage.

Whatever the ultimate source of audience predisposition, the presentation gave a fuller dimension and "ocular proof" (or disproof) of the ideas. Hudd and Harris as Richard apparently attempted to present Richard in the early scenes as much less abrasive and priggish, simplifying his costuming and confrontations while picturing him in eerie, isolated bewilderment in several scenes. Richard was simply confused and physically weakened by any questioning of his authority or position. He retreated behind streams of rhetoric. Punch (25 June 1947) noted this particularly in the Lists scene (I.iii.), which was staged inverted from the usual setting, with the combat occurring upstage. What the audience shared, from its viewpoint inside Richard's pavilion, was his uncertainty and indecision as he turned away from the situation he was unable to control. Harris as Richard did not react violently to Gaunt's strong attacks and accusations in II.i. By the time this Richard arrived on the Welsh Shore (III.ii.), he was clearly overwhelmed by events, perhaps by the next "world" for which he was hopelessly mis-suited. A silhouette of a defeated army was projected behind him, and as the bad news continued, he collapsed. At Flint Castle (III.iii.) Harris leaned on Aumerle and directed all his questions to him, rather than to the rebels in the base court.

Finally, in a shadowy Pomfret scene (V.v.), Harris was terrified by the prospect of having only his human-ness as an identity (Figure 3.6).

Michael Golden, the Bolingbroke who, in this scenario, is the representative of the other, Renaissance "world," was treated rather summarily by reviewers, and there is little in the promptbook to clarify his interpretation of the role. He certainly was a strong contrast to Richard's inconsistency (The Birmingham Evening Despatch, 14 June 1947; The Manchester Guardian, 16 June 1947), forthright and self-assured. He was also a bit less ambiguously involved in his revolt--aware of his position instead of merely being swept along by events. Hudd restored the executions of Bushy and Green to his text, and Henry IV's own difficulties with Prince Hal and the Aumerle conspirators were also enacted in full, although the scenes with the Yorks (V.ii.-V.iii.) were cut.

Hudd also attempted to portray the conflict of Medieval and Renaissance visually, using sets and staging with the scope of West-End spectacles. All of Richard's party were clearly medieval, with the Queen and two ladies working on a tapestry in III.iv. Bolingbroke and the rebel nobles were a bit more Elizabethan in attire than Richard's favorites; obviously Renaissance hats and accoutrements were worn in Ely House while the Lists scene was just as clearly Medieval. Finally, a massive act curtain in the pattern of a medieval tapestry served as the backdrop for front scenes. Two figures the height of the proscenium stood in a pre-Raphaelite garden with emblematic decorations such as doves in flight. Hudd's Richard II was "theatrical" and



Figure 3.6. **ROBERT HARRIS AS RICHARD (1947).** The Pomfret scene (V.v.), played as a front scene with only the tapestry drop-curtain and tightly controlled lighting, gave Richard's analysis of his identity a haunting, tragic quality. Source: Photograph (Kanova), Shakespeare Centre Library.

stikingly presented, but all the elements of theatre and schoarship were not perfectly bound into a unity of purpose and effect.

Atkins and Hudd had brought West End production style and values to Stratford. They had turned to current scholarship for production concepts and had used academic critics to enforce the impact of the plays. In turn, reviewers and, one would hope, other members of audiences were increasingly aware of both the theatrical and the academic sides of Shakespeare. Stratford had indeed joined the mainstream; no longer a provincial civic service, Shakespeare in Stratford was ready to become the rival of Shakespeare anywhere in the world. The union of the theatrical world and the academic reached one of its most felicitous seasons in the next production of Richard II, when the greatest stars in London came to do the histories in Stratford in 1951.

CHAPTER 4

QUAYLE AND THE EPIC SECOND TETRALOGY

Except for one outstanding example, Richard II after World War II continued to be a play which, like many of the histories, did not receive the kind of contemporizing treatment which other plays in the canon did. No staging was the result of a major reworking by virtue of a "production concept." Richard II was not, for example, produced with a setting far outside its historical confines. Komisarjevsky's 1933 Macbeth, for example, and Barry Jackson's modern dress productions in Birmingham were based upon a central idea which, when carried through all aspects of production, offered a unified theatrical re-viewing through a single, sweeping insight. The histories in general and Richard II in particular had been bound by their period and by a standard interpretation. And the success or failure of a production had come to depend upon the skill and magnetism of the actor in the title role.

After Hudd's 1947 production in Stratford, the early 1950's saw more than a few versions of the play. Most of them, like Hudd's, offered bits and pieces of interpretive detail and betrayed increasing scholarly clarification of the text. Obscurities and indeed some of the themes of the play--as an Elizabethan would have known them--were being communicated with a new freshness. The post-war London stage in particular had taken Richard, the difficult beauty who irreverently lost the world but gained a knowledge of the nature of identity, if not to its soul, then at least to its heart. The audience was searching

for more Evanses and Gielguds, and Richard II was a "test" role for aspiring stars, not necessarily a proving ground for innovative directors. Alec Guinness was Richard in 1947 at the Old Vic; Gielgud directed Paul Scofield in 1952 at the Lyric, Hammersmith; Jack May took Birmingham by storm in 1955 at the Repertory Theatre; and John Neville was lionized after his performance at the Old Vic in both 1954 and 1955. In each of these productions, most of the interpretive energy was expended on Richard, not to the exclusion of all other roles as Edmund Kean had done, but rather to interpret all of the play on the basis of the particular acting style of the star.

From all reports, Guinness in 1947 was an embarrassing failure, typically blamed on his director Ralph Richardson, and their personality clashes.¹ Guinness was simply not up to the tragic grandeur of Gielgud and Evans; the inevitable comparisons labeled the newcomer as a caricature, a "character-actor's" version of the King; instead of a virtuoso performance in language, emotion, and tragic ennobling, Guinness managed only "a surface melancholy unlit by the flame of tragedy. Nor was Richard's pride of kingship very marked." Guinness portrayed "cold anger" well, but had no "royal heat."² The general audience had by this time defined Richard II as a tragedy, a story of personal weakness, suffering, and growth in awareness and

¹Kenneth Tynan, Alec Guinness (London: Rockliff, 1953), p. 42; A View of the English Stage: 1944-63 (London: Davis-Poynter, Ltd., 1975), p. 63.

²Audrey Williamson, Old Vic Drama: A Twelve Years' Study of Plays and Players (London: Rockliff, 1948), p. 209. This was the Old Vic's first year of commitment to a repertory system.

soul which is made universal through the common nature of the experience. The public now demanded of Richard a depth, convincing subtlety, and charisma which were difficult to reproduce.

Paul Scofield in Gielgud's 1952 production reproduced it; apparently he had the necessary magnetism, and the production increased Scofield's stellar status. The personal tragedy of the King seems to have been the focus of this version; however, it was not oversimplified. In a subtle analysis, T. C. Kemp claimed that Scofield achieved tragic proportions not simply by suffering, but rather by "his meticulous examination of his suffering self" in lush Shakespearean verse given its full power (The Birmingham Post, 16 December 1952). The audience did not necessarily sympathize with Richard, but rather was fascinated along with him as he scrutinized and expressed his suffering at the exact time he was experiencing it. The immediacy and probing descriptiveness of Richard's analysis were riveting in this production. In this Scofield must have benefitted greatly from his director's experience with the role; Gielgud himself noted that "the actor of Richard cannot hope at any time during the action to be wholly sympathetic to the audience."³ Instead, Richard's character over the course of the play allows for gradual, grudging identification with him. Through this identification, a tragic aesthetic is set up; in mere sympathizing, it is blocked by the necessarily superior attitude the audience feels for the sufferer. Gielgud and Scofield were tragic

³ John Gielgud, Introduction to King Richard II (London: The Folio Society, 1958), p. 3.

Richards, not objects of pity. The same was apparently true of Jack May in Birmingham.⁴

As was the case with Scofield, John Neville was confirmed into stardom through his performance as Richard in the Michael Benthall production at the Old Vic in 1954, in repertory through 1956.⁵ He had the beautiful voice and young, delicately handsome face of other recent interpreters. He also followed the the conventional tragic method: Benthall's Richard II was "the simple tragedy of a youthful, headstrong king, one who is an artist in self-pity and draws exquisite pain and pleasure from contemplating his own distress."⁶ Thus, the Benson-Montague artist-king interpretation had matured into a twentieth-century intellectual tragedy. Benthall gave a bit more attention than others had to subordinate characters, but there was no clear central production concept. Bushy, Bagot, and Green, and even Richard himself were played as effeminately as possible, and at times Richard seemed almost masochistically hysterical. In defiance of historical fact, rebels appeared tortured; Richard's favorites were displayed so--beaten, bloody, and nearly naked in III.i.⁷

⁴J. C. Trewin, The Birmingham Repertory Theatre 1913-1963 (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1963), pp. 156ff. Directed by Douglas Seale, Jack May was Richard, Alan Bridges was Bolingbroke, and Richard Pasco was Aumerle, with some but not all of his scenes restored.

⁵Roger Wood and Mary Clarke, Shakespeare at the Old Vic (New York: Macmillan, 1956), p. 146.

⁶Wood and Clarke, p. 147.

⁷Audrey Williamson, Old Vic Drama: 1947-1957 (London: Rockliff, 1957), pp. 176-179.

Concurrent with this traditional stellar vehicle for John Neville was a Stratford East Theatre Workshop experimental production directed by Joan Littlewood with Harry Corbett as Richard. It did not follow the pattern which the big professional companies had set. Most reviewers took the opportunity to contrast it to the West End performance of Neville. Corbett's Richard was a "frenzy of effeminacy," and after the Welsh Shore scene "fully lunatic" (Kenneth Tynan, The Observer, 23 January 1955), not quite the delicate and grand courtier of Neville. Harold Hobson and others clearly documented the relative merits and popularity of the two shows: Littlewood's was "intellectually stimulating and defensible, [but] theatrically untenable" (The Sunday Times, 23 January 1955). On the other hand, Neville was a star sensation in a virtual one-man show, with twenty-three operatic curtain calls on opening night,⁸ reminiscent of Edmund Kean, although the interpretation was certainly not similar to Kean's dynamic hero.

Even Littlewood's excursion into "experimental" interpretations and setting the play in a London sewer were keyed to the central interpretation of Richard, and not necessarily to a vision of the play as a whole. Although it is often possible to discover an incipient "production concept," even in such distant revivals of Richard II as Charles Kean's "historical picture" or Guthrie's vision of the public and private, few if any of the productions prior to 1950 have a genuine

⁸This tally is recorded in J. C. Trewin, John Neville (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1961), p. 58.

claim to production concepts. The term generally indicates at least two things. First, a particular, usually narrow, interpretation of the "theme" of the work is emphasized by using as many theatrical means as are available. Often, the idea to be stressed is drawn from scholarly critical approaches. William Poel's Elizabethan methods and the popularity of modern-dress productions of the tragedies from the 1930's onwards are forerunners of conceptualized productions. Later directors seized upon tools of disciplines other than literary scholarship to offer full-blown readings of plays according to Freudian or Existentialist schemae. Script preparation, scenic design, movement, character portrayal--and even audience manipulation through such devices as program notes--are permeated by the informing concept, as a Freudian production of Hamlet might set Hamlet's confrontation with Gertrude on her bed, after presenting Claudius as a lecher and including extensive program notes on Oedipal complexes. A production concept, then, guides a director in a deductive fashion: he looks for opportunities and methods to follow through on his basic idea in each scene. The end result, ideally, is a tightly controlled and unified interpretation, self-consistent and provocative. Second, this production method very nearly requires a producer-director rather than an actor-manager to be in charge. Harley Granville-Barker at the Savoy in the early years of the century had been a precursor of this; Komisarjevsky at Stratford in the seasons before the Second World War was one before the terminology was popular. But until 1951 and Anthony Quayle's production of Richard II and the other three plays of Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy, the production concept had seldom if

ever been seen at work on one of the history plays. These productions were the grand exceptions to what had gone before and to their contemporaries; but they were also the wave of the future.

As he contemplated producing the 1951 Festival in Stratford, Quayle had at his disposal virtually the same scholarly and critical sources that Hudd and his group had apparently consulted in 1947--notably John Dover Wilson's 1939 Cambridge Edition of Richard II⁹ with its valuable Introduction, and the relevant chapters of E. M. W. Tillyard's Shakespeare's History Plays.¹⁰ What Quayle and his colleagues did with the material, however, was quite different. Wilson and critic T. C. Worsley documented the whole process in some detail in their book Shakespeare's Histories at Stratford 1951,¹¹ with a forward by Quayle. The Stratford Festival brought together one of the strongest repertory companies ever assembled--among others, Quayle, Michael Redgrave, Harry Andrews, Richard Burton. Taking "The Festival of Britain" as the theme, they chose to do in historical sequence, using a single permanent setting, and casting the actors in the same roles across the plays, Richard II, the two parts of Henry IV, and Henry V.

⁹ King Richard II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939).

¹⁰ E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays (London: Chatto & Windus, 1944).

¹¹ J. Dover Wilson and T. C. Worsley, Shakespeare's Histories at Stratford 1951 (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1952). The volume is liberally illustrated with photographs by official photographer Angus McBean.

A single unifying critical interpretation--the production concept--bound several directors together. Quayle oversaw most of the productions, directing Richard II and Henry V, while performing Falstaff in both parts of Henry IV. Shakespeare's Histories probably presents the process of unifying and producing the cycle as being much more systematic than it was. Yet however difficult the achieving of a consensus among directors and performers was, a single concept did emerge and was applied to the productions by the full team of designers and performers.

Quayle, Redgrave (directing Henry IV Part II), John Kidd (assisting Quayle in directing Henry IV Part I), and Tanya Moiseiwitsch (designing sets) began with Tillyard's assertion that the four plays were actually a single, epic tetralogy which dealt with the rise of the House of Lancaster and its culmination in the Renaissance heroic ideal of Henry V. Quayle went so far as to claim that Shakespeare intended them as such and wrote them with links clearly provided.¹² In this analysis, the topic for Shakespeare was no less than portraying the full epic life of Elizabethan England and "a profound commentary on Kingship" itself. T. W. Worsley, one of Quayle's team, summarized their basic interpretation of each play in the sequence as paraphrased below:

Richard II: In a "prologue" Bolingbroke's usurpation forms the ground from which Henry V, the hero of the cycle must escape; both the tragic world of Richard's self-centered system and the illegitimacy of Henry IV's reign must be overcome.

¹²Anthony Quayle, Forward to Shakespeare's Histories at Stratford, p. vii.

Henry IV, Parts I and II: Henry IV struggles to make a success of his kingship without traditional sanction from Divine Right concepts and even without the personal support of his own son. Simultaneously, in Hal king-worship without the Divine Right theory grows naturally from its new legitimate source, the love and understanding of the people.

Henry V: The "hero" of the cycle, fully human with all faults intact, clearly possesses the ideal of Kingship which made the Tudors, and especially Elizabeth, so successful--having, and continuously nurturing, the unquestioning love, confidence, imagination, and faith of his subjects.¹³

In proceeding to construct their cycle from these clearly stated and narrow theses, the directors were well aware that they were not following accepted and successful box-office guidelines, those that were to prove so successful for John Neville and the others a few years later. They also knew that they were departing from theatrical tradition, especially in Richard II, in effect making the play Bolingbroke's rather than Richard's. Additionally, they were re-focusing Henry IV Part I, where the typical starring role was Hotspur, while Falstaff was the comic lead. In their scenario, Hal was to be the focus, the hero in embryo, who must be made attractive, again in defiance of established theatrical experience with the play. Finally, Henry V, once an extremely popular play, had fallen on hard times in the theatre because of the warrior-king's unrelenting patriotism. In the days of the British Empire, it was seen as glorious patriotism; after World War II, it was interpreted as war-mongering jingoism.

¹³T. C. Worsley, Shakespeare's Histories at Stratford, pp. 24-26.

In order to carry through their re-focusing, the Quayle team would have to alter what had previously been successful. Both Richard and Hotspur would have to become parts of larger fabrics and not central roles which depended upon direct identification with the audience. Some of Falstaff's attractiveness would have to be tarnished so that Hal could step to the fore in audience esteem. Throughout all of the plays greater emphasis would have to be placed on each King's political problems and the issues raised in his reign; and knowledge of the civil wars to come would tinge the unabashed "war-mongering" speeches of Henry V with the hollowness of mere rhetoric.

Worsley analyzes some of the specific changes made in the plays in order to accomplish the aesthetic ends the team sought. In Richard II the political background, especially in the first acts, typically submerged in the overwhelming emphasis on Richard's personal magnetism and the medieval ceremonial scenes, had to be brought emphatically to the audience's imagination. The background was necessary for continuity as well as for the thematic material on Kingship. Second, Bolingbroke must be fleshed out and treated more sympathetically: "actor and producer have to establish him: and establish him, so to speak, against the facts." He is a usurper, but a usurper whose force of arms led to a better kind of king in Henry V.¹⁴ Finally, implicit in these shifts of emphasis from Richard's loss to Bolingbroke's part in the rise of Lancaster and the political significance of the reversal, were some startling re-interpretations of characterization

¹⁴Worsley, pp. 27-28.

and motivation. The most all-embracing, of course, was the future-shifting implied in calling Richard II a "prologue." When the play is performed alone, the dynamic contrast which creates dramatic tension is between Richard and Bolingbroke. But when the play is part of the longer sequence, the two poles of kingship may be seen as Richard and Henry V. To force an analogy, Richard was the old wine that had to be thrown out, Bolingbroke-Henry IV the ugly but necessary cask which allowed the new wine to ferment, and Henry V the new wine, full-bodied and welcome in certain times.

In justifying their project and in constructing interpretations, Quayle and the others drew upon a sizable and persuasive body of scholarly criticism from the 1940's. Three works and their authors in particular had set the tone. Lily B. Campbell, first in 1938 and then more fully in 1947,¹⁵ tried to define how "history" plays were viewed and what history itself meant to an Elizabethan audience. By documenting that the chronicles upon which dramatic history drew were Tudor-subsidized propaganda, and by demonstrating their corollaries in Elizabethan homilies which saw providence as the active agent, even in such temporarily disastrous events as civil war, Campbell showed that the aesthetics of a "history" play were somewhat different from a "tragedy." It was in reality more of a "political" play, appealing to

¹⁵ Lily B. Campbell, Shakespeare's "Histories": Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1947). A good portion of Campbell's argument on Richard II was first published in the Huntington Library Quarterly, I (January 1938).

different heartstrings and to logic and ethics to a much greater extent than could personal tragedies. John Dover Wilson, in his probing and highly influential Introduction to the 1939 Cambridge Edition of Richard II, did much of the same sort of analysis of the play's likely effect upon a Shakespearean audience. However, he carried his ideas further by proposing that the whole of Shakespeare's English "history" canon was a single grand structure which explored dramatically similar themes. E. M. W. Tillyard, most forceful and influential of the revisionist group of critics, bluntly claimed that Shakespeare intended the plays to be a grand epic presented in serial form.¹⁶ Quayle's 1951 project tested that contention in dramatic terms. The fundamental change in the relationship of scholarly critics and the theatre here cannot be underestimated. Formerly, great performances of individual actors had stimulated the imaginations of critics like Hazlitt, Lamb, Pater, and Yeats. With this 1951 project, however, the direction of influence was reversed. Then, and for at least three decades afterwards, the theatre drew upon critical analysis for constant, imaginative revitalization of its interpretation of classic plays, particularly the Shakespearean "histories," which steadily grew in theatrical currency.

Dover Wilson's introduction had strongly suggested that the real point of Richard II was not simply to offer a psychological study for a proto-Hamlet, but rather to offer that portrait as a part of a larger political discussion. The play, without undue dramatic invention,

¹⁶Tillyard, pp. 236-237.

"develops the political issue in all its complexity," he claimed. The "issue" was the seemingly irreconcilable doctrines of the realm's supremacy over any individual, including the monarch, and of the monarch's infallibility under the theory of Divine Right.¹⁷ Dover Wilson went on to offer two more interpretations which the Stratford team used. First, he asserted that Richard II was "intended to be introductory to a play, or plays, upon the subject of Henry IV, and perhaps Henry V," precisely the point of view Quayle adopted in his productions of the individual play and the series as a whole. Second, focusing on the shadowy character of Bolingbroke in Richard II, Dover Wilson unhesitatingly went to the later plays for information about his character and applied those details in interpreting the earlier play. For both Wilson and Quayle, Bolingbroke was a puppet of fortune, "an opportunist, not a schemer,"¹⁸ something always ambiguous in Richard II, but based upon Henry IV's later soliloquies, clarified beyond any doubt. This interpretation absolved Bolingbroke of some of the odious character of a self-serving usurper and opened the way for a much more sympathetic treatment of his reign in the later plays.

Tillyard had followed the same methodology in interpreting earlier plays through evidence from later ones. Based upon his assertion that Shakespeare's "intent" was for all the plays to be seen as one, Tillyard felt justified in viewing each character as consistent across the full twenty acts of the epic tetralogy, freely using speeches in

¹⁷ Dover Wilson, p. xxxv.

¹⁸ Dover Wilson, p. xx.

the later plays to interpret character in Richard II, for example. Tillyard determined that "we must treat them [the plays] as a single organism," for "Shakespeare knew what he was doing from the start,"¹⁹ an assertion which has not held up in scholarly circles. Tillyard went so far as to claim that the marked stylistic and structural differences between Richard II and the later plays were all a function of the grand design, in that Richard is the "necessary" prologue, the groundwork of the preceding age from which Shakespeare could construct the epic world of the Henry IV plays, which to the Elizabethans constituted the "present" age. In Richard II the "world of medieval refinement. . . is threatened and in the end superceded by the more familiar world of the present," Bolingbroke's is the "embryonic" world that is to come to full fruition at Agincourt.²⁰ Quayle's goal in following this line of thought was not to offer a tragic aesthetic in Richard II, but, rather, to inform the whole sequence with the festive and heroic aesthetic of a climactic Henry V. Richard was no longer the central focus of a single play. He was instead a piece of a larger commentary on kingship, namely the un-heroic, ineffective contrast to Henry V.

Quayle's group used an additional device for accomplishing their purposes, one which had been employed as early as Herbert Beerbohm Tree's attempts to "prime" the audience for a particular reading of the text: an elaborate discussion of the "meaning" of the plays in a souvenir program. Quayle anthologized and excerpted many of his

¹⁹Tillyard, p. 237.

²⁰Tillyard, p. 263.

sources and added their not inconsequential weight to his view of the epic series. The audience--at least those who read or were aware of the program's essays--were attuned to selected subtleties even before the first words were spoken on stage. The program baldly laid out several important propositions. First, the historical events and political significance of the murder of Thomas of Woodstock were summarized, including Richard's involvement in the affair. The program also developed the idea that the tetralogy as a whole was an elaborate "commentary on kingship" and that Richard II presented "another kind of king" from those who were to follow in the remainder of the series. The hero of the cycle was one of these other kings, Henry V, offset in "perfect counterpoise and prologue" by Richard. Overall, the program continued, the structure was mythic, in that the process by which the curse of usurpation and sin begun in Richard II is (temporarily) overcome in Henry V, similar in movement to the Orestia. But the play was simultaneously topical to Shakespeare's audience: they would have accepted it as a "mirror for magistrates" for Elizabeth and her court, advising extreme caution on dealing with dynastic issues such as her treatment of Mary, Queen of Scots.²¹

Not all of the preparation for the project was scholarly and cerebral. The directors decided that for practical, economic reasons and for the purpose of visually enforcing continuity among the plays as well as fluid action between scenes, especially in the later plays, a

²¹ A copy of this program is in the Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon, catalog S-42.

single unit set was necessary. Tanya Moiseiwitsch designed a rough wood structure which was reminiscent of some of the current Globe Theatre reconstructions, with a large, non-specific acting area in the center, an upper level bridge between two flanking curved stairways, and an interior stage beneath the bridge which could be closed off or reveal hangings or a sky cyclorama upstage (Figure 4.1). Set properties were simple and had to be brought on by actors or costumed stage hands in full view of the audience, as there was no front curtain. Variation, particularly between plays in the cycle, was achieved by large, subdued fabric hangings which framed the set and acting areas. Placed downstage right and continuously lit was the symbol of the whole cycle, the throne of England, which was altered slightly as the kings who possessed it changed. For example, it was draped in a light colored, luxurious cloth while Richard was in power, but by IV.i. of Richard II, it was stripped down to become little more than a wooden chair, devoid of personality and ready for the usurper. The set was stark and unpopular at first, especially since people were used to a gorgeous Richard II, but as the season progressed, it proved itself.

The set encouraged continuity between plays in the cycle. But the real continuity was the casting. Stratford had joined the mainstream, and some of the best actors of Shakespeare available world-wide were content to devote an entire season of their careers to the histories. The same actors would portray the same characters across successive plays in an often grueling schedule of repertory. Harry Andrews, for example, was Henry Bolingbroke and King Henry IV throughout, and

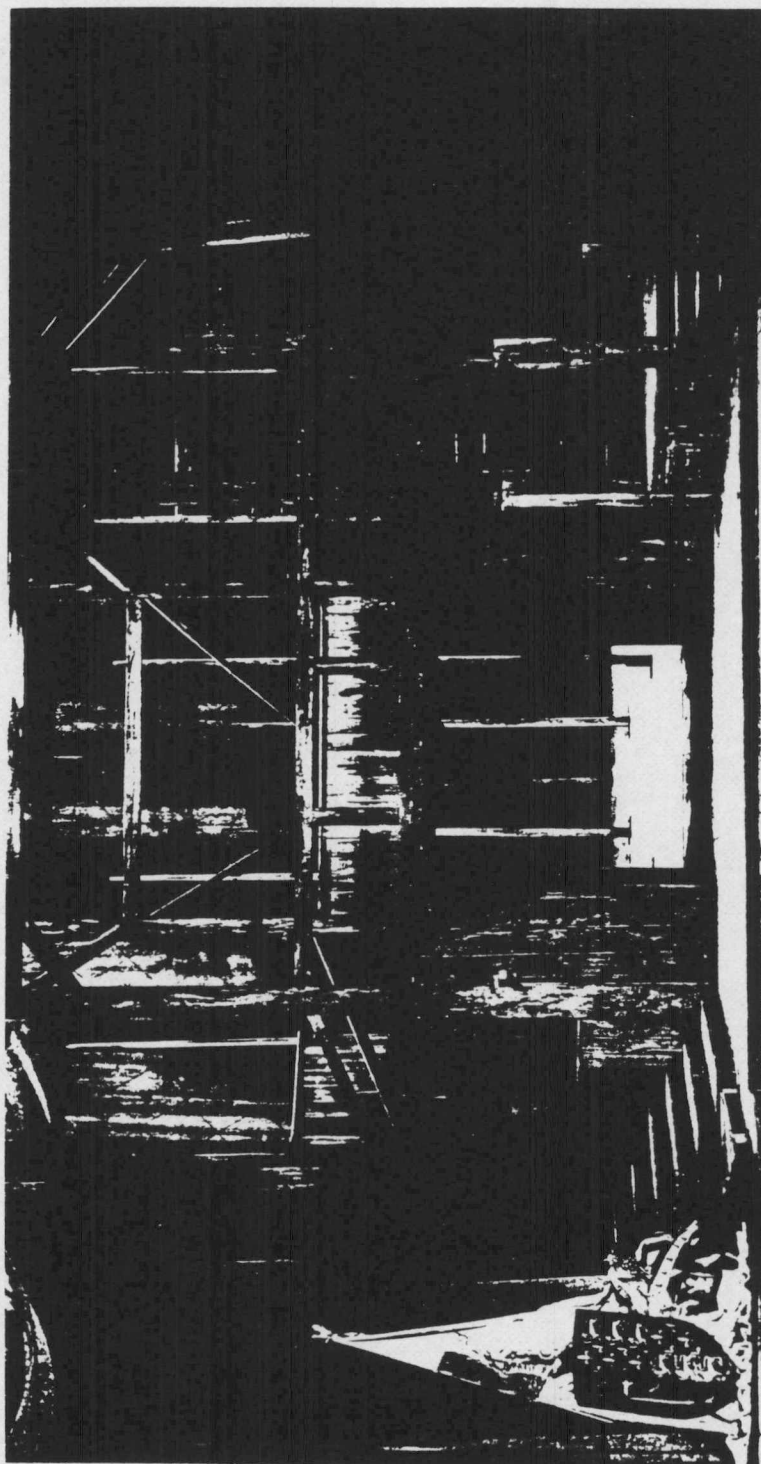


Figure 4.1. UNIT SET FOR THE HISTORIES (1951). Pictured for the opening of Richard II, Tanya Moiseiwich's design was intended to give continuity to the series, to ease scenic transitions, and to focus attention upon the throne, which was constantly visible and spotlighted (far lower left corner). Source: Photograph (Angus McBean) K 464-39, Shakespeare Centre Library.

Richard Burton was Hal-Henry V. The only significant exception to this was the "star" actor of the season, Michael Redgrave, whose Hotspur in Henry IV Part I was not carried forward from Richard II. Text preparation and editing promoted further continuity and focus in the later plays. A large number of Falstaff's lines were cut, thus casting the focus on Prince Hal, and the potentially jingoistic speeches in Henry V were softened considerably by sensitive trimming. In Richard II, however, the text was the essentially standard one of the day: the Aumerle conspiracy was gone (V.iii., V.iv.). A few opportunities were seized, however, to good effect, such as having the Welsh Captain in Richard II clearly be Glendower of the later Henry IV Part I. Most of the alterations necessary to create the overall conceptualization in Richard II were apparently left to the considerable talents of the actors.

Production records available at the Shakespeare Centre in Stratford-upon-Avon are extensive. In addition to a fairly detailed promptbook, there are Radioscripts from two BBC World Theatre interviews and a typescript by Emma Farrow, entitled "Thrones and Dominions: A recollection of the History Plays given at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in the Festival of Britain Season, 1951." Nothing in the collection properly identifies this document; however, from its appearance it probably is a memorial reconstruction contributed to the Library after the plays were in production. All of these records serve to augment the account by T. C. Worsley in Shakespeare's Histories, except in a few details. In assembling the account that follows, all

of these sources were consulted; except where some are at odds with others, they are not individually identified.²²

From the outset, Redgrave as Richard was frivolous, bored, and effeminately volatile (Figure 4.2). His favorites were always at his elbow as an admiring audience, giggling at his witty comments and egging him on. He lightly exchanged his royal orb for a pomander, and, piqued, raged at Mobray's and Bolingbroke's refusal to obey him. Richard was clearly no admirable ruler, either in public or in private; he nervously vacillated and relied upon his sycophants, especially in the Lists scene (I.iii.). He and his favorites callously giggled and skipped with delight throughout I.iv. Richard was a singularly uninspiring leader. When he returned from his Irish wars, he was still elegantly dressed, carrying not a sword but a rose. With much attitudinizing and a lush orchestral underscore, Richard limply accepted the successive reports of disaster. Listless, feline poses and business were the rule for this Richard. Even in the Deposition scene (IV.i.), he did not shatter the mirror but sighed and let it drop. In his farewell to the Queen, he was passive and leaned on her for support as he nearly swooned. Finally, in Pomfret he was almost mesmerized by his own situation, and in a true coup de théâtre riveted the audience in the way other modern tragic Richards had, but without

²² All materials in the Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon, catalog S-42. Farrow's account confuses the order of certain scenes but in other respects is consistent with the promptbook. In the discussion here the anomaly is silently ignored, as are such slight errors as might be expected in a memorial reconstruction of various individual performances.



Figure 4.2. **THE GORGEOUS KING OF SYCOPHANTS.** Redgrave (1951) in a scene with his royal favorites Bushy, Bagot, and Green (II.i.). See Figure 4.4 for Quayle's/Redgrave's contrasting realization of Richard in the Pomfret scene (V.v.), after all his kingly trappings had been taken away. Source: Photograph (Angus McBean) K 464-8, Shakespeare Centre Library.

the carefully constructed identification they had purchased in the first four acts. Suddenly Redgrave as Richard became almost sacrificial; instead of fighting against Exton and the other assailants, he was held and stabbed from behind. Fascination with the beauty and fragility of this Richard, along with a nearly morbid pressing of the points about Richard's glorious ineptitude seem to be what Redgrave and Quayle sought.

Critics, especially early on in the season before the full cycle was playing regularly, reacted strongly to Redgrave's Richard. Most agreed that Redgrave's portrayal was hysterical, foppish, and contemptuous--a tyrant. To The Spectator he was not "satisfying" (30 March 1951). The Birmingham Gazette was even stronger in its condemnation: Redgrave's Richard was "an effeminate, irresolute, capricious fop that we seldom feel for him" (26 March 1951). Regional as well as London critics found little to like in the character (The Manchester Guardian, 24 March 1951; The Daily Telegraph, 26 March 1951; The Observer, 1 April 1951). It appeared that Quayle and Redgrave had been more than a little successful in removing from Richard an audience's tragic identification. Critics were almost universal in their praise of Redgrave's performing skill, especially his vocal control, but were repulsed by the revolting character who spoke and moved so beautifully.

In contrast, although not necessarily sympathetically presented either, Harry Andrews' Bolingbroke was strong, manly, and in control of almost any situation from the start. From the opening scene onwards, Bolingbroke was the crowd's favorite. The promptbook calls for a

"sensation" to punctuate each of his speeches in I.i., while Mobray stimulated a "buzz." In private, with Gaunt (I.iii.253ff) Bolingbroke was volatile and bitter, too much so to stimulate much audience sympathy, noted Farrow. However, upon his return from banishment, Bolingbroke was confident and almost magnanimous, with his attendant lords making every obeisance and cheering his public speeches. At Flint Castle (III.iii.) Bolingbroke solicitously played upon Richard's pride but was so clearly the master of the situation that he could afford to be gracious. With a full coterie of formidable soldiers behind him, it was Bolinbroke who knelt to a Richard with only his courtly popinjays around him. The contrast and its attendant reversal of fortune were inescapable (Figure 4.3). Bolingbroke offered his hand, Richard looked at it with revulsion, and then Bolingbroke gently led him offstage. In the Deposition (IV.i.) it is the nearly silent Bolingbroke who was in unquestioned control, quietly calming the hotheads with significant, silent looks, and manipulating his agent Northumberland through eye-contact and gestures rather than words.

Thus it was not only Richard and Bolingbroke as individuals who were set before the audience in contrast--neither one was necessarily gauged to win the audience's favor. They represent, for ethical and not emotional judgment, two different worlds and value systems. Richard's medievalism and Bolingbroke's modernism were the real contrast, carried forth in both action and speech, a fact not lost on the reviewers. Richard's limp, feline attitudes and luxurious, pause-filled speeches were sharply in contrast to Bolingbroke's strong blocking and terse delivery. The actors' personal styles also

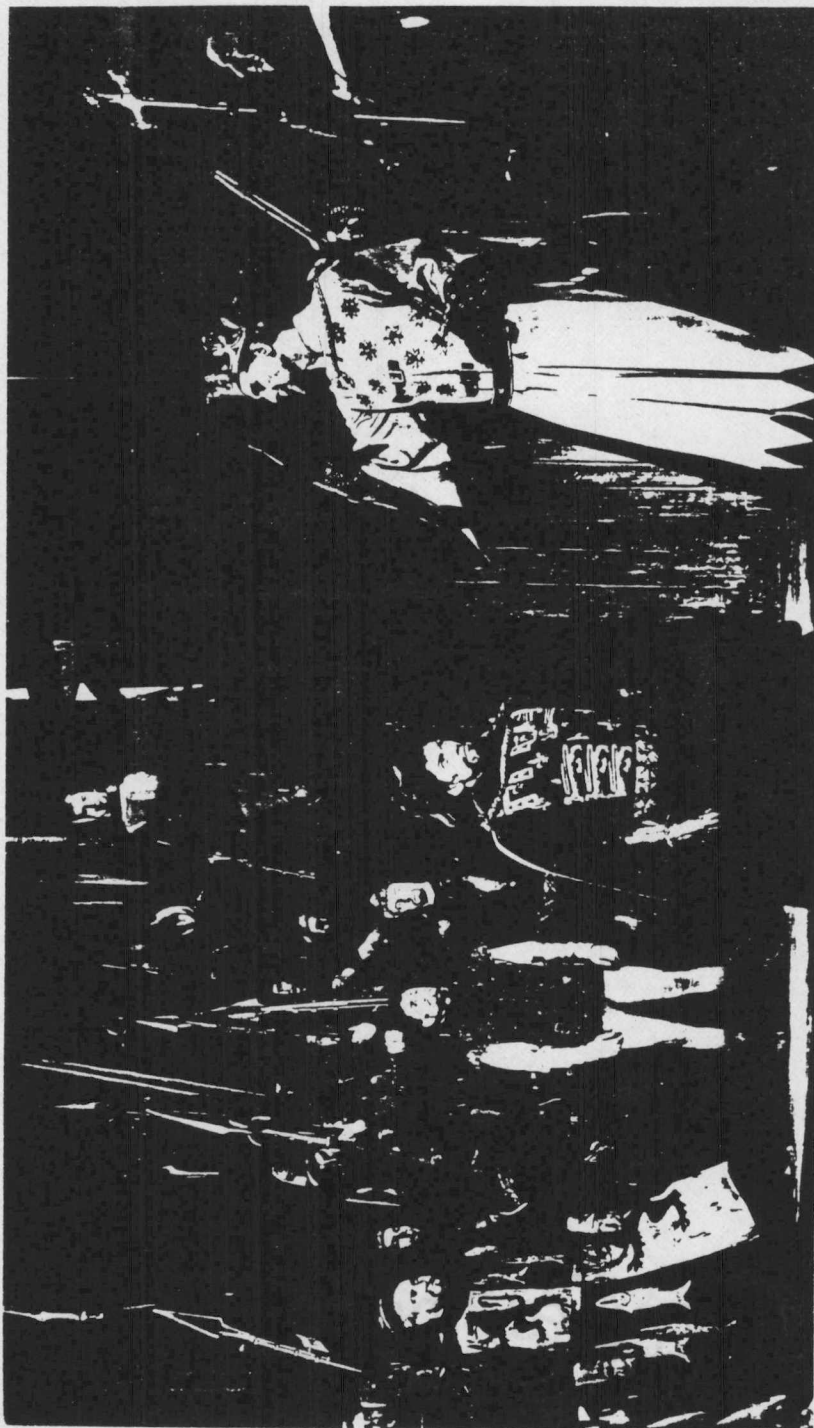


Figure 4.3. REDGRAVE AND ANDREWS: CONTRASTS (III.111.). Quayle's 1951 series of the history plays, in focusing on the Rise of Lancaster, proposed Bolingbroke, kneeling, as the successful, strong politician opposed to Richard as the ineffective, weak dilettante. Costuming, script preparation, and characterization enforced the contrast. Source: Photograph (Angus McBean) K 464-25, Shakespeare Centre Library.

contributed greatly: Redgrave's "mellifluous" tone and Andrews' harsh but "beautifully articulate" diction established the two poles in the first scene and were consistent throughout.²³ Costuming and set decoration also brought home the ideas that two different ideologies as well as two sets of individuals were in conflict. Following through and solidifying a pattern begun in Hudd's 1947 production, the costumes of Richard and his court were elegant and obviously medieval, while Bolingbroke's rebels were clad in a non-specific mode of military outfits or courtly attire--regal but belonging to no easily identifiable century. In the overall scheme of the tetralogy, costumes moved from Richard's Chaucerian style to Henry V's near-Tudor Renaissance look, with more modern armaments and furniture for interior scenes.

The conflicting political theories and realities of the two periods were more prominently displayed in Quayle's Richard II than had been the case in most previous productions. The throne, constantly spotlighted and on the extreme edge of the stage, virtually in the laps of those on the front row, focused the action. Richard and his court lounged there in the opening scene; Gaunt and the Duchess of Gloucester used it as a central prop in the following scene; as the conspirators

²³ Particularly in Farrow's account, and also in such reviews as: Harold Hobson, The Sunday Times (24 March 1951); Claude L. Westell, The Birmingham Mail (26 March 1951); and J. C. Trewin, John O'London's Weekly (13 April 1951). Several critics held that Redgrave's attitudinizing destroyed the balance of the play; the most rabid was Kenneth Tynan, A View of the English Stage: 1944-63 (London: Davis-Poynter, Ltd., 1975), p. 111, who called Redgrave's Richard "exquisitely over-mothered, a king sculpted in puppy-fat," "a noble booby."

in II.i. discussed their plans, Northumberland maneuvered the group into the shadows as far away as they could get; in the Deposition (IV.i.) Bolingbroke was forcibly blocked from it. Even in scenes where the throne could have no logical place, its visual presence made it a powerful symbol; for example, during the Garden scene it had been robbed of most of its finery and was a sad commentary on Richard's esteem in the eyes of his subjects.

In addition, the characters seemed throughout to have a sense of the political and historical significance of their actions. Conspiracies, whether Northumberland's or Aumerle's, were clearly heinous and illegal--whispers, furtive glances, uneasiness, and seeking the shadows were points in common in the staging of both. Bolingbroke, although largely impassive in the Deposition scene, was troubled and concerned about maintaining decorum during the proceedings and attempted to cut short the volatile statements of his conspirators-cum-advisors. Carlisle's speech, so often cut from acting texts, was a forceful moment. As soon as York proclaimed "long live Henry," Northumberland led the lords in chorus, whereupon Carlisle, flushed with emotion, rushed across the stage to block Bolingbroke from ascending the throne. Hotspur attempted to stop him and was held back, struggling. Carlisle's accusations and prophecies, central to the unity of the concept of the tetralogy, were thereby made during a moment of high dramatic tension. Bolingbroke was clearly shaken and did not then even approach the throne. Although the full scenes dealing with the Aumerle conspiracy were not performed, the conspiracy as a whole was not deleted pro forma as for most preceding productions

of the play. It was clear from the Deposition onwards that Bolingbroke's crown was none too firm. The lines in which Aumerle, Carlisle, and Westminster discuss their plans were restored to the end of the scene (IV.i.322-335). And Bolingbroke's concerned speech about conspiracies and Prince Hal (III.iii.1-22) was also included.

That was not the only section of the deleted "Aumerle scenes" which was restored to benefit Quayle's political emphasis and the continuity of the cycle. The opening of V.ii. was also staged. Following upon the highly formal Farewell scene (V.i.), which was played in full with all of the mannered couplets intact, the lights shifted to reveal the Duke and Duchess, above, on the bridge, feeding birds in their "garden." York described Richard's entry into London in the plain, touching words Shakespeare intended. The final speech, usually played for pity for Richard, was in Quayle's context an elucidation of the two opposing monarchical ideologies. In contrast to Bolingbroke's universal acclaim as their chosen King, was the universal and fickle rejection of Richard, their annointed King.

As in a theatre the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious,
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on gentle Richard. No man cried, "God Save Him."
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home,
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head--
Which, with such gentle sorrow he shook off,
His face still combatting with tears and smiles,
The badges of his grief and patience,
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted
And barbarism itself have pitied him.

But heaven have a hand in these events,
 To whose high will we bound our calm contents.
 To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,
 Whose state and honor I for aye allow.
 (V.ii.23-40)

These lines, which so frequently had disappeared from productions along with the rest of the scene to follow, significantly enriched York's character. But perhaps more importantly they echoed many of the political themes: the change of type of king, not just the change of dynasty, was at the heart of Bolingbroke's successful usurpation; York is convinced that, as the Tudor historians claimed, all was a part of God's plan, but he scrupulously refers to "Bolingbroke" and not "King Henry" when he gives him his grudging fealty "for aye" in line 39. As soon as York completed his lines, thunder and lightning shattered the Yorks' calm, and the stage was plunged into blackness.

The next thing the audience saw as lights slowly returned was Exton scurrying around the throne as he laid plans for Richard's murder (V.iv.), followed quickly by a light shift to reveal Richard, near mental collapse, in the dungeon of Pomfret (V.v.) Richard's soliloquy was presented with no cuts, and in Redgrave's deeply affecting reading, Richard miraculously shed the disgusting character of the former king and gained the quintessential humanity which had made the role an exclusively tragic one in other productions (Figure 4.4). The very slow pace of the complex soliloquy blended into a tender scene with the groom and was rudely shattered by the frenzy of the murderers.



Figure 4.4. THE "UNKINGED" VICTIM OF HIS OWN INADEQUACIES. Redgrave in the Pomfret scene (V.v.). Quayle's idea of Richard was a pathetic effeminate of a world which was doomed to collapse in the ascension of Renaissance ideals typified in Prince Hal. This informing political concept was current among the Cambridge group of E. M. W. Tillyard, John Dover Wilson, and others. Source: Photograph (Angus McBean) K 464-34, Shakespeare Centre Library.

To conclude the play and continue the alternating pace of scenes, the final scene with now-King Henry was solemnly judicial, with Henry already weary and sickened. He was interrupted by Exton, who brought on Richard's body and hailed Henry in the tones of a fanatic. Henry's reaction was strong and angry; he found bitter the destiny which had somehow taken control of his life. There was little remorse for Richard himself. Whatever regret Henry IV felt was, over the course of the following plays, clearly related to his self-pity and not to any guilt he accepted personally.

As the cycle unfolded, it became increasingly clear that the true contrast was between Richard and Henry V. Quayle ensured that the emphasis in the two Henry IV plays lay on the King's political problems and a very long, slow development of Prince Hal's character, freed from the plays' usual inevitable emphasis on Falstaff. Quayle himself took the role and proceeded to cut around 400 lines from Falstaff's part in the two plays. Additionally, Quayle made a conscious effort to portray Falstaff on the borderline of grotesque, instead of genial mischief. He carried this through his costume and makeup in particular, so that he was unpleasantly fat, greasy, and caricatured in the face. After several critics condemned his Falstaff as extreme, Quayle made some visual adjustments, such as reducing the girth of Falstaff and removing a false nose and fantastic, wispy wig; but the heart of the characterization remained much the same. Instead of regretting the scene in Henry IV Part II where Hal rejects his old friend, many in the audience found themselves wondering why Hal had put up with the degenerate for as long as he had.

In The Times' analysis (4 April 1951), Falstaff's appeal was sacrificed to the "kingship" theme not only by virtue of the cuts and Quayle's interpretation of the role; strong performances by Andrews as Henry IV, Redgrave as Hotspur, Hugh Griffith as a very Welsh Glendower, and Richard Burton's untraditionally intellectual and detached interpretation of Hal's relationship with Falstaff also contributed. Burton's Hal was always distant, dry, preoccupied, and nearly judgmental, while Quayle's Falstaff was certainly not above anyone's reproach. In Henry V, Burton's Hal was also played against the traditional interpretation of the role, loyal to the thesis of the cycle. He was exactly what Redgrave's Richard had not been. Largely through wholesale cutting of the long war orations and through Burton's simple, direct, and obviously democratic manner of dealing with other characters on the stage, Henry V was indeed the full contrast to Richard II. He was the ideal leader, not necessarily the ideal warrior. He was clever but not necessarily wise, a combination of "spirituality and cunning," and "Renaissance in conception" (J. W. Lambert, The Sunday Times, 4 August 1951).

One of the last adjustments made in the sequence was a small, non-Shakespearean addition to the Chorus's Epilogue in Henry V. The directors clearly wanted the four plays to be seen as a unit, but also wanted them to be seen as a completed epic unto themselves, without any reference to what Tillyard had called the "first tetralogy," the Henry VI plays and Richard III. Patrick Dickinson wrote five new lines for Michael Redgrave as the Chorus to substitute for an original section which dealt with events in that other tetralogy. The new lines sealed

the events of the four 1951 productions instead of forecasting future events, referring to "Richard's winter" and Henry's "summer throne."²⁴ By the time all of the plays were running in sequence, the overall design became abundantly clear. Henry IV was merely a transition between the two real poles of Kingship--Richard the heir of a hierophantic tradition, and Henry V the beneficiary of a humanistic one. Robert Speaight, for example, agreed that the series achieved what it set out to do in setting an ethical, political problem before the audience--which is really better, monarchy based on faith or efficiency, a doctrinaire or an empirical society, medieval divine right or Renaissance pragmatism. As one critic put it: "If Richard was an idea that failed and Bolingbroke a sin that succeeded, Henry V was the common-sense solution." Overall, not Richard, but Bolingbroke was the "great tragic protagonist," who, having been raised by Fate, was doomed to collapse under the weight of flaws he could not control (The Tablet, 8 September 1951).

Regrettably, after the great effort was made in 1951, the histories as a sequence were not revived at Stratford. It was simply too large and costly a project, and the performers had other commitments to honor. Quayle's directorship at the Memorial Theatre was also drawing to an end, and with him the stellar connection with the West End and the rest of the performing world. Richard did not

²⁴The re-writing was generally criticized by reviewers; for example, Ruth Ellis claimed that it set a "dangerous precedent" of altering a text in order to fit a production concept, something which the theatre had long been battling to escape (The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 3 August 1951).

walk the Stratford stage again until a very different director, actor, and organization essayed the histories in an even grander design.

CHAPTER 5

PETER HALL: AN "INTERPRETATION RATHER THAN A REPETITION"

Beneath the excellence and innovation of Anthony Quayle's 1951 annus mirabilis in Stratford were both business and artistic weaknesses which worsened in succeeding seasons. The Festival was a precarious professional endeavor: with every season ad hoc, restaging former seasons' productions from repertory was difficult due to artists' schedules and conflicting career paths; demanding schedules and low pay in contrast to film work and West End contracts increasingly kept the "stars" away from Stratford; new talent found London much more attractive than Stratford because of opportunities to work with new writers and revolutionary directors. Even Quayle was not immune from Stratford's professional repugnance. He wanted out of the business side of the Festival and the Memorial Theatre and felt stifled by having to work within the confines of a single dramatist's plays. In 1956, he resigned in favor of Glen Byam Shaw, who became the overseer of a caretaker regime in Stratford.

During the 1950's most of Stratford's offerings, under both Anthony Quayle and Shaw were competent without being daring, innovative, or examples of dynamic ensemble playing. Peter Brook periodically directed single productions in which he was given artistic control of text, design, and staging. These productions, such as that of Titus Andronicus (with Quayle as Aaron, Olivier as Titus, and Vivien Leigh as Lavinia) in 1955, attracted "stars" who wanted to work with Brook. Typically they were individualistic, quirky affairs not unlike

the personalized meteoric products of Komisarjevsky in the 1930's, and they were usually the best, as well as the most controversial, of the productions of any season. The regular fare in Festivals simply was not up to the quality and box-office appeal of these revivals by a director who was not interested in becoming the general director, even if it were possible for it to be offered. The Board of Governors insisted on someone over whom some sort of control could be exercised, but who would also infuse the new blood into the Festival necessary to keep it from drifting back into provincialism. Byam Shaw, Fordham Flower, and the Board chose Peter Hall, a young and relatively inexperienced but dynamically different Cambridge graduate to refocus the mission of Stratford. The story of these turbulent years is well documented in Sally Beauman's history, The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History of Ten Decades.¹

Hall's goals combined some of Quayle's dreams with a very businesslike plan for the development of the Theatre and its company, all of which Fordham Flower supported. Among the changes on the agenda were an expansion of the Festival beyond Stratford to a London theatre with a full season, and a varied repertory, including works by new dramatists. These two changes would, they thought, attract new talent, avoid stagnation, and help build a consistent, dependable core company with long, three-year contracts. The system might sacrifice flexibility and hamper attracting "stars," but exceptions could be made

¹ Sally Beauman, The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History of Ten Decades (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 196-235.

if necessary. Most radical of all in 1960, Hall proposed that the Festival and the Memorial Theatre should present themselves to the government for subsidies. In addition to these changes in overall philosophy, internal operational changes were initiated. The Memorial Theatre was refurbished and the stage itself redesigned--the most far-reaching changes were the raking of the stage and the construction of a fourteen-foot deep apron from the proscenium over the orchestra pit and the first few rows of stalls. As soon as the Aldwych Theatre in London was engaged, its stage was made into a copy of the Stratford parent. Funds were also obtained from the general budget to commission new plays which would be given full-scale production alongside Shakespeare. To cap this wholesale re-structuring of the organization, Hall re-named it. Formerly the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, it was to be called the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, shedding the staid, funereal connotations of "memorial," while gaining the suggestions of royal appointment and quality. The company itself was also given a name in part to indicate that it no longer was a group cast together for a limited number of performances as were opera casts. The "Royal Shakespeare Company" (RSC) was not tied to a specific theatre and was a tangible object for identification and loyalty, in London and beyond.

Hall's efforts were a part of Britain's search for how to effect cultural subsidies. He wanted the Royal Shakespeare Company to become the "national theatre," while most of the London establishment was trying to have the Old Vic company and organization receive the subsidies. It appeared that the government would subsidize only one group, and each realized that in order to survive economically, it

would have to be the recipient. Certain ruin would result from having to "compete" with a subsidized theatre. Each side pursued the subsidies through both political and artistic campaigns.² The political maneuvering had little bearing upon Richard II, but the artistic campaign drew the play into the forefront. Hall tried to prove to the Arts Council and to the public at large that the RSC combined quality of production and commitment over the broadest spectrum of arts in the early 1960's, and it could do things which no other company could ever attempt. Hall showed the broadest repertory of any classical theatre within memory in the 1962 season, in which the RSC staged a total of twenty-four productions, including Clifford Williams' Comedy of Errors, Peter Brook's King Lear, The Lower Depths at the Stratford or London theatres and on provincial tour. In the next season Hall set out to demonstrate the other strength of the RSC: it could undertake projects that would be impossible for any other entity. Building over two seasons, he would stage the entire eight-play sequence of English history plays dealing with the Wars of the Roses--in sequence and using consistent casting across plays, as had Quayle in 1951, but with twice the material to control. In Shakespeare's Quatercentenary, 1964, Hall's RSC would give to the nation something it had never seen before.

However, for the RSC the sequence was more than a demonstration to the Arts Council of the company's unique capabilities; it was also a

²Beauman, op. cit.; John Elson and Nicholas Tomalin, The History of National Theatre (London: Jonathan Cope, 1978); Peter Roberts, The Old Vic Story (London: W. H. Allen, 1976).

high point in the development of what has since come to be recognized as the RSC "style" of doing Shakespeare. There were many elements in this mixture in addition to what was made necessary through Hall's redesigning of the stage. Alumni of the universities rather than theatre schools or repertory system, Hall, John Barton, and to some extent Peter Brook constituted a blending of the academic and theatrical worlds. Philosophy, theory, scholarship, and experimentation were combined in an approach to text and staging more far-reaching and audacious than any which had previously appeared in the established theatres. Instead of great actors or directors, Peter Hall acknowledged literary scholars such as E. M. W. Tillyard, Derek Traversi, Philip Brockbank, John Palmer, Neville Coghill, George Rylands, F. R. Leavis, and John Dover Wilson, to be his "influences," according to a 1964 interview.³ Part of Hall's program at Stratford was the institution of classes for training actors in what had previously been the exclusive province of academics. Barton in particular insisted upon each actor's informing each speech with a full understanding of its Shakespearean-era meaning so that it could be effectively communicated with reference to modern idiom.

Hall and his group had recognized that the theatre after the cold war had undergone substantial changes. Its audience had gotten younger, and they expected confrontation with issues and problems instead of escapism. They asked more of production than a competent

³Quoted in the souvenir program for Richard II, 1964.

repetition of conventional interpretations and staging. The pre-war Stratford faithful were not Hall's audience. In a revealing interview on the BBC's People Today (broadcast 12 July 1964), Hall discussed his productions of the Histories in the context of his general theatrical philosophy. Analyzing Shakespearean traditions and contemporary demands, Hall pointed out that Shakespeare had always been a popular author, never dependent upon a cult, and that the test before the RSC was to keep it that way. Hall wanted to balance the antiquarian with the contemporary, to use Shakespearean production to instruct the young in their cultural inheritance but always to do so with contemporary relevance in subject and manner. The RSC must be a forum for experiment in reconciling the traditional "visually operatic" with modern intimacy, to be able to be many different theatres, giving the best quality production to each, without limitations caused by lack of understanding or training. Shakespeare was to be the proving-ground for all modes, with the RSC

always searching and going forward and trying to relate new techniques to the way we were doing Shakespeare, and trying to see what of the present, helps to illuminate the past and vice-versa. And I must point out here, through all this restless activity one is not trying to re-write or re-interpret Shakespeare's intentions.

What Hall wanted was not a series of "revivals"--an outdated term--but rather to offer an "interpretation" of each play, on its own terms, to the particular moment and specific audience to whom that view would be most meaningful. And all of this must be true to Shakespeare's intentions, not a gratuitous adaptation or travesty, but an honest

attempt to find the right technique of making what was meaningful to Shakespeare's audience similarly meaningful to Hall's.⁴

In discussing his reasons for doing the history sequence in 1963-1964, Hall stressed that he considered the plays "extraordinarily relevant to this moment, extraordinarily meaningful in a political sense," clearly positioning himself within the bounds of John Palmer's and E. M. W. Tillyard's interpretations of the history play as a "political" play. And what was particularly applicable to the 1960's was the sense of anxiety over power politics and the possibility of total annihilation over such a staged conflict as the Berlin Wall or the Cuban Missiles. What sorts of excuses were being offered as justification for cold war tensions and undeclared wars was similar to the "sanctions" offered in the plays as justification for total disruption of the society and civil war:

I mean what works on our audiences in Shakespeare's histories, is his very penetrating view of the politician, of the historical process, the ironic sense which is always there. One of the things we did in doing these plays was to discuss with the company this whole question of sanctions. The plays are littered with sanctions--I do this in God's name, in the King's name, for the good of the common weal, in the name of Christ, all this--sanction after sanction after sanction, and you often find these sanctions in the mouth of the most terrible villain in the piece. And we have our current sanctions, don't we, don't we? It is not in the public interest, the Commonwealth, the West, the Iron Curtain, the cold war; these are all sanction terms which are used to excuse actions which sometimes are expediency and sometimes indeed are mere ambition on both sides of the Iron Curtain. And yet the only totally Christian King in the plays, Henry VI, because he believes that selfwill is sin, is a total washout as a King.⁵

⁴ BBC interview, broadcast 12 July 1964, typescript in Birmingham Reference Library, p. 3.

⁵ BBC interview, p. 5.

The combination of "sanctions," which are ironically at odds with the real motives of power politics on the one hand, and the general mood of malaise and anxiety in an Existentialist universe on the other, provided Hall with both interpretive and aesthetic concepts for the productions.

Hall had his interpretive concept. It was translated into visual terms by the scenic designer John Bury, who was responsible for the "Stratford Style" of doing Shakespeare almost as much as were directors Hall, Barton, and Brook. The "Stratford Style" was christened by Kenneth Tynan in his 1962 review of Clifford Williams' The Comedy of Errors, set design by John Bury. It was characterized by "solid, Brechtian settings that emphasize wood and metal instead of paint and canvas; and by cogent, deliberate verse speaking that discards melodic cadenzas in favor of meaning and motivation" (The Observer, 16 September 1962). The elevated diction and vocal tenor as well as the elegant posturing of the young Gielgud and Evans were now out of fashion. The same bare style was evident in the other triumph of the 1962 season, Peter Brook's King Lear, which starred Paul Scofield as Lear. Finally, Brook's unique contemporary impact and immediacy was absorbed into the company as a whole; his previously isolated successes were now a part of a consistent effort and were given visual form in the weighty and brilliantly flexible stage design. Critics consistently praised the austerity and rigor of the simple, straightforward and immediate style of production.

Verse speaking was at least as important as the the visual impact. In a series of interviews conducted by Sally Beauman, Hall, Barton, and

Brook discussed their aims and the resulting product.⁶ They consciously tried to replace the moribund oratorical/operatic style and the luxurious but often empty melodic flights of lesser actors imitating Gielgud and Redgrave. The "Stratford Style" demanded a rational, systematic, analytical, and highly controlled touch. Hall described it as "dry, cool, and intellectual"; Barton called it the "rational style" which sacrificed music for meaning; Brook demanded of his actors controlled intentions, "not just played on feeling and intuition."⁷ In order to achieve a uniformity of diction in the RSC, Barton conducted sonnet classes as preparation for the verse of the plays. The Histories were the supreme test of the Stratford Style--if they could be made effective, meaningful contemporary theatre, then all the theories would bear glorious fruit.

In 1963 the project began with a highly controversial plan for staging the three parts of Henry VI and Richard III. Hall and Barton cut, pasted, and composed "Elizabethan" verse in putting together The Wars of the Roses, a three-part compression of the four Shakespearean texts, re-titled Henry VI, Edward IV, and Richard III. Of the 12,350 lines in Shakespeare's original Henry VI Parts I, II, and III, Barton and Hall cut almost half, and added 1,400 lines of "Shakespearean" verse actually composed by Barton. Richard III was left virtually intact. The adaptation was designed to accomodate the pace, simplicity,

⁶ Discussed in Beauman, pp. 267-270.

⁷ Beauman, p. 268.

and ease of transition the productions demanded; the text was also simplified in order to increase the prominence of one of Hall's stated themes--the ironic intricacies of political power. Contemporary relevance was also emphasized through speed and the no-nonsense presentation of basic political conflicts and strong-arm tactics. John Bury's sets and costumes, in the best of the Stratford Style, complemented the hard, unrelenting world of military power--the stage floor was covered with riveted metal sheets, raked so that the apron almost became a weapon thrust into the audience. Stiff metallic costumes and over-sized prop weapons augmented the effect. It was a world where only ruthless military men or politicians could avoid being overwhelmed by the sheer scale.

As a part of Hall's desire to make Shakespeare "relevant," he tried to discard some of the clearly historical elements of the histories; he was not as interested in giving a history lesson as in providing an experience whereby his audience could realize the universality of the historical subject matter. Attributing to F. R. Leavis his goal of relating the effects of the plays in Elizabethan England to a similar effect he could achieve with his audience,⁸ Hall purposely used elements from various historical periods. Power politics was not unique to Shakespearean times, and neither were the sanctions used to justify abuse of power. The effect Hall sought was mythic--not epic, as Quayle had attempted. Quayle tried to portray the flavor of Shakespeare's times; Hall wanted the experience to be as

⁸BBC interview, pp. 9-10.

much twentieth-century as it was sixteenth, or even prehistoric. In his souvenir programs Hall quoted from disparate sources over several centuries. Holinshed, Halle, anonymous Elizabethan homilies; Dover Wilson, W. H. Auden, L. C. Knights, Derek Traversi, John Palmer; Smith Hempstone on African rebellions; Elias Canetti on paranoid rulers, Albert Camus on "the rebel"; and even Winston Churchill on the determinism of history--all were evidence of the universality of Hall's themes. In a section of the same program under the heading "Blood will have Blood," Hall himself offered an overview for the whole series which stressed motifs ancient and recent. "The highly artificial text of these plays" enclosed archetypal patterns of protection and revenge common to all historical periods; pagan rituals as well as Nazi rallies relied on the same patterns of emotional "sanctions" to justify the garnering and use of absolute power. The pity and fear for these instinctual human horrors was the "tragic" element for Hall:

The tension between man the animal in action, murdering to protect, or lying to save, and the moral men trying to rule by a developed human ethic is what makes history tragic. I believe this is still the dilemma of power. . . . The Plays are therefore an intricate pattern of retribution, of paying for sins, misjudgements, misgovernments. . . . It is not necessarily that power corrupts, but that the needs of being in power are in themselves corrupting. A man aspires to be a king, and is then destroyed by being a king, whether he be a good or bad king.

In stressing the elemental conflicts and patterns over the full series of plays, Hall saw that stopping, as Quayle had done, with Henry V as an ideal was really a false culmination. Hall's vision was much bleaker; only when both sides had coalesced into the single monster of Richard III could there be a full expiation and a hope for regeneration:

I feel Shakespeare's tone is . . . equivocal. He doesn't promise that a millennium awaits us; rather he says that history is a constant tragic pressure on all human beings and unless they govern themselves and their institutions pragmatically there is a natural tendency to return to chaos. . . . So the selfish ambitions of men must be checked. . . or else the men of ambition will misgovern the rest.

In 1964 Hall saw none of Quayle's 1951-style heroes--only more or less destructive patterns and life-affirming moments and hopes that civilized man would prevail.

The qualities which Hall saw in the plays were conveyed visually through John Bury's designs. The vaguely medieval costumes, which could easily have been from a fairy tale as well as from a definite historical period were not decorative or representational. In fact, their mixture of stiff cloth, armor, and large scale tended to make the actors merge with the harsh metallic sets. There was no attempt to create a particular illusion of a specific historical period--as, for instance, Charles Kean's or even Frank Benson's had. In 1964 the goal was the mood, the impact of a situation which could--and did--occur again and again in the human experience. Further, the sets were of no real time or place so much as they were of all times and all places, a kind of cosmic world in which elemental forces played out basic conflicts common to all history. For example, although Richard II, IV.i., was set in what was clearly a royal chamber, it could as easily have been Homeric Troy as Chaucerian London. No crowds of supernumeraries, no banners, no decorative detail which could, as in the Quayle 1951 series, present the epic "whole life" of a particular time and place swelled the 1964 Hall productions. They were as different from the "epic panorama" vision Tillyard claimed for the

histories⁹ as they were from "documentary scenes" for which chronicles and portraiture had been consulted. Even in the seemingly interminable battle scenes of the Henry VI plays, Hall used only those characters who had speaking roles, never "attendant lords" to swell a progress. The massive set pieces changed mechanically for almost every scene with no visible assistance from stage hands.

The mood created was an anxious anticipation of being overwhelmed by forces beyond one's control, always in terms of weight, strength, and impenetrable power. Bury summarized his visual keynotes for the series in program notes:

The hard world of these histories is shaped in steel. The nature of the English court changes from king to king.

Richard II: the overgrown garden of England, the court a tarnished jewel.

Henry IV: the introduction of the steel palace, the countryside grown rusty.

Henry V: the polished steel of England; in France a golden court and countryside.

Henry VI: a stone saint dominates the English court.

Edward IV: the sun-covered golden drapes in a brief moment of flamboyance, before--

Richard III and the bunker.

The similarity to Fascist German history could hardly have been accidental.

Bury's sets were composed of huge metallic structures mounted on a riveted, steel-sheathed raked stage floor which thrust far through the

⁹E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays (London: Chatto & Windus, 1944), p. 262.

proscenium and into the audience area (Figure 5.1). Two huge revolving "rostra" which each had three faces formed the walls of each scene, with each side differently decorated to produce suggestions of differing locations. The rostra were rotated mechanically and could form a great variety of angles in defining the acting area. For Richard II one face was a tangled vine and tree used, for example, in the Garden scene (III.iv.). Another surface was flat metal with oversized, prominent rivets and seams, used for court scenes, as if the court were encased in armor plate. Another side had a heavy double-door, another a curving stairway up to a higher level, used to represent both Flint Castle (III.iii.) and the Pomfret dungeon (V.v.). Chairs, stools, and tables were pre-set and revealed as the turntables revolved, and such larger pieces as the 20-foot-high throne and a gnarled metal tree were mounted on trucks that glided onstage seemingly under their own power. The faces of the rostra were indeed large; when brought parallel to the proscenium, each side extended more than two-thirds of the distance across the stage. Drops of neutral colors also changed in appearance with each scene shift. Although the design sounds terribly cumbersome, especially in comparison with Quayle's simple wooden unit set, production records indicate that pacing was brisk, with an average running time of two hours and thirty-eight minutes. None of Hall's histories ran more than three hours in length.

The costumes also used the latest in stage technique and design to accomplish with relative ease what might once have been crippling to a stage presentation. The actors were clad in what seemed to be oversized, metallic pseudo-armor. Not greatly detailed, the robes were

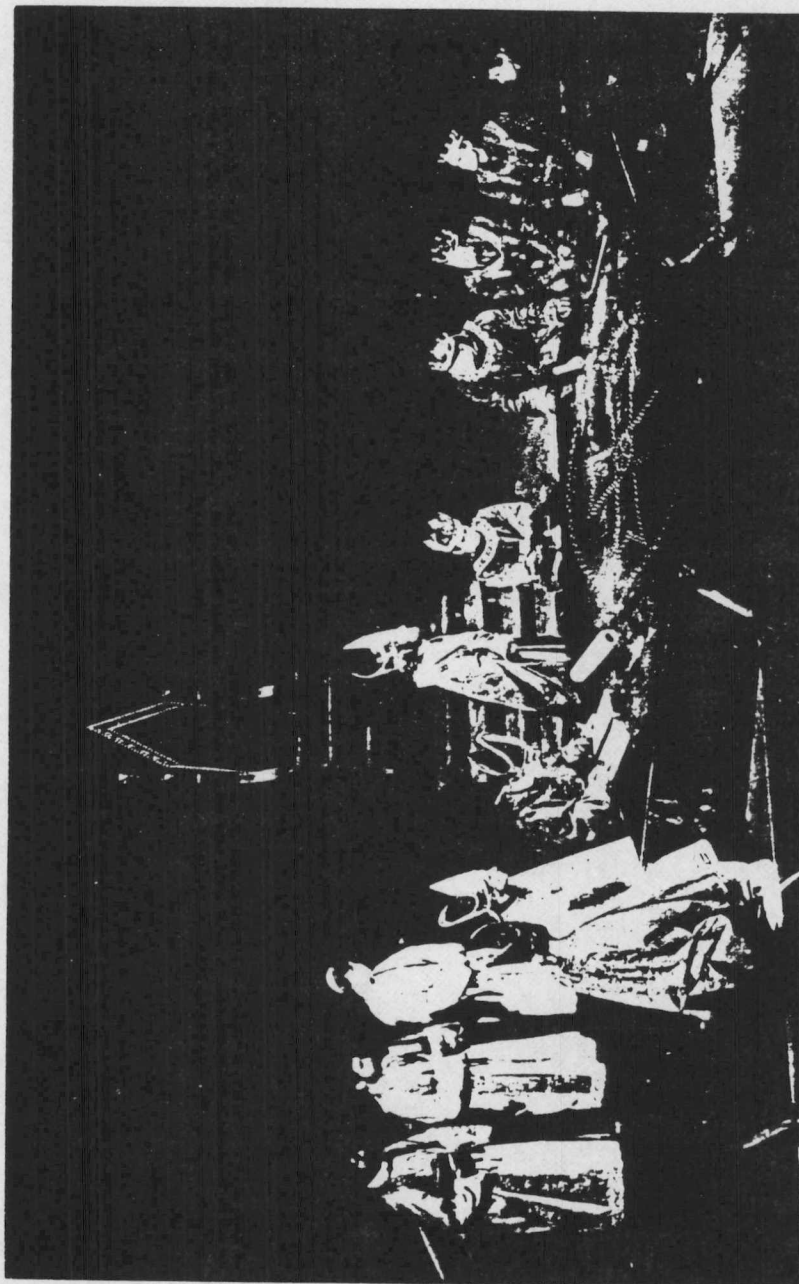


Figure 5.1. A METALLIC WORLD (1964). Although this photograph records Henry V, the same general setting was used in Richard II, an environment of cold steel where actors were overwhelmed by the size of such set pieces as the throne and the council table, and where armor was the appropriate attire. All scenes in all seven plays were constructed of metal, with even vegetation and cloth costumes seemingly encrusted with tarnished steel. Source: Photograph (Holte) S 1268, Shakespeare Centre Library.

quite remarkable. The Christchurch Press (28 March 1964) discussed how the effect was achieved. The basic fabric, canvas, was sprayed with latex and dyes and then sprinkled with cut metal scrapings and bits of "lurex" thread and beads. The effect under lights was dazzling. Personal hand props and accessories were all over-sized and followed the same metallic motif. Huge, heavily-jeweled belts and flashing swords, banners, and candlesticks picked up the hard metal effects of the set. Additionally, the harsh sounds of warfare were accentuated by putting metal taps on boots for battle scenes, which clanked and rang out against the metal floor. All court scenes were dominated by Richard's "sanction" for his rule--a giant, looming, implacably distant statue of Christ, far upstage, in the shadows. It was a grim, dark world with no soft surfaces.

Not only did Hall rely upon John Bury's talents and the latest in stagecraft to impress upon the production his elemental vision of the interplay of corruption and power; he also employed the oldest device in the history of "reviving" Shakespeare--textual manipulation. In Richard II Hall added no non-Shakespearean lines, but he did add one very important element: the "Aumerle conspiracy" scenes (V.ii.-V.iii.). Hall's editing departed from traditional practice. He deleted line by line instead of slashing out whole sections or scenes. The longest single cut he made was Richard's confusing conceit on the clock in his Pomfret soliloquy, a mere ten lines (V.v.50-60). Any specific interpretive bias is difficult to detect in Hall's editing; he seemed to delete end-stopped couplets wherever possible, and such obscure references as the clock conceit. It appears that he did make an effort

to eliminate all "sanctions" except the central one being tested in the play--Divine Right. The code of chivalry and its trappings were downplayed; even the word "chivalry" was excised (I.i.81,203). In the restored Aumerle scenes, only repetitious lines and some of the couplets were cut; the low comedy was retained but restrained; York's potentially slapstick failure to get into his boots was not played for laughs.

In general, Hall depended upon brisk and clean delivery of the lines to bring the play into reasonable playing time, not wholesale cuts. In the nearly full text, Richard was pulled from the absolute center of the show without making him entirely unattractive, as Redgrave and Quayle had risked. Bolingbroke was seen on stage for a substantially longer time, particularly in the last act, seated on the throne which had been altered from Richard's warm but tarnished copper to Henry's polished steel.

The casting followed the pattern set in 1951. The same actor portrayed a historical character across play divisions, sometimes reappearing in intriguing "doubling" after their initial assignments. Young, twenty-two year old David Warner was both Richard II and Henry VI; their respective opposites, Henry V and Richard III, were undertaken by Ian Holm. Thus, the two introverted ineffectual kings were played by the gangly newcomer to Stratford (1963 had introduced Warner as Henry VI in a highly praised, understated performance); and the two extroverted, dynamic, effective polar opposites were played by short, stocky Holm. From another point of view, the doubling was even more interesting: both the Renaissance ideal, Henry V, and the

Machiavellian megalomaniac, Richard III, were instantaneously thrown into comparison. The same revealing comparison was forced by having the self-indulgent Richard II and the selfless martyr Henry VI played by Warner. Hall's matrix of kings offered staggering flashes of insight through these cross-castings over successive nights as the sequence unfolded. And Hall added two more dimensions with Eric Porter, who was both Henry IV and Richmond, and with Roy Dotrice as Gaunt, Hotspur, and Edward IV (Figure 5.2). Not all audiences enjoyed the benefits of the rich suggestions of the doubling, for Hall did not release the full cycle all at once. The Wars of the Roses, composed of the adapted Henry VI plays and Richard III, had premiered in 1963, but it took almost four months for the full sequence to open in 1964, from Richard II's first night on 15 April to Richard III's on 12 August.

Anyone expecting a repetition of Richard II as a star-vehicle in the Gielgud or even Neville mold, in a reading of him as a tragic, artist-king was certainly disappointed. Instead of an elegant, sweeping entrance into his fashionable court filled with sycophants, Warner's first appearance was almost inconsequential. He shuffled on, uncertain, hidden behind others, and most assuredly not "grand" or regal. Alan Dent longed for Gielgud and a poet-king (Financial Times, 16 April 1964). Philip Hope-Wallace found Warner "a shade dull" (Guardian, 16 April 1964). Milton Shulman (The Evening Standard, 16 April 1964) called this Richard "as bloodless as a vegetarian dinner." J. C. Trewin, along the same lines (The Birmingham Post, 16 April 1964), saw early on that Hall's histories were concerned with things



Figure 5.2. **PETER HALL'S KINGS** (1964). Each King was given a different appearance and interpretation, showing the evolution from Richard II's benighted despotism to Richard III's diabolical egotism. (Clockwise from top left: Richard II (David Warner), Henry IV (Eric Porter), Henry V (Ian Holm), Henry VI (David Warner), Edward IV (Roy Dotrice), Richard III (Ian Holm)). Source: Photographs (Gordon Goode), Shakespeare Centre Library.

other than striking moments in the delineation of the central character. The focus in the opening of Richard II was the symbolic throne itself, not the "weak, uncertain man" who leaned against it, throughout the scene meditative instead of glittering. Trewin went on to observe that former great Richards all "had certain speeches, certain scenes that they made their own--Hayes the scene on the Welsh coast; Evans the great declamation from the castle walls. . .; Gielgud the mirror scene. . .; Guinness the time-spinning metaphysics of Pomfret." David Warner had none. The "star" was the total experience, not a single scene nor an individual actor.

The Times saw that Warner's Richard was "not the whole part, but it belongs organically to the production" (16 April 1964). In accentuating the political themes and striving for a mood of anxiety, Hall and Warner made Richard II not an exploration of individual characters revealed in lyric "arias"; instead the play took on "an unexpected masculinity and ensemble spirit," in which even minor characters such as Hotspur and the royal favorites were individualized political creatures. Not all reviewers were disappointed in Warner's Richard and the non-lyrical "Stratford Style," however. The Birmingham Mail (16 April 1964) praised the pace, the effective sets and also Warner's "growing, haunting performance as Richard"; The Coventry Evening Telegraph (16 April 1964), and The Glasgow Herald (24 April 1964), among others, thought highly of the symbolic effects of the sets and lighting, although the Herald took Hall to task for presenting Hotspur as a blustery Scot.

More well-focused observations on Warner's Richard came after the first round of opening-night reviews. After the two parts of Henry IV opened on 17 April, Hall's overall design became more apparent, and Warner's interpretation found a context. Alan Brien in The Sunday Telegraph (19 April 1964) was still unhappy with a "monotonous" Richard, but Philip Hope-Wallace retracted his "dull" judgment in preference of "understated" (17 April 1964). Even Alan Dent (Financial Times, 17 April 1964) recanted and acknowledged the sequence as a good idea and very effective, even if it crippled Richard II's tragic depth. Just as Redgrave and Quayle's Richard in 1951 was substantially altered by its presence in a cycle, Warner and Hall's interpretation, as Harold Hobson claimed, made it almost a new play, tragic in a more universal way (The Sunday Times, 19 April 1964). In his opinion, Quayle's series had missed the point by leaving Lancaster in triumph; Hall's showed the full tragic reversal. In style Quayle's production had retained a good deal of the tradition in soaring lyricism and elegant personal tragedy. Hall, in accentuating Richard's personal ineptitude and the dense texture of multiple intrigues surrounding him like the tangled undergrowth in John Bury's sets, broke new ground.

Warner's Richard was "boyish," as Maurice Evans' had been, but in a 1960's fashion; as several critics pointed out (e.g., The Liverpool Post, 16 April 1964), Richard was "peevish" and spoiled, meditative and sulky, nearly manic-depressive and sociopathic. John Gardner (The Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 24 April 1964) ascribed to this Richard the quality of a "bejewelled viper" with "a magnificent revealing stare which argues utter contempt. It is at once the upper dog look, the

stare of the old Tzars." Gardner completed his description of this modern youthful Richard by referring to the Deposition scene where he dealt with "the change like a happy suicide gratefully pushing a pheno-barb prescription into the hands of an unwilling chemist." Warner was no stylized, delicately garbed historical creature like Redgrave, Evans, or any of the Old Vic Richards in the 1950's (Figure 5.3). He was simplified and contemporized as were all of the other kings and warriors in the series.

Bolingbroke, the great central tragic figure in Quayle's productions, like Richard became more an ensemble player in the 1964 series. Political concerns were of more importance than psychological ones in Hall's bleak universe. Hall and Eric Porter as Bolingbroke followed the Dover Wilson-Tillyard idea that Henry's motives were basically honorable and he became a rebel almost without realizing it; Bolingbroke then became an opportunist, never a schemer. He was certainly less ambitious and power-hungry than any of the other nobles at first (The Coventry Evening Telegraph, 16 April 1964). He then became as ruthless as the rest, and his "calculating" decision in pardoning Aumerle and Carlisle was just a variation on Richard's earlier "embroidered hesitations" in the Lists scene (Harold Hobson, The Sunday Times, 19 April 1964). The action, and its political significance, were of more importance in Hall's production than were the specific motives that would make a historical individual behave in this fashion. In the same way, Carlisle's prophecy of the horrible retributions to come and his defense of the Divine Right doctrine were central to the theme, while any attention to Carlisle's motives was



Figure 5.3. **DAVID WARNER AS RICHARD.** Warner's Richard was a tortured soul, whose sycophantic court was ironically both an attempt to escape from and a confirmation of the hostile world in which he was condemned to live and rule. Above: Scene with royal favorites (II.i.). Next Page: Welsh Shore scene (III.ii.). Source: Photographs (Reg Wilson) 577-22, 577-12, Shakespeare Centre Library.



inconsequential. For the full sequence of the histories as Hall presented them, the full circle is completed only when in Richard III political power and self-serving personal ambition are brought to a vortex in the crookback--and exterminated.

As Bamber Gascoigne (The Observer, 19 April 1964) considered it, Richard II seemed downbeat until the succeeding plays began to develop the seeds planted there; "it now seems inconceivable that we were content to have them otherwise." B. A. Young called the cycle "one of the supreme achievements in the theatre today" (Financial Times, 12 August 1964). Other critics stridently disagreed. Ronald Bryden (The New Statesman, 24 April 1964) criticized the whole concept. There was too much difference in kind among the plays: Richard II was a "Spenserian hagiography," Henry IV historical realism, Richard III crude Machiavellianism. More seriously, Bryden condemned the oversimplification. The characters are not the same across the boundaries of the individual plays. Richard III in Henry VI is a far different person from Richard III in Richard III, and so on. To present the plays in sequence and attempt continuity of character and style made "novel" sense, but Shakespeare's plays did not add up to a novel. And in simplifying the characters and variable style, Brydon accused Hall of perverting Shakespeare into Brecht.

Hall countered such a point of view in an interview in May 1964.¹⁰ Using terminology and an outlook on the aesthetics of the theatre

¹⁰"Towards a Theatre of Ritual," Plays and Players (May 1964).

reminiscent of Antonin Artaud,¹¹ Hall freely admitted to his "almost neo-Brechtian approach," but he added that he was moving away from the "epic" theatre to a "Theatre of Ritual," examining "recurring patterns of human behaviour which come from instinct." Instead of trying to preserve the intentions of the author, a method which Hall was convinced trapped a director in the academic vicious circle of continuous, tentative re-interpretation, he sought a very clear-cut and unmistakable impact which was immediate and devastating to a contemporary audience. To those who lamented the sacrifice of poetic beauty and lyricism, Hall responded that the true essence of Shakespearean verse was not in its music but rather in its "metaphysical expression of opposites, contradictions being yanked together." Hall wanted to reproduce the effect and not necessarily the style which Shakespeare, were he our contemporary, might have intended. At the Aldwych in the same season, Hall carried his ideas even further. It was the London season of the "Dirty Plays," mostly from the Theatre of Cruelty school with Peter Brook's production of Peter Weiss' Marat/Sade as the centerpiece. In these productions, as was true to a slightly lesser extent of the histories in Stratford, the mise en scene was intended to confront the audience and to disturb all preconceptions, to leave them with questions instead of a catharsis.

¹¹ Beauman, op. cit., discussed Artaud's influence upon Hall and the RSC in connection with the "Stratford style," pp. 273-277. For Artaud's own words, see the collection The Theatre and its Double, trans. Mary Caroline Richards (New York: Grove Press, 1958).

As Artaud had advocated, Hall tried to offer his audience an "interpretation" in terms of effects, not a "revival" in terms of the characters as subtle reconstructions of totally convincing and absorbing individuals. He did not go as far as Artaud wanted, completely subordinating text and psychology to spectacle and emotional impact, but after all he was directing a publicly supported Shakespeare Festival and making a bid for the conservative Arts Council to subsidize his company. Throughout his career, however, Hall was committed to the centrality of spectacle and design, but certainly in a different context from that of the visual operatic school of the nineteenth century:

A director's task is to stimulate those signals [of behaviour] and edit them so that the play lives. . . . [I]n an old play, where the signals are different [from the audience's] and are not being made to a society which has the same receivers. . . , you have to know what Shakespeare's signals are, and then think of a way of getting them through to a modern audience.¹²

Hall attempted to do so in Richard II by re-focusing the audience's attention away from a modern sympathy for an alienated martyr and towards the hard political arena which Shakespeare's audience would have found more interesting. He designed a world which through spectacle vivified the sanctions of power and forced home the bleakness of self-serving duplicity. The question which Hall did not answer was whether the overwhelming effect of spectacle and the non-cathartic stimulation of unresolved paradoxes were worth the sacrifice of the "humanity" of an audience's identification with a character.

¹²Director's Theatre (London: Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1974), p. 71.

John Russell Brown in a 1966 analysis of Hall's project readily recognized that the production concept came across quite well, but that the series turned out to be less than the sum of its parts--not greater. Brown had reviewed the productions in 1965, and in his "second look" amplification in 1966 he found them regrettably lacking in human interest. In the plays written early in Shakespeare's career (the Henry VI trilogy), the oversimplification and bald presentation style was not so noticeable; but in Richard II, Henry IV Parts I and II, and Richard III, "it obscured deeply observed and imaginative elements of Shakespeare's art."¹³ Much was achieved, but much was also sacrificed. The sets, variable yet consistent in mood and overall effect, unified the series and created a unique vision of the plays' universe, but slowed the tempo with their oppressive, time-consuming changes. Before and after the Lists scene of Richard II (I.iii.), Brown noted delays of over sixty seconds,¹⁴ a long wait for him.

Brown also observed that although the plays were ostensibly about "politics"--at least that was the concept trumpeted in every press release and throughout the pamphlet-sized souvenir programs--the most memorable and effective moments were the bloody, violent episodes instead of the calm political dilemmas. "The plays became a high-class cartoon, a relentless horror comic." In Richard II, Richard had

¹³ John Russell Brown, "Three Kinds of Shakespeare: 1964 Productions at London, Stratford-upon-Avon and Edinburgh," Shakespeare Survey 18 (1965), 147-155; republished with additional material in Brown, Shakespeare's Plays in Performance (London: Edward Arnold, 1966).

¹⁴ Brown, p. 151.

repeatedly stuck the dying Gaunt with a riding crop with a nearly maniacal vengeance (II.i.). Richard smashed the mirror in the Deposition scene (IV.i.), staining the rest of the scene with self-inflicted sacrificial blood. In the Pomfret scene (V.v.) the visual keynote was a massive chain which tethered the king to the metal walls, a chain which noisily punctuated Richard's points in metal-on-metal thunderclaps. Especially when he tried to fight off the murderers, using the chain as a weapon, Richard had joined the world of torture which somehow was transferred from the Henry VI plays.¹⁵

Technically, Hall had also oversimplified. Brown gave his highest approval to Hall and Barton's goals of eschewing meaningless operative pomposities of speech, but he sometimes wondered if the cure was not as debilitating as the disease. In striving for psychological actuality and contemporary realism in speech, the pace and quickened rhetorical rhythm of many long speeches was lost, and "broken and slow delivery" was the result, particularly weakening and shrinking Richard II. Brown felt that the psychological complexity of characters could not be overlooked and still have Shakespeare be Shakespeare--and that the challenge which Hall did not even take up was the making viable of the shadowy, flat, near-monsters of the early plays. The warlords of Henry VI were concatenations of words instead of fully realized beings; the audience was confronted with the written ideas of a speech instead of having it realized in a theatrical moment based in a human

¹⁵ Brown, p. 148.

experience. Hall's actors who were the best at the Stratford style, David Warner and Ian Holm, most often seemed the flattest, and their scenes, according to Brown, were full of lost opportunities for subtle character delineation. In contrast, Hugh Griffith (John of Gaunt, Falstaff), Peggy Ashcroft (Queen Margaret), and Donald Sinden (York) were often able to break from the mold of simplification and at moments to transcend the limitations of the style and production concepts to reveal Shakespeare's full complexities.¹⁶

John Russell Brown's comments ring too true to be ignored. In the midst of the press acclaim for the project, it was only rarely that great performances and moving insights were mentioned. The "hero" was the director, the conceptualist, and not the performer or even the character portrayed. One cannot escape the impression that while the critics appreciated and admired Hall as the creative hero, in the darkened theatre they still were moved by something else, older and much less rational than a production concept. The most often mentioned (e.g., Guardian, 13 August 1964, The Birmingham Post, 13 August 1964) and clearly the most effective moment of the entire series was in Henry VI Part III, I.iv., when Queen Margaret (Ashcroft) confronted York (Donald Sinden) when the horrors of war: she smeared on his face the blood of his sacrificed child. This act, one of the most violent and simultaneously one of the most "political" in the whole of the sequence, gained from the simplicity of the concepts and from the stark style; but, perhaps more importantly, it was also highlighted by

¹⁶Brown, p. 149.

Ashcroft's inspired interpretation and performance. It may not have happened often in the series, but whenever Hall's interpretive concepts were at one with the production and were enacted with depth and humanness, the effect was unassailable.

Hall's project reveals both the great strengths and the dangerous hidden weaknesses in strict adherence to a production concept. The simplification allowed him to make a specific point about how power makes monsters of merely ambitious men, for example; but it also limited the full scope of the drama of humans, individual humans, making choices and having motives much more complex. Any production and any style necessarily restricts, but Hall's attempted to make the plays impress upon the audience only one lesson--his--and did it remarkably well. Yet the production was also, regrettably, content to lose the potential to stimulate the myriad unintended lessons which fully convincing portrayal of characters and the aesthetic tragedy creates. Only in those rare moments when all of the elements were working together did Hall's scheme become truly great theatre.

CHAPTER 6

BARTON AND BEYOND

After having been exposed to the hazards of professional Shakespearean production under Peter Hall's directorate at the RSC, and after having worked on The Hollow Crown series for the BBC, John Barton began to develop his ideas for a new Richard II in an RSC Theatre-Go-Round touring production. It was mounted first at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford (first night, 29 March 1971) and subsequently played in various locations in the United Kingdom as a part of that season's new repertory, competing for attention with Peter Brook's sensational A Midsummer Night's Dream and the premiere of Harold Pinter's Old Times.

As befitted a traveling show, the cast as well as the set was compact. Barton's Richard was Richard Pasco, and five actors doubled or tripled minor and supporting roles. For example, Dennis Holmes was Carlisle, Willoughby, the Groom, and a Gardener's Man. A simple unit set was complemented by basic properties, and broad, vigorous blocking with tight ensemble acting gave the production a concentrated effect. Still very much influenced by those ideas in the 1964 series, Barton included lines from later history plays in order to tie Richard II to the larger scope of the Wars of the Roses; however, the political themes which formed the interpretive backbone of the 1964 cycle were subordinated to Richard's personal tragedy.

In a 31 May 1971 interview (The Birmingham Post), Pasco stated that he saw the King as a truly tragic character instead of the

necessary linchpin in a political debate; the production supported his interpretation. Pasco was invariably the focal point of the blocking, and his vocal quality and slow, lush phrasing brought out the sympathetic side of Richard. Many speeches were truncated (over 450 lines were cut in all), but Pasco was left with ample opportunities to explore Richard's lyricism, especially later in the play. One reviewer, David Isaacs, commented that "Richard Pasco's peculiar haunting quality--that sort of genuine, tortured anguish. . .--makes Richard a more majestic and noble ex-king than he was a monarch" (The Coventry Evening Telegraph, 8 June 1971).

Ann Curtis had designed a simple pseudo-Elizabethan stage with a central upstage balcony flanked by two curving stairways down to a raked, oval platform resting on the stage floor proper. Beneath the balcony was a curtained inner stage, on the whole a scaled-down version of Moiseiwitsch's 1951 setting for the Quayle production. The austere set formed an unobtrusive backdrop for intensely emotional action, most of which occurred far downstage. The promptbook indicates a very demonstrative style: the whole opening scene with Bolingbroke and Mobray was constantly on the verge of blows, with chivalric decorum providing only the most tenuous calnative. Mobray spat, and both knights had to be restrained at almost every line. When he was banished, Mobray even went so far as to assault the King. The same sort of highly charged action continued throughout the play, with such scenes as Richard's farewell to the Queen being played to rend hearts and bring tears. The effect was, according to reviewers, quite moving,

due to Pasco's "heroic rendering of that most pathetic of monarchs" (Frank Marcus, The Sunday Telegraph, 20 June 1971).

When Barton transferred the traveling version to a full-fledged production on the main stage at Stratford in 1973, some of the staging and basic concepts were retained. In widening the scope, cast, and designs, Barton altered his ideas both consciously and unconsciously. According to a lecture/discussion in 1974, when the production was revived for a second season, Barton's first step was securing a commitment for a daring new concept in casting: Richard Pasco and Ian Richardson would alternate the roles of Richard and Bolingbroke on successive nights.¹ Other roles were also assumed by major actors; Tony Church was Gaunt, and Clement McCallin was Northumberland. There were four "leading ideas" in the production, most of which were specifically related to increasing attention to the role of Bolingbroke.

In the rehearsal period, Barton stressed as a unifying concept the medieval doctrine of the King's "Two Bodies" and the modern parallel of role-playing. Essentially, the idea was that the King was not necessarily the individual currently wearing the crown; the individual, then, could fail and not care for his subjects' welfare, while the office of King was infallible. Paradoxically, the individual king was subject to the law, but the King as annointed according to Divine Right was infallible and indeed personified the higher law. The crown, according to this distinction, and in fact the office it typified, were

¹Lecture/discussion in Stratford-upon-Avon, personal communication.

emblems of a kind of supreme role which continued indefinitely regardless of the performer who happened to be the instrument at any one time and place. "Richard" as God's deputy could be at odds with Richard Plantagenet the individual. This idea fit well with modern fascination with the concept that all humans in society "play roles," many roles, for different situations.

In addition to these two related sub-textual ideas, two design ideas also informed the Barton production: the image of the Sun King, and a verse-speaking technique almost the exact opposite of the "Stratford Style" Barton taught in the early 1960's. In 1973 Barton urged his cast to deliver the long speeches, especially Richard's, as operatic arias. These stylization and interpretive ideas replaced the simplicity and immediate domestic reality of the 1971 production with a more mannered, artificial mode.² According to Barton, Noel Coward's Private Lives was a major theatrical influence on his production in terms of formalized behavior, game-playing, and self-conscious relish for role-playing. However, Barton translated realism and verbal sophistication into his vision of Richard II with expressionistic devices and sheer theatricalism. The rituals of monarchy replaced the rituals of Noel Coward's drawing-room and boudoir.

Barton explained some of his re-editing and re-focusing by reference to a theory of "continuous copy," holding that Elizabethan scripts were always tentative and were always altered in order to suit

²Lecture/discussion in Stratford-upon-Avon, personal communication.

individual performers and locations, calling such alterations "adapting a play to set free its voice."³ He claimed to be operating in the manner the King's Men used in the Seventeenth Century, unabashedly changing the thrust of scenes if not always their text to suit Pasco and Richardson and the idea that Richard II was a play about the King's Two Bodies. In 1973 Baron's script alterations were not nearly as extensive as he and Hall had accomplished in adapting four plays into three; but Richard II was certainly reshaped according to his needs. The 1973 text, although not greatly changed from the fairly generous one used in the 1964 production, was played quite differently. And in the further development of his production for the 1974 revival at the Aldwych, Barton even increased the stylization. In the discussion which follows, the 1974 production, representing Barton's most completed realization, is considered, with differences from 1973 noted wherever significant.

The set in 1974 was constructed along the same ideas but with much more grandiose scale and mechanization. Both the set design and staging accentuated Richard's distance from his subjects and, consequently, enhanced the significance of his fall. Two huge, flanking, escalator-like structures replaced the 1971 curving wooden stairways (Figure 6.1). However, the escalators were not used as steps by the actors; Richard himself was the only person ever to sit upon the high bridge across the tops of the two structures. It was reached by

³Quoted in Judith Cook, Directors Theatre (London: George Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1974), p. 11.

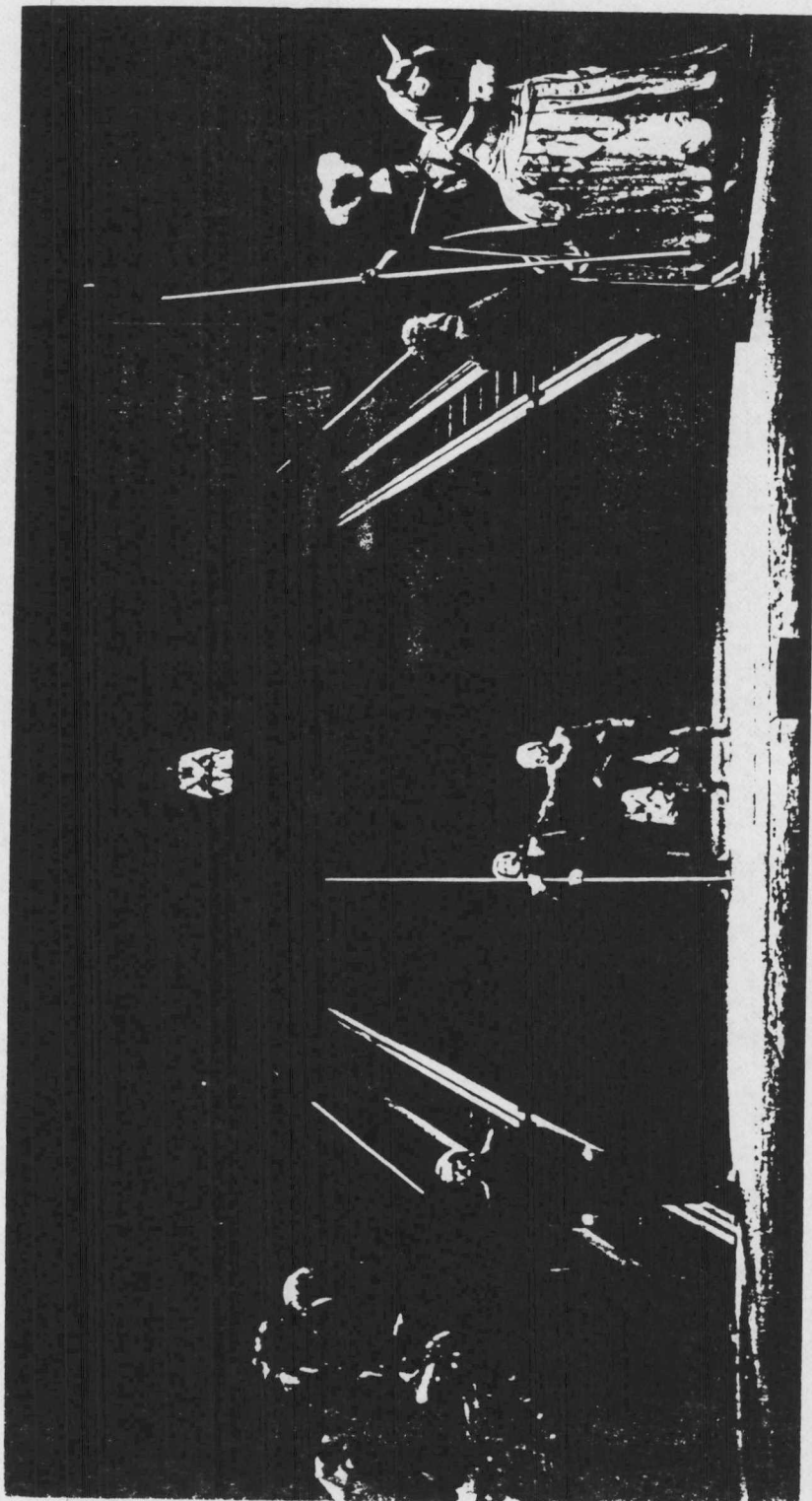


Figure 6.1. **RICHARD AS HIEROPHANT** (1973). The ceremonial Lists scene (I.iii.) made full use of symbolic staging, with Richard the distant, almost unidentifiable image of King, guiding the ritualistic chivalry on stage. Source: Photograph (Donald Cooper) S 1431, Shakespeare Centre Library.

hidden stairways, and it descended mechanically along the incline of the side structures, as in Richard's going to the "base court" in the Flint Castle scene (III.iii.). Richard's hierophantic position was established in the opening scene by his being carried on in a litter, which was also used in the Lists scene (I.iii.). The emblems of office were always present, as the throne had been in Quayle's 1951 cycle. Sun-King images were continuously worked into the spectacle. Blocking called for ritualistic, highly symmetrical arrangements and choreographed simultaneous movements. Richard's court was a temple designed for the worship of the King.

Additional devices and techniques increased the ritualistic stylization and formality of all but a few scenes. Hobby-horses, buskins, masks, and symbolic costumes encouraged an other-worldly atmosphere. The Duchess of Gloucester entered from the pit (a grave) with a skull (I.ii.) in order to make sepulchral demands for vengeance, not unlike the ghost in Hamlet. Northumberland wore a huge black costume in the Farewell scene (V.i.), presumably making him a bird of prey, although some irreverent critics made him out to be a buzzard instead of a griffin. Mercifully for Pasco and Richardson, Richard changed his 1971 hair shirt for an ascetic monk's robe in Pomfret (V.v.), after having previously been a dandy in all white, with plumes, upon his return from Ireland. The conspiring lords all wore black, and their threatening impression was greatly accentuated by massive hobby-horses and by the actors' wearing lofty buskins. One of the most memorable moments in the production was created when Richard, wearing a full-circle, brilliant gold cloak in the Flint Castle scene, raised his

arms to become a Sun, flashing and certainly looking like a King, as the nobles below admit. When he descended to join them, it was accomplished by mechanical means, as the elevated bridge slowly slid down to stage level, as if Richard were being divested of his office by omnipotent external forces.

The basic staging of Barton's Richard II was not markedly original, partaking of several previous productions which had relied upon the scholarly work of Tillyard. However, one additional thesis nearly overwhelmed the rest of the production, and this one was relatively new to the stage. The Divine Right theory of the "King's Two Bodies" became the artistic concept underlying Barton's nightly alternation of Pasco and Richard in the two leading roles. Ernst Kantorowicz's 1957 book The King's Two Bodies⁴ was the source, which Anne Barton summarized in the 1974 Aldwych souvenir program. Her husband John adroitly linked this scholarly re-discovery of late medieval dogma with modern concerns about personal identity and role-playing and with traditional ways of presenting Richard II as a tragically miscast King--an artist, a poet, who could not or would not fulfill the responsibilities of kingship.

Kantorowicz had drawn upon sixteenth- and seventeenth-century summaries of earlier sources to examine the legal concept that the King had two existences--one of which was immortal and infallible (pure Divine-Rightists would add "sacred"), and the other of which was

⁴Ernst Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

"natural," subject to human frailty and failings. A crowned king thus had two "bodies" which either could or could not be well united. It was this legal fiction which allowed Charles I to be tried and executed for treason against the "King": the body natural of Charles I had conspired against the body politic of King Charles I. Kantorowicz held that Shakespeare examined the "humanly tragic aspect" of the King's twin nature in the whole of the "Second Tetralogy" as defined by Tillyard, most specifically in Richard II. In applying Kantorowicz's idea to the four plays, Henry V is a "glorious history" because of Henry's ability to merge the two natures; Richard II, on the other hand, is tragic because of Richard's inability to do so. Henry IV is, ambiguously, the necessary transition, chafing under the role he found himself obliged to play--able to play the King but not able fully to merge his personal identity with the nation's.

Anne Barton's 1974 program notes acknowledged the same sources as Kantorowicz although not his book itself.⁵ She made the contemporizing equation of "bodies" with "roles"--in the full modern psychological sense. With quotations from the Elizabethan homilies which Lily B. Campbell had surveyed,⁶ Barton claimed that Richard II probed "uncomfortably deep into the nature of kingship itself, into the pain and near impossibility of asking any human being to lose his or her individuality within an impersonal, semi-divine role." The crown then

⁵ A copy of this program is in the collection of the Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon, 72.927 at 71.23.

⁶ Lily B. Campbell, Shakespeare's Histories: Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1947).

became a kind of enforced uniform or costume, and a reign was an inescapable command performance of a role with virtually no time offstage or out of character. Barton went on to give a reading of the play as a development of tragic tension between the person and the role of King, the human and the divine overlay. She concluded by analyzing the Deposition scene (IV.i.) in detail: it is the moment when Richard loses his semi-divine mask and Bolingbroke assumes it, becoming "silent, impersonal and remote," while Richard, for the first time without an assigned character, realizes he must now find his own character. Richard and Bolingbroke, according to this reading, have a transcendent bond. They are both victims of a system which requires that they immerse individuality in a second "body" or role forever. Richard gives up the Kingship without realizing what he is abdicating; he has no idea of what he will be without it but finds out all too quickly. Bolingbroke accepts the Kingship in a similar state of ignorance; he finds out quickly what it is he has taken on and regrets it the rest of his reign. Both men suffer personally tragic effects from their reversals and realizations.

This reading calls for a double tragedy, not the more typical tragic interpretation which sees the two in Richard's own conceit--two buckets moving in opposition, one rising and one falling. Barton's interpretation was more like a wheel of fortune, which called for a circular movement, with neither character necessarily better off after the exchange, but certainly more aware of what the other was like. Barton's application of the concepts to his 1973-1974 productions was perhaps the most thoroughgoing interpretive treatment of Richard II

since Nahum Tate's. In addition to enforcing the idea of role-exchange through actually having Pasco and Richardson exchange the roles, Barton manipulated the text and staging to underscore the symbolic referents and the balance he saw in the play's structure. The two kings, usually played as direct contrasts, would be played as having deeper similarities. Offsetting pairs of supporting characters and factions would provide a groundwork of balance and symmetry; although the two sides represented very different political philosophies, they shared the common motivation of a quest for power. Therefore, from the top of the cast to the bottom there was a tension between surface irreconcilable differences and underlying similarities. The similarities became more and more apparent to both the audience and the two kings as the play unfolded, but the opposite was true for the remainder of the dramatis personae. It was an intriguing theatrical proposition, and with the excellent interpretations of two popular actors in the lead roles, a box-office success.

Beyond the theatricalism of announcing the "roles for the evening," Barton presented role-playing as a thematic motif, implying throughout the play that the political disintegration on stage was due to a system of alliances in which allegiances were changed as easily as roles in plays, or even worse, capriciously. The full cast filed on stage at the beginning of a performance and in full view of the audience donned costumes which defined their positions in the two "parties," Richard's and Bolingbroke's. Bolingbroke and his group were in furs and black, Richard's court was in cream-colored finery with

gold appointments. Actors were thus "cast" into the roles which would determine their allegiance.

Barton also used the well-established symbol of the mirror to unify images of role and reality, person and shadowy alter-ego. In the Deposition scene (IV.i.), for example, Richard violently smashed the hand-mirror which Exton (not Aumerle, the traditional choice for this) brought to him; he clearly cut his hand on the fragments, so that his lines about the mirror were also addressed to his life-blood.

Bolingbroke left Richard with the fragments, took the mirror-frame, and "crowned" Richard with it, very slowly, so that the oval became in turn a halo, a crown, and a noose, while declaiming "The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd/ The shadow of your face" (IV.i.292-293).

Continuing this ritual "unkinging" and re-assignment of the role to himself, Bolingbroke had all of the attendant lords chant the lines in unison just as they later did "Long live King Henry" when he crowned himself with the true crown.

In his most forceful and daring manipulation of the play in order to realize theatrically the informing concept of the two kings' common tragedy, Barton had Bolingbroke assume the role of the Groom who comforts and befriends Richard in the Pomfret scene (V.v.). The "Groom" was fully cloaked and hooded so that neither Richard nor the audience could recognize him as Bolingbroke until they faced each other, kneeling. Then Richard looked through the mirror-frame (still around his neck from IV.i.) into the face of his nemesis. Bolingbroke uncovered his head and looked back in a long, "meaningful," mutual recognition (Figure 6.2). An extremely controversial change from the

original play, this action presumably sealed the theme of role-playing and the curse of the King's Two Bodies: Bolingbroke the individual, shedding for a moment all roles, could befriend the individual Richard, and Richard could sympathize with the individual Bolingbroke, who would be forever playing a role. There was little question about what Barton intended. Whether the substitution worked its intended effects upon the audience was doubtful.⁷

In the 1974 Aldwych staging, Barton added a dumb-show preceding the play which belabored the point further. As Stanley Wells recalled, the pantomime was played in front of a scarecrow decked out with royal robe, crown, orb, and sceptre:

Before the house lights dimmed there appeared a figure resembling Shakespeare, carrying a book resembling the First Folio. . . . He contemplated the robed scarecrow, opened the book, and signalled for the appearance of the actors. They filed in in two columns, one headed by Ian Richardson, the other by Richard Pasco. They all wore rehearsal costume. . . . Shakespeare bowed to the actor who was to play Richard at that performance, and gradually the actors took on their costumes and wigs. . . . The robing of Richard was a kind of coronation ritual; the court knelt to him, chanting words not in the text; "God save the King! Long Live the King! May the King live forever!" Richard himself faced the audience, echoed "May the King live forever!" and removed his mask.⁸

Richard's mask was a golden "Sun King" replica of a traditional tragic mask and was attached to the crown. When Richard removed the mask, it

⁷Sue Dommett, personal communication.

⁸Stanley Wells, "John Barton's Richard II, 1973-4," Furman Studies 23 (June 1976), 64-81. Wells' detailed account of the production is based in part upon the unpublished M. A. Thesis of his student James E. Stredder, "Richard II at Stratford, 1973: An Account of John Barton's Production for the Royal Shakespeare Company," University of Birmingham, 1973.



Figure 6.2. **MIRROR-IMAGE KINGS** (1973). Pasco as Richard and Richardson revealing himself as Bolingbroke in the Pomfret scene (V.vi.). Looking at each other through the mirror-frame from the Deposition scene (IV.i.), both men supposedly are shown as being essentially the same, having had to immerse their individual identities in the "body" of Kingship. Source: Photograph (Joe Cocks) S 1431, Shakespeare Centre Library.

was returned to the scarecrow, and Richard wore the crown. The dumb-show tried to connect symbols of theatrical impersonation, Kingship, Divine Right dogma, and sacrificial death. The crown was a symbol of a role, assigned arbitrarily (by "Shakespeare"), and the action of the play already written in the book (the "Folio"), as if Fate had already determined the outcome and the participants had no options.

The golden robe of office which Richard accepted in the dumb-show was another symbol of the Sun-King idea. It was shimmering metallic fabric, cut in a full circle with a hole in the center for Richard's head and pleated all around. In the Flint Castle scene (III.iii.) Richard appeared high above the stage, in the robe with his arms outstretched so that it seemed in the lights to form a blazing sun. Particularly for Pasco as Richard, it was a stunning final act of defiance. Thunder rumbled as he invoked "God omnipotent [who] is mustering in his clouds on our behalf/ Armies of pestilence" (III.iii.85-86). But at the lines "Down, down I come, like glistening Phaeton," Richard's show was over: the robe fell away and was offered to Bolingbroke, but he obviously did not even know how to put it on. Only at the close of the play, after Richard had been murdered, did Bolingbroke wear the robe. In his "coronation," another interpolation by Barton, the scarecrow reappeared with all the regalia, except that this time instead of a golden mask below the crown there was a skull. The apparent message had something to do with personal identity being sacrificed on the altar of the throne.

Emblems of his production concept of the tragedy of the King's Two Bodies were not the only devices in Barton's production. There was a chalice of "English earth" placed downstage center as a constant reminder of the stakes in this political struggle--the realm of England. Tony Church as John of Gaunt established the prop as "England" in his speeches about the "sceptred isle" (I.iv.), and the chalice was used in a very literal way when Richard returned from his Irish Wars (III.ii.). In the Garden scene (III.iv.) monkish gardeners planted rue in the chalice, and Carlisle flung some soil at Bolingbroke in the Deposition scene (IV.i.). The rue reappeared in the Farewell scene (V.i.) when the Queen gave some to Richard, who later toyed with it and the chalice in his Pomfret soliloquy (V.v.). As they stood over the chalice in V.vi., Bolingbroke expressed his concerns over the realm with York in new lines interpolated by Barton (after V.vi.4):

Dost thou perceive the body of our kingdom
How foul it is--what rank diseases grow
And with what danger, near the heart of it?

York replied:

It is yet a body distempered,
Which to his former strength may be restored
With good advice and little medicine.

Bolingbroke then returned to the original text (V.vi.5).

These and other very literal devices, such as an upstage actor impersonating the melting "King of Snow" which Richard refers to in V.i., were variously seen as "gimmicks" or effective realizations of the play's themes. Reviewers, however, were much more interested in the alternation of Pasco and Richardson as the two kings. Although the 1951 Quayle production had focused on "the rise of Lancaster," and had

made Henry IV into a central character, Barton was the first to elevate the role of Bolingbroke to that of a major character in Richard II. Far different from such versions as Edmund Kean's, which effectively made the play into a one-man show, Barton's thrived on the tension between the two leads. The altered text helped to position Bolingbroke as more of an equal. Following the trend since 1964, the Aumerle scenes were presented virtually intact, and some interpolated speeches from later plays found their way into Richard II. Henry IV's "O gentle sleep" soliloquy from Henry IV Part I became a part of Act V.

The character was further altered by changing the conspirators and Bolingbroke's relationship with them. Northumberland was unquestionably the mastermind, and he took on most of the ruthless, ambitious qualities usually ascribed to Bolingbroke. He read from a document handed to him by Northumberland, commanding the execution of Bushy and Green (III.i.). Northumberland handled most of the "dirty work" in the Deposition scene (IV.i.), with Bolingbroke hanging back and eventually relieving Northumberland of the articles of abdication, with which he was berating Richard. By the Farewell scene (V.i.), Northumberland was almost a Machiavellian Iago type, looming malevolently over the royal couple and unashamedly accepting responsibility for all his sins. Similarly, Exton's role was expanded and darkened, further erasing unsavory characteristics from Bolingbroke. Exton was substituted throughout the production for Bagot, so that regicide was simply the summation of a series of treacherous acts. The implication was that killing the King was perhaps as much Exton's idea as it was Bolingbroke's.

Richard and Bolingbroke, then, were a more "balanced" contrast. Two characters of equal importance and psychological detail, played by two strong actors with different styles, made for a better comparison. The two characters were quite different in almost every way but the fact of kingship and its effects upon identity; and the two actors were quite different in appearance and general appeal, even if their interpretations were very similar. Many reviewers praised the casting and commented upon the contrasts. They found in the Barton production not just an intriguing theatrical event but also a striking aesthetic experience. John Elson typified the best of these analyses:

The knowledge that the roles are being swapped is more important than a qualitative comparison between actors, which would be hard to make anyway since Richardson and Pasco have very different styles. Pasco usually conveys a tortured sincerity with his haunted eyes, deep voice and abrupt smile, while Richardson is an actor whose gestures and vocal mannerisms seem calculated, as if some inner self were assessing with aesthetic irony each crook of the forefinger. One speaks with the air of a missionary, the other with the air of a cardinal: two contrasting solutions to the problem of reconciling the self to the persona.

(The Listener, 19 April 1973)

The idea of the production itself, the theatrical event, then, underlined Barton's central concept of the King as persona, a role, and not the self. Knowing that on any given night either actor would become one of the kings gave the audience a double vision of the contrast between the characters and the similarity of their both being roles.

An examination of Barton's promptbook indicates that the contrasting personalities of the kings were consciously planned. Pasco's deeply personal, tragic Richard was more volatile. At Ely House (II.1), for example, Richard and Gaunt had a violent

confrontation. The business called for Pasco to seize the feeble Gaunt's walking stick, break it, and fling it into the wings; Richardson simply took it, displayed it to the rest of the company, and then dropped it. In the Welsh shore scene, blocking was different for the two Richards. Richardson was less military, blocked with weak, fidgeting crosses, even dropping his sword; line 84 in a performance by Richardson was the Quarto reading, "Awake, thou coward! Majesty thou sleepest," but Pasco followed the Folio, "Awake thou sluggard Majesty, thou sleepest." As a final example, in the Pomfret scene (V.v.) Pasco's personal dignity and tortured soul were at odds with Richardson's more intellectual, ironic role-playing. Pasco wore a cracked pot on his head as a mock crown and sat, dejected, immediately worn down by the huge rope that bound him; Richardson paced, struck attitudes, and then sat at line 11, never with the mock crown. These and other similar production details all contributed to the interpretations of Richard which were characterized well in the The Oxford Times. For those who saw Richardson, Richard II was a "finding of grace," for those who saw Pasco, it was a "tragic ennobling" (20 April 1973).

The contrast between the two actors was not as important to the production as a whole as it was to the box-office. Whichever Richard an audience preferred, the overall point of the swap was that all was a kind of grand ambiguity, a begged question: either the abdication was the offense to the King "political" or the usurpation was the sin. The story could either represent the tragedy of Bolingbroke, who sacrificed his identity in order to become king and end Richard's treason against

the King, or be the tragedy of Richard, whose immersion in the King persona denied him the humanity to govern and the loss of which stripped him of an identity. Neither individual was to blame for the cataclysms to come in the Wars of the Roses, but rather the system itself. The Times was not alone in considering the production as the tragedy of Bolingbroke (Charles Lewson, 12 April 1973).

Bolingbroke was a fully realized, developing character with whom the audience could identify, and not just a foil for Richard. In interviews with Hugh Herbert, Richardson and Pasco identified the long twelve-week rehearsal period as the discovery of Bolingbroke. According to Richardson, he was "a young man who returns from banishment a wiser, more politically minded courtier, who, through force of circumstance and his better will and judgment, has to accept the crown" (Guardian, 25 April 1973). Boyish clumsiness and brashness in the opening scenes gave way in stages to a kingly high seriousness. In I.i., he obediently retrieved Richard's sceptre and presented it to him, kneeling. In II.ii., Bolingbroke was the co-equal of Hotspur; stage business noted in the promptbook calling for boisterous jostling with each other. Upon his return from exile, he had learned to make a knee when the situation demanded it, coolly kneeling to York in order to gain his acquiescence. At Flint Castle (III.iii.) Bolingbroke was much more aware of public appearances, gracefully refusing to wear the gold cloak of office Richard had lost, even when one of his group pressed it on him. He calmly stopped the shark-like frenzy of gage-throwing which preceded the Deposition (IV.i.). Instead of following tradition and cutting some or all of the gages, Barton used the scene to make points

and to contrast with the solemnity of the abdication itself. Barton cut lines but no gage-throwing, with the effect of quickening the tempo and raising the emotional intensity. The lords were blocked to circle and even to struggle over which one was going to respond next, with ever-more vituperative language. Bolingbroke coolly stepped into the circle and calmed them with almost no effort at all. Clearly Bolingbroke would be preferable as king over any of these power-mad lords.

Barton departed from some of the analyses of the play which informed Quayle's 1951 and Hall's 1964 productions. The Dover Wilson-Tillyard-Palmer idea that the Lancastrians were Renaissance-style modern politicians as opposed to Plantagenet medieval Divine Right sanctions was submerged in the King's Two Bodies tragic idea. Both Richard and Bolingbroke live under the same political system; they are individuals and not representatives of two conflicting theories of kingship. Barton saw Kingship as a constant, with no variations or reversals in type. What Pasco, Richardson, and he presented was a double tragedy--in the recognition scene with the "Groom" (V.v.) the spiritual journey of both men was matched. The rich paradox of surface contrasts with underlying tragic similarities worked in the production particularly well because of the stature of the two actors portraying Bolingbroke and the characterization for him which was worked out so carefully from the first moment of the dumb-show preceding the play. Bolingbroke could achieve a kind of tragic stature because he was created fully enough for an audience to identify with him and watch him develop.

Not all critics followed the reasoning nor approved of the dramatic attempt to present it. Several found the production overwhelmed by gimmicks, "eccentric," "redundant," "too full of tricks," and an "uneasy mixture of stylization and literalness." In 1974, Jeremy Kingston was still uncomfortable with the basic conceptions undergirding the "Groom" scene (V.v.): he argued that Shakespeare's point was not that both Richard and Bolingbroke were actors, but that there was a psychological similarity (Punch, 25 September 1974). Barton probably would agree, pointing out simply that the devices were stylistic indications of the deeper psychology of the characters under the pressure of kingship. The mask of kingship forced them to become kin, and when Bolingbroke expresses his guilt over the murder, he mourns a brother.

Two major productions in the decade of the 1970's were not by the RSC. The first attempt at a "history play" by the new National Theatre at the Old Vic was Richard II, in 1972, launching the young Ronald Pickup's career with the star-maker role of Richard. The production was large and lush, with a cast of fifty-two, including walk-ons. Program notes by John Kenyon provided historical and ideological background, mentioned the notion of the "history cycle," and yet indicate no clear single production concept.⁹ Additional notes by Benny Green suggest a "tragic" reading based upon Richard's hubristic attempts to insist upon Divine Right and infallibility--probably the

⁹Copies of the program and scrapbook reviews provided by personal communication from the National Theatre Public Relations Department.

"correct" interpretation according to historians. The reviewers saw the production as competent but offering nothing beyond the interpretations of the 1950's by directors Richardson and Gielgud. The Aumerle scenes of Act V were included and played as comic relief. Although the intent seems to have been to unify the political underpinnings with tragic overtones, several reviewers did not consider Pickup's performance strong enough to be "tragic" (e.g., Irving Wardle, The Times, 30 March 1972; John Barber, The Daily Telegraph, 30 March 1972; Michael Billington, Guardian, 30 March 1972). Not unlike Barton's, the production was "stylized," using emblems of the political, thematic issues. The unit setting was a flight of steps and levels resembling a relief map of Britain; and a golden, sun-like light was constantly projected on Richard, giving him a divine, halo-like aura. As if that were not enough, a flaming sunburst dropped from the flies whenever Richard entered the stage.

In 1978 BBC Television produced Richard II as a part of its complete works of Shakespeare series, The Shakespeare Plays. Derek Jacobi was King Richard, Jon Finch Bolingbroke, and John Gielgud Gaunt. With its broadcast and subsequent world-wide distribution, this production may well prove to become the new standard, finally replacing Gielgud's and Evans' 1930 Richards.¹⁰ As in the 1972 National Theatre production, most of the political and ideological themes so central to Hall were translated into visual terms which were not allowed to obscure the tragedy of character. Richard was an intelligent, attractive tragically ill-equipped public figure (Figure 6.3). As was common with BBC classics, the settings were naturalistic period pieces,

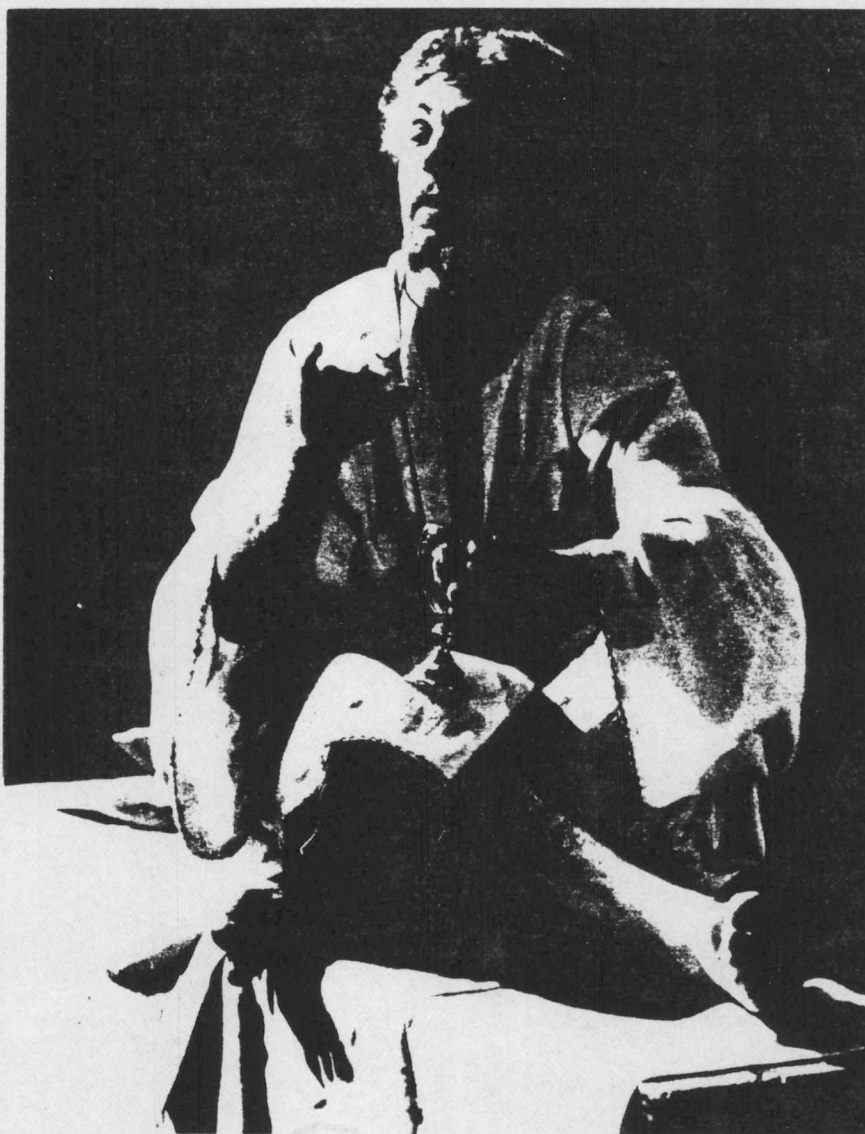


Figure 6.3. **RICHARD AT CLOSE RANGE** (BBC SHAKESPEARE, 1978). By virtue of being pictured in many close-ups, Derek Jacobi's Richard was overwhelmingly the central focus. The identification necessary for a "tragic" aesthetic was thereby assured; but Jacobi's intense, detailed performance, while very effective for television presentation, would be difficult to transfer to the stage.

fully three-dimensional and solid, not in the least symbolic of mythic or contemporary parallels. Verisimilitude was a goal, which caused the Lists scene (I.iii.), although filmed in a studio, to use live horses. The costumes were as historically accurate as scholarship could provide. The Aumerle scenes in Act V were performed almost intact and comically, with Dame Wendy Hiller giving a much more subtle reading of the Duchess than was the norm. Similarly, Mary Morris, an accomplished actress, gave added depth to the cameo role of the Duchess of Gloucester. John Gielgud was the John of Gaunt, and his interpretation of the play was influential in solidifying the aesthetic much in the pattern of his own Richard, forty years earlier--the beautiful, personal tragedy of an intellectual king who was out of his time.

Textual cuts by director David Giles accentuated the personal aspects of the tragedy as did many close-up shots of Richard during his long speeches. Jacobi's concept of the role was neat, consistent, and traditionally tragic:

There's an almost Chekhovian self-diagnosis all the time, play-acting. . . . At the same time all the emotions are absolutely real for him. . . . It's one of the easiest of the histories to follow. It really is the classic tragedy of the great man falling, of riches to rags. He starts as the great sun, the godlike king, and he ends as this poor prisoner in Pomfret Castle, all alone. A man who has had the world at his feet, a¹¹ court of sycophants, and ultimately played his cards all wrong.

¹⁰ The performance was recorded 12-17 April 1978. The text, with photographs and extensive introductory documents, was published by the BBC, 1978: Richard II: The BBC TV Shakespeare (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1978). The discussion which follows is based upon the introductory essays and the acting text of this publication.

¹¹ As quoted in Henry Fenwick, "The Production," in Richard II: The BBC TV Shakespeare, p. 26.

The producer Cedric Messina agreed that it was "the tragedy of one man. To a modern audience the history fades in significance beside the complex, neurotic quality of this strikingly modern figure."¹² In this production, the play is "historical," in that it is set in the past and grounded in a philosophy, theology, and psychology of a different time. But it is not an Elizabethan "history play" since it posed no contemporary ethical or political problem to the audience. Hall's or Barton's attempts at the RSC were productions which strove to restore to the play the political and ethical immediacy which an Elizabethan might have felt. The BBC film, on the other hand, was a documentary of a tragic historical incident appealing on a personal level.

The most recent major production of Richard II by the RSC was Terry Hands' 1980 nearly full-text version with Alan Howard as Richard. Hands had for several years been working his way through the history plays one by one, purposely avoiding the presentation of cycles. Richard II and Richard III in 1980 completed his survey of the canon. The structure of Hands' production was more traditional and much less thesis-ridden than Barton's 1973-1974. Bolingbroke was clearly back in the supporting cast, as a foil for Richard. Richard and his court were a supercilious, haughty lot, and Bolingbroke was nearly a puppet of self-interested power-mongers. Although the promptbook and production records were not available for review, press notices and memorial reconstructions allow one to obtain a reasonable idea of what the show was really like.

¹² As quoted in Fenwick, pp. 24-25.

Taking a cue from Tillyard and later scholars, Hands apparently sought not to contrast two individuals, or even two political ideologies. The play was not a personal tragedy either. Instead, the production presented in juxtaposition two irreconcilable and inevitably hostile and incompatible worlds, complete with sets of values entirely alien to each other. The audience knew at once that a world of symbol, elegance, and ritual was on the other side of the footlights. As the play began, a row of five elaborately costumed effigy-like figures were revealed, with a huge, stained-glass-like wall of their images behind them. These giant structures later were lowered to become a raked stage floor for deep scenes, allowing, for example, the walls of Pomfret's dungeon to become the floor of Westminster Hall, in full view of the audience (V.v.-V.vi.).

The human counterparts of this Gothic row were all just as distant and petrified as the glass (Figure 6.4). Richard maintained a serene, superior attitude as he conducted the interview with Mobray and Bolingbroke (I.i.), never once altering his focus from point-blank downstage, and never moved enough to cause a wrinkle in his golden gown. His absolute physical and vocal control was in direct contrast to their bombast; and he was almost amused that they refused to be sensible and withdraw their suits. Throughout the play Richard continued in this mold--patronizing, caustic, sarcastic, rather bemused in his contempt for his opponents. His was a world of ritual and utter division between the ruler and the ruled: Richard was unassailable, omniscient if not omnipotent, and his superiority was symbolized in the ritual attitudes and movements (or lack thereof). His manner was

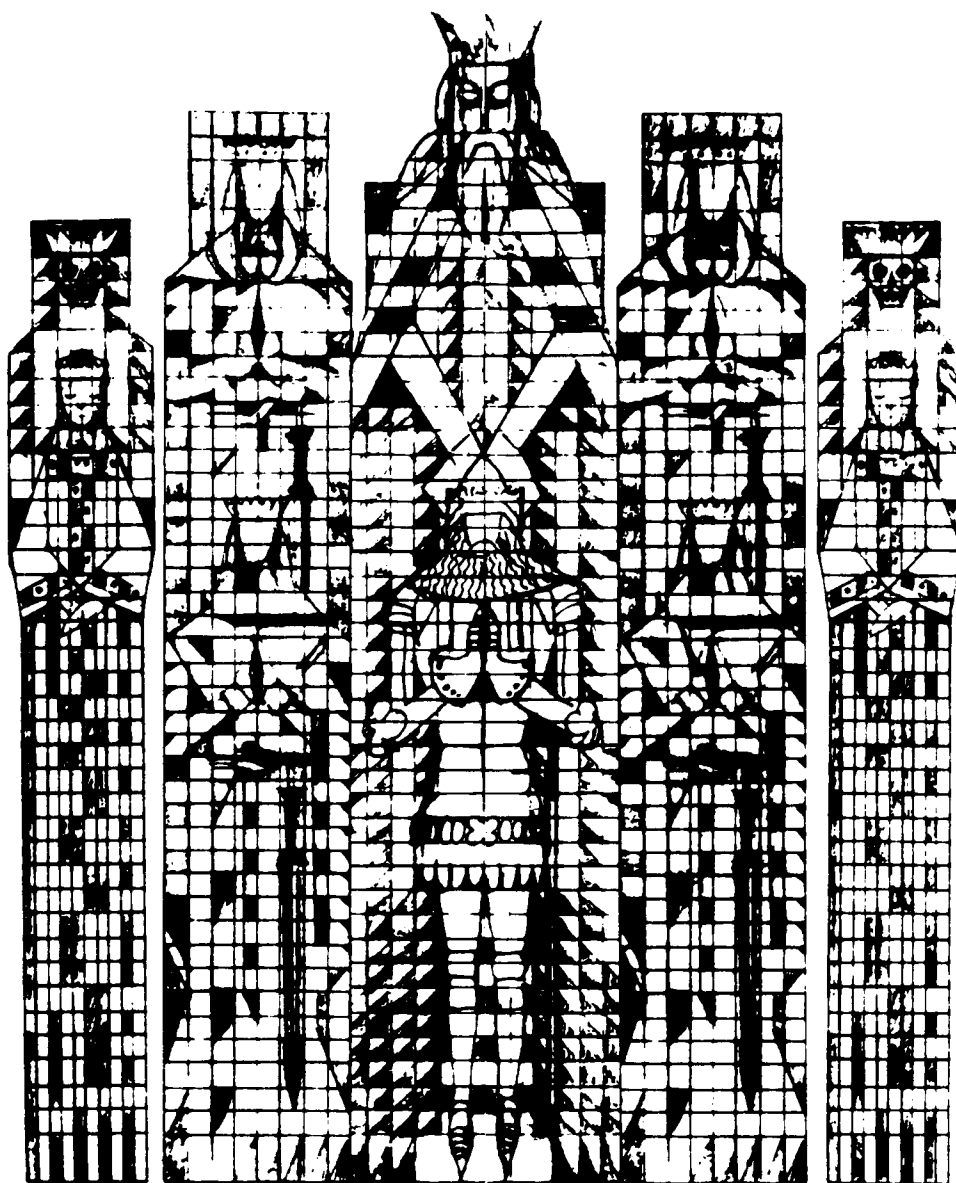


Figure 6.4. **THE COURT AS EMBLEM** (1981). Huge stained-glass-like back wall which was raised and lowered as scenes shifted behind the elaborately-costumed entities of the court, petrified artifice and artifacts of a medieval world no longer capable of inspiring emotional allegiance. Source: Stage set conceptions by Farrah as reproduced in the Souvenir Program, Shakespeare Centre Library.

suggestive of an Eastern potentate, as sacred as a pharaoh and as sophisticated as a Byzantine emperor.

The other world, that one which was to come with Bolingbroke's ascension to the throne, was fully manifested in the closing scenes. It was a plebian world of intrigues in which the ruler participated. Bolingbroke intentionally ordered Exton to murder Richard. The scenes were rearranged so that Exton and Richard's body remained on stage after the murder (V.v.) and Bolingbroke came to them there, ensuring that his orders had been carried out. Then, the dungeon, in the middle of the scene (V.vi.) became Westminster Hall where in public Bolingbroke condemned Exton and hypocritically expressed his snickering regrets. The production had no difficulty communicating its ideas of worlds replacing one another with such clear changes. As Michael Billington phrased it, Richard's world--opulent, secure, and glittering, "a burnished copper world where the king and his lords stand out like cathedral effigies"--gave way to "a society of darkness, gloom, flickering torches, and of men signing documents in small back rooms" (Guardian, 11 May 1980).

There was much praise for individual performances, including a comic York (Tony Church). And there was unfavorable comment on excessive "operatic" posturing and over-splendid costuming. The souvenir program was nearly the document of "Director's Theatre" that Hall's and Barton's had been, but it unmistakably guided an audience away from a personally tragic interpretation and from such clearly political ideas that had been the backbone of productions of the play since 1951. The concepts for Hands' view were more philosophical and

sociological; the program contained excerpts from the usual scholarly sources, but it also quoted such figures as Eugene Ionesco:

When the fallen Richard II is a prisoner in his cell, abandoned and alone, it is not Richard I see there, but all the fallen kings of this world; and not only all the fallen kings, but also our beliefs and values, our unsanctified, corrupt and worn-out truths, the crumbling of civilizations, the march of destiny. When Richard II dies, it is really the death of all I hold most dear that I am watching: it is I who die with Richard II. (1958)

Ionesco's avenue to personal identification with Richard was not the usual tragic identification; one would normally recognize and sympathize with personal characteristics, which was difficult in the case of Howard's supercilious Richard. Instead Ionesco, and perhaps Hands' audience, identified with what Richard represents, on a philosophical level. Richard's tragedy, then, became a symbolic one, not a tragedy of character. The production posed the problem of what to do at a fin de siècle, when what had once been meaningful and secure--a King, for example--had lost its effective, emotive reality and existed only on an intellectual plane, as a curiosity.

Barton and Hands, along with their respective actors and production personnel, dealt with inherited traditions of Richard II as a political problem play as well as a tragedy. Both attempted to deal with the double movement of the play's structure--Richard's decline and Bolingbroke's rise--but while Barton approached the script with an analytical microscope, Hands attempted an expansion. Barton examined two identities, Hands two worlds. In Barton's view, the crown was a personal sacrifice to a kind of role-assigning Fate which is beyond our control; in Hands' the crown was a symbol of civilization which, even when worn by Bolingbroke, belonged to Richard and his era. Bolingbroke

could be master over a pack of politicians, but Richard was the last genuine King, a reminder of a civilization tragically lost.

CONCLUSION

A RICHARD II PRODUCTION DESIDERATA

The stage treatments which Richard II has received over the centuries, when added to the scholarly and analytical work done on its text, lead to a fuller understanding of the play's intellectual content and theatrical power. This profound political and emotional piece is not a relic or an antiquity, but rather a viable, indeed vibrant and vital aesthetic experience--as effective and pertinent to the late Twentieth Century as to any time previous. The productions of the play since its composition have dealt with some of the problems the play poses in divergent ways and have uncovered layers of meaning without necessarily making earlier interpretations untenable.

Many if not most of the difficulties in staging Richard II have been interpretive ones, and most turn upon the analysis of the nature of the aesthetic impact of the whole. An explicit "Production Concept" defines the intended aesthetic effect, and even an implicit one allows a certain degree of focus. As production became increasingly the artistic province of the director instead of the leading player, production concepts instead of making "points" with the audience have become a better way of characterizing a revival of the play than the name of the leading actor. Only in isolated instances in the twentieth century history of Richard II have the names of performers eclipsed those of the directors--John Gielgud, and to a lesser extent Maurice Evans. Simultaneously, and perhaps caused by the same forces of rediscovery of Shakespeare for everyone, over the century the theatre

has come to depend more and more on academic or literary criticism to provide the sophisticated interpretive theses and demonstrations demanded of fuller-text productions. This dependence has grown sharply from the days of Pater's long-delayed comments (1889) based upon Charles Kean's 1857 production, through Walter Hudd's and Anthony Quayle's reference to John Dover Wilson and E. M. W. Tillyard, culminating in John Barton's and Peter Hall's extremely thesis-ridden productions, and continuing in Andrew Gurr's 1984 Introduction to the New Cambridge Richard II, which devotes three pages to a discussion of Barton's 1974 production.¹ What was once an occasional cross reference in the days of William Hazlitt and the great actor-manager Kean, has become a near symbiosis in the period of Stanley Wells and John Russell Brown, and innovative directors like Peter Brook and Trevor Nunn. The interdependence is deep and wide. The trend has been from the scholars' being impressed with a single performance (Hazlitt-Kean, Montague-Benson), through a period when the scholars were making their theatrical cousins do their homework (Wilson-Quayle, Leavis-Hall), to a time when the scholars are displaying a new appreciation and giving credence to Shakespeare as a man of the theatre (Barton-Gurr).

Not all Shakespearean criticism has been of equal value in the interchange. In many cases the theatrical world has simply not had the need for all of the niceties of academic scholarship. Only such criticism as has led to a consistent overall "reading" of a play

¹Andrew Gurr, ed., King Richard II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 48-50.

seems to have been of much influence. Imagistic studies, analyses of single motifs, themes, or "poetic" qualities have seldom helped performers, aside from clarification of an obscure passage or two--invaluable to modern actors who stress meaning over cadence, but not so crucial to earlier operatic voices of the theatre to whom music took precedence.² The goals of all scholars and all performers simply are not the same. A survey of the specific "difficulties" which scholars allege Richard II presents as a text, along with the solutions made on the stage, reveals how often common sense and theatrical pragmatism have made easy those issues which have troubled scholars, thus indicating once again the degree to which Shakespeare's texts are those of a man of the theatre, and not of the university.

As audiences have come to be further away from Shakespeare's own time and its preoccupations, the philosophical and political underpinnings of the play have become esoteric instead of commonly-known recent history. The discussions between characters and the positions they hold are no longer fertile with current topical allusions. For audiences in the Benson and Bridges-Adams days of the Stratford Festivals, who were steeped in Shakespeariana and English history,

²The actual copies of the script used in the theatre underwent a change in the 1960's. Until that point, sheer availability and convenience was the rule dictating which edition was used. The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre from Bridges-Adams through Quayle used the Temple Shakespeare edition of Richard II (London: J. M. Dent and Co., 1905). It was of a size for hand-held use, inexpensive, and widely available. However, it had no explanatory notes and only a few words glossed. With Peter Hall, paperback versions of more scholarly editions with full notes and comments or especially prepared scripts in typescript, based upon scholarly editions, became the rule.

as well as the small London audience for "legitimate theatre" through the Age of Garrick, the problem was relatively small. Later productions, notably with Gielgud and Evans as Richard, solved the problem by subordinating the play's historical and political content to the personal grief and passion of the central figure, making the play a kind of first draft of Hamlet. Other productions, even those as fundamentally different as Beerbohm Tree's and Hall's, attempted to supplement the audience's knowledge at the last moment through extensive program notes containing both historical background and commentary. Finally, the theatre has attempted to solve some of the difficulty through scenic means instead of verbal instruction. Charles Kean's documentary production with its interpolated "Historical Episode" of Richard's ignominious entry into London, the National Theatre's 1972 production on a stage arranged like a relief map of Britain with a giant sunburst descending from the flies every time the "sun-king" Richard was onstage, and Terry Hands' RSC production's totemic medievalism with stained-glass representations of the King's court and stiff, nearly immobilizing costumes--all tried in very different styles to accomplish similar ends of giving their audiences a flavor of the significant beliefs of Shakespeare's audience. The success of the play, unquestionably, depends in large part upon the audience's realizing why some actions and statements are of cosmic importance instead of simple dirty politics, cold-war style.

The problem of how to communicate the richness of the play's political conflicts on a more specific level is not easy. It seems that without the tiresome program notes or pommeling visual gimmickry a

modern audience will never overcome the difficulty with any depth of understanding and come to an Elizabethan frame of reference. Simply getting across the details about the "Woodstock" antecedent action is unwieldy; productions have had limited success if the opening scene can be arranged so that it is clear that Mobray was Richard's surrogate in the affair and if the Duchess of Gloucester is played by a very skillful actress who can convey a great deal in her few words in I.ii. In general, however, a modern producer must be content to accept the fact that his audience will not ever begin to approach Shakespeare's in their knowledge and belief in such things as Divine-Right monarchy--or any kind of monarchy, for that matter. A modern production can achieve some of the same effects without the specific characteristics of sixteenth-century minds, however. Following the lead of Peter Hall's 1964 production, modern parallels to Shakespeare's political struggles--military juntas struggling to gain "legitimacy," for example--can go farther in aesthetic terms than gimmicky staging.

Related to this difficulty of establishing the political and historical background of Richard II is a concern which has become more serious in the twentieth century than it was in early productions, largely by virtue of the interdependence of scholars and the "testing" ground of the theatre. Exploring the textual ambiguity of Bolingbroke's motives has occupied both the stage and academe much more since Dover Wilson's 1939 edition of the play, with an introduction which paid more attention to the character than he had been accorded previously. According to Dover Wilson's view, Bolingbroke more or less stumbles into a vacuum created by Richard's collapse. In this reading,

the real protagonist is still Richard, whose de facto abdication of responsibilities forces the action of Bolingbroke and the conspirators; then, when Richard realizes what he is losing, it is too late to regain his sanction, even if it were possible, given his character weaknesses. The last step in this sequence is then to depict Bolingbroke as an unquestioned usurper, solidifying audience sympathy for the failed Richard. Bolingbroke, once sucked into the vacuum, is too much of an opportunist to retract gracefully. Most productions before Quayle's 1951 series, where Dover Wilson and Tillyard, who also followed the "opportunist" interpretation, first had their influence felt on the stage, had depicted Bolingbroke as a self-conscious usurper, the easiest and most direct interpretation and the one guaranteed to stimulate the most immediate sympathy for Richard. The new attention from the scholarly community on the ambiguity of Bolingbroke's motives, however, rendered that reading too simple and unimaginative for audiences who expected full psychological complexity from all Shakespearean characters.³

Without such significant directoral manipulation of text or purposeful playing against type as Barton in 1973-1974 and Quayle in 1951 effected, there can be little doubt about how Bolingbroke is seen by most audiences. Richard suspects a desire for his throne from the first when he remarks, "How high a pitch his resolution soars"

³See, for example, Irving Ribner, "Bolingbroke, a True Machiavellian," MLQ 9 (June 1948), 177-84; Brents Stirling, "Bolingbroke's Decision," Shakespeare Quarterly 2 (January 1951), 27-34.

(I.i.109), and when he enviously tells his courtiers about his cousin's solicitous behavior to the commons (I.iv.). Although Bolingbroke never mentions the "throne," and although it is Richard who verbally capitulates unsolicited in III.ii., how could an audience, especially one which already knows its history, interpret Bolingbroke's arrival with forces much earlier (II.i.) as anything less than clear and present treason? And his ordering the deaths of Bushy and Green (III.i.) on trumped-up charges and without trial is nothing short of de facto usurpation of the King's prerogative. The Duke of York sees no ambiguity and is not deceived by Bolingbroke's protestations; he sees the size of the forces Bolingbroke leads, and at his nephew's obeisance to him coolly says what he thinks (II.iii.). The visual impact of these scenes should not be underestimated by the scholar. Bolingbroke in command of an armed force is not very ambiguous. Some productions, such as Benson's or Hudd's, instead of trying to gloss over the evidence of Bolingbroke's ambitions, made the military aura even more pronounced through the use of martial music, armed extras, and all the trappings of war. None of the nobles is mystified about what Bolingbroke's intentions are; and to suggest that an audience seeing the full text could think it ambiguous would be theatrical folly. Unless Bolingbroke is played as an ignorant booby manipulated by, say, Northumberland (Hands' 1980 interpretation), he must also be aware of the political implications of his acts. If the text is presented in a straightforward manner, Bolingbroke's position as a conscious usurper will be painfully obvious, scholars notwithstanding.

Another problematic character on stage has been the Duke of York. York has not benefitted from as much critical attention, and the difficult decision on how to interpret his character and position in the structure of Richard II has typically been solved through purely theatrical means. York has the third largest number of lines in the play and, depending on staging, could actually be on stage for more time than Bolingbroke. Yet his character is so difficult a combination of comic and serious, of lyrical and stoic, that few productions have even attempted to solve the paradoxes. He is either played serious or comic, with the other side neatly (and sometimes not so neatly) deleted from the script. He has been played for broad comic relief (Tate, Benson, Bridges-Adams) and for "black" comedy (Hands). Certainly, a reading of his character as a fussy, confused, Polonius-like character (Hall, Barton) can be accomplished with a minimum of line cuts.

Yet to play him as a bumbler tends to obscure the politically important lines he speaks and, more importantly, his position in the political spectrum of the play. He is an advisor, a regent, and a traitor to Richard, and finally an extreme loyalist to Henry IV. Much more appropriate to the complexity of this character, it seems, was David Giles' production for the BBC Series in 1978--the "linchpin" of the play, almost a choric character.⁴ York is able to change personal loyalties without sacrificing his belief in monarchy itself.

⁴As quoted in Henry Fenwick, Introduction to Richard II (London: BBC, 1978), p. 24.

He recognizes that something has been lost in the transition from Richard II to Henry IV, significantly still calling the new king "Bolingbroke" instead of "King Henry," but, like the audience, he would be hard pressed to put a label on the exact sanction which has somehow disappeared from the throne. The fact that it is not easily labelled may testify to its illusive mystical power, something that an audience, without a good interpretation of York, might find only in the program notes. Coleridge had identified some of York's effect in the structure of the play: York's inner struggle between conscience and pragmatism is really in microcosm the struggle of the realm, the conflict of Richard's Godly sanction and the lord's economic and political worldliness.⁵ John Palmer later offered additional insight for an interpretation of York as a serious, central character. York is "a contrast in temperament with Richard and in ability with Bolingbroke." Further, his acceptance of the usurpation is the supreme example of the pragmatic English political mentality--trying to make the best of a hopelessly confused situation.⁶

It seems only appropriate to interpret York as a major character, the only living contact with the preceding age, a man "beyond his depth," whose weakness can be pathetically revealing. Even if the language is clumsy and even if York himself is a bit of a dolt, his speech of confrontation when Bolingbroke arrives in Gloucestershire at

⁵ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Shakespearean Criticism, ed Thomas Middleton Raysor, 2nd ed. (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1960), I, 138.

⁶ John Palmer, Political Characters of Shakespeare (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1945), p. 142.

the head of the rebellious army can be a forceful scene between the two generations, and can enliven the two word-views they represent:

Tut, tut! Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle.
I am no traitor's uncle, and that word grace
In an ungracious mouth is but profane.
(II.iii.86-88)

Later, when Bolingbroke uses the legalistic double-talk of being "Hereford" when he was banished but now a different person, "Lancaster," simply laying claim to his inheritance, York realizes in a flash that there is no hope for a military victory over such a well-planned claimant:

Well, well. I see the issue of these arms.
I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,
Because my power is weak and all ill-felt.
(II.iii.151-153)

What could a great actor and director build from that "ill-felt"?

The changes in York and the dilemmas he suffers, especially compared with his feeling of helplessness in the face of them, so mirror the changes in the political climate of the realm, as he serves as foil for both Bolingbroke and Richard, that he should be given much more attention in productions and in the study than has been true heretofore. As a foil to Richard's eloquence and intellect as well as to Bolingbroke's pragmatism and public relations skill, York could even enhance these two characters. If they were not presented as such polar opposites, all three in the structure, perhaps even expanded to four with Northumberland, could present a matrix of personality and politics with infinite variety.

Few productions, even those which professed to accentuate the political themes of the play, have given sufficient attention to York.

One of the most obvious reasons has been the frequent excision of two of his most important scenes, those dealing with the "Aumerle Conspiracy." These scenes (V.ii.-iii.), which complete the picture of the change in dynasty and loyalties, have been omitted from performance more often than they have been played. Usually cut for time considerations or because of their awkward comedy, or even because of their stylistic inferiority--Dover Wilson, Tillyard, and Barton labelled them textually corrupt, incompletely revised remnants of an earlier, immature play--these scenes should instead be seen as an opportunity to give much greater dimension to both York and King Henry.

In addition to allowing an audience to see the full reversal of York's political sympathies and to witness the new king upon his throne having to deal with the realities of government and a rebellion of his own,⁷ these two scenes complete larger thematic developments. York's struggle with his boots, the Duchess's groveling overstatement of her case, York's suggestion that Bolingbroke avoid the issue by "pardoning" Aumerle in French--certainly all of these moments and more besides can be played as farce. It has been rare when they have not been. However, the agonizing simplicity of the situation and the visual impact of the three Yorks kneeling to Bolingbroke, all at cross purposes, should not be thrown exclusively to the comic muse. In this picture, the strife of the civil war that will come is presented in miniature: a family squabble with political ramifications, a typically

⁷ See above, Chapter I, discussion on the effects on the character of Bolingbroke of cutting the "Aumerle scenes."

Shakespearean mirroring of great national or cosmic issues at the personal level. Bolingbroke's acceptance of a mother's plea for mercy over the letter of the law sets the pattern for his attempts to heal the realm without reference to traditional Divine-Right sanction. He later spares Carlisle from the same motive of establishing a "legitimacy" based on moral worth instead of blood ties and harsh application of the letter of the law. Finally, even York's comic ploy of having Bolingbroke say "pardonne moy," a non-binding pardon since it is French, is significant. It echoes the kind of legalistic hair-splitting Bolingbroke used in the Gloucestershire wilds when he claimed to be "Lancaster," and not "Hereford." And it also suggests that York has quickly learned how the new administration will conduct its affairs--grounds of tenuous but "legal" right.

However important York and Bolingbroke and the Aumerle scenes are to the structure of the play, the central focus must always be the character of Richard. Stage representation of him has been as problematical as anything else in the play. The real difficulty has been not so much to interpret and analyze his character, but rather to evaluate it and to lead an audience to share the evaluation. The complexity of the character encourages many different readings, many of which will "work" with different performers, different talents, different production concepts, ranging from Maurice Evans' young intellectual artist to Richard Pasco's noble martyr, from John Gielgud's elegant verse and attitudinizing to David Warner's prosaic shuffle. Diversity is the life of the role, but one theatrical decision is evitable: how the audience should feel towards him--no

sympathy, increasing sympathy, decreasing sympathy; identification; disgust; admiration--all of these and more have been attempted. Samuel Johnson had a cogent baseline comment on the aesthetic structure:

It seems to be the design of the plot to raise Richard to esteem in his fall, and consequently to interest the reader in his favor. He gives him only passive fortitude, the virtue of a confessor rather than of a king. In his prosperity we saw him imperious and oppressive, but in his distress he is wise, patient, and pious.⁸

Most productions and most literary critics have agreed in general terms with this pattern. However, further definition of Johnson's vague "interest the reader" has led to different relationships between audiences and stage Richards. Some (Tate, Charles Kean, Beerbohm Tree) have made Richard pathetic, that is, a victim of undeserved sorrow; this tends to cripple the play's ability to raise Richard in esteem, and may result in an audience response of "too bad." Further, to make Richard an unwitting victim of Fate or to present a societal mind-set such as the "King's Two Bodies" (Barton) hobbles the play in achieving what Shakespeare's own title calls for: The Tragedy of King Richard II. If Richard is not in part responsible for his own fall, he becomes a historical curiosity--perhaps an effective "mirror"--but not an object of audience identification and agent of catharsis. Another attempt to raise Richard in esteem, to make him heroic, as Edmund Kean did, is even more detrimental to Shakespeare's tragic design.

While some modern productions did not go as far as Kean's, they have done a similar disservice. In trying to force Richard into some

⁸Samuel Johnson, Johnson on Shakespeare, ed. Arthur Sherbo (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 440.

sort of alleged historical doctrine, directors have stripped away too much of the tragic aesthetic from the play. When Bolingbroke is defined as the "hero" of a tetralogy of which Richard II is prologue (Quayle), it is very difficult to move an audience until the whole thing is complete, three performances away. By that time we have identified with at least one other king. The audience can admire the whole panorama, but the tragedy is weakened if not entirely gone. Hall's series similarly sacrificed the tragic to other more epic concerns; the series worked well as a movie or television series might have done, but the personal identification with the hero, which constitutes an individual spectator's line of transcendence to the universals, was necessarily interrupted, if not disconnected.

The truly great Richards--Benson, Gielgud, Evans, and perhaps Jacobi--have not been sacrificed to other concerns within the production. Their performances did not question the centrality of Richard and the tragic framework. It could perhaps be argued that these Richards were effective because of their stature as actors, but certainly other great actors who have undertaken Richard did not do as well--Edmund Kean, Edwin Booth, and Paul Scofield were all undeniably excellent actors and yet posted undistinguished interpretations of the role. Directors and performers who have trusted Shakespeare and followed his suggestion in the title of his play--no other of Shakespeare's "history" plays is called a "tragedy"--have been the most effective interpreters. For all its similarities to other histories, Richard II is centered on a single character and his personal tragedy in a way comparable only to Richard III among the histories, which is

different for a whole set of reasons. The only difficulty then rests in how to accomplish Johnson's requisite "esteem" for Richard, without at the same time relieving him of responsibility for his own fall or trivializing the personal in the face of the sweep of history.

Benson's solution, at least as C. E. Montague saw it, was to make Richard an artist who was unattractive in command but fascinatingly attractive in self-analysis of failure. Many others successfully developed this lead, adding their own individual touches. Richard was attractive in his intellectual subtlety and quick, theorizing mind. Gielgud and Evans added their physical attractiveness, fluid and elegant movement, and superb verse-speaking abilities to the intelligent artist reading. They also deepened the interpretation by delving into Richard's self-awareness, self-examination, and self-dramatizing abilities. In efforts to make the transition from Richard's initial appearance as an outspoken prig to Johnson's "wise, patient, and pious" fallen king, many ways of directing the blame from Richard have been devised: he is the victim of his own court of possibly homosexual sycophants; his Divine-Right theories are anachronistic; his character is "unsuited to kingship." However, for a production to work well, Richard's fall must be simple and unmitigatedly caused by his own weakness. Coleridge offered as succinct a description of Shakespeare's art and the way it works in this case as has anyone since:

Shakespeare has represented this character in a very peculiar manner. He has not made him amiable with counterbalancing faults; but has openly and broadly drawn these faults without reserve, relying on Richard's disproportionate sufferings and gradually emergent good qualities for our sympathy; and this was possible,

because his faults are not positive vices, but spring entirely from defect of character.⁹

Coleridge goes on to identify this defect as an "intellectual feminineness," but regardless of the exact label for it, the aesthetic problem requires the tragic movement which shifts an audience's sympathies.

Post-World War II scholarship has shifted the emphasis from Coleridgean psychological examination to a more holistic approach.¹⁰ Yet for the play to realize its full potential in the theatre, the tragic elements cannot be allowed to fail. They must not be sacrificed to a discussion of the political "problem" that the play may be seen to pose. The inefficient legitimate monarch as opposed to the pragmatically effective usurper is portrayed quite rightly as the central conflict of the play; but this must not overshadow the tragic aesthetic. Richard II is the tragic enactment and resolution of the "problem" in a particular historical circumstance. Without the tragedy the play can become a simple documentary with no "point." It becomes an antiquarian spectacle or a frustrating ambiguity.

The difficulties the play poses in terms of style, both verbal and visual, have proved relatively simple over the centuries. Quick-moving, smoothly-flowing scenes are an indispensable asset, and

⁹Coleridge, I, 135.

¹⁰See, for example, Michael Quinn, "The King is not Himself: The Personal Tragedy of Richard II," Studies in Philology 56 (1959), 169-186; Robert Ornstein, A Kingdom for a Stage: The Achievement of Shakespeare's History Plays (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

with the modern theatre's technical capabilities, even the most "visually operatic" staging can be accommodated within tight speed and continuity constraints. The ornate lyricism and heavy use of rhyme has been revealed in and conversely nearly leveled--both extremes without undue violence to the overall effect. The absolute requisite is the interweaving of political themes with personal tragedy, which after all is one of the prime ingredients of plays like Lear, Hamlet, Coriolanus, Macbeth, and Antony and Cleopatra about which there is no dispute concerning the genre. That an individual's choices have meaning for the cosmos is at the heart of the pity and fear which drive the tragic experience, even as it is the center of the English History Play as Shakespeare created it.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

GENERAL DIRECTORS OF STRATFORD-UPON-AVON FESTIVALS (1879-1960)

AND ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY (1960-1980)

APPENDIX A

GENERAL DIRECTORS OF STRATFORD-UPON-AVON FESTIVALS (1879-1960)

AND ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY (1960-1980)

1879-1880	Barry Sullivan
1881-1882	Edward Compton
1883	Elliot Galer
1884-1885	Charles Bernard
1886-1888	F. R. Benson
1889-1890	Osmond Tearle
1891-1894	F. R. Benson
1895	Ben Greet
1896-1916	F. R. Benson (1914, Spring: Patrick Kirwan; 1916, Summer: Lilian Baylis)
1919-1934	William Bridges-Adams (1919, Spring: F. R. Benson)
1935-1942	Ben Iden Payne
1943	Milton Rosmer
1944-1945	Robert Atkins
1946-1948	Barry Jackson
1949-1956	Anthony Quayle
1957-1959	Glen Byam Shaw
1960-1967	Peter Hall
1968-	Trevor Nunn

APPENDIX B

**KEY TO PRIMARY MATERIALS CONSULTED
AND ABBREVIATIONS USED**

APPENDIX B

KEY TO PRIMARY MATERIALS CONSULTED

AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

(1) Acting Texts/Promptbooks

For early productions, acting texts were often published by actor-managers and/or the adapter of the text. Cornmarket Press, London, has issued a relatively large number of these versions in photographic facsimile reprints in the 1970's. Others may be found in their original form as souvenirs of productions.

A "promptbook" is a text of the play marked for use in the playhouse, indicating textual changes and necessary staging cues such as entrances, exits, and "stage business" and blocking; a "preparation copy" may or may not reflect actual practice in the playhouse, since it is a planning document, used to experiment with possible staging and editing prior to actual production. It is often difficult to determine whether one term or the other exclusively applies to a particular document; in this study wherever there is uncertainty of origin which is not discussed in the text, "promptbook" as the more general term has been used.

Some promptbooks and preparation copies used in planning productions are currently available in various archival libraries, notably the Folger Library, Washington, D. C. (Folger); the Lincoln Center Library of the New York City Public Library, New York City (LCL); the Victoria and Albert Theatre Museum, which also contains the Forster Collection of theatre memorabilia, London (V&A); The Shakespeare Centre Library (sometimes referred to as the Nuffield Library) administered by the Birthplace Trust, Stratford-upon-Avon (SCL).

A detailed listing of promptbooks for all Shakespearean plays was published 1965 by Charles Shattuck, The Shakespeare Promptbooks: A Descriptive Catalogue (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1965), the definitive study. Shattuck reference numbers are included for each production described below, e.g., "Shattuck #28." William P. Halstead supervised an extensive collation of all available acting texts and promptbooks over several years in the 1970's in which the relationships among the texts are graphed and each variant counted and catalogued, Shakespeare as Spoken: A Collation of 5000 Acting Editions and Promptbooks of Shakespeare, 13 vols. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International). Reference to this work is also included below, with reference numbers noted as "SasS # 28."

Based upon these two works and by personal examination of most of the promptbooks of Richard II, promptbooks/preparation copies have been viewed as the documentation of first authority in reconstructing any production.

(2) Scrapbooks of Notices and Reviews

Several productions are well documented in archival collections by scrapbooks of clippings from periodical reviews, typically noted by source and date only. Archival libraries have no particular method for cataloging these documents; for example, the Shakespeare Centre Library simply files them chronologically in volumes of uniform size but not uniform time periods. One scrapbook can contain ten years of productions, another a single season. Reviews have been especially useful in clarifying notations in promptbooks, assembling historical facts surrounding a production, and judging effects upon the contemporary audience if corroborated elsewhere. Of course, the bulk of any review is devoted to evaluating individual performances according to the taste of the reviewer; this sort of information has a limited scholarly use and has been relied upon with caution in this study.

(3) Memorial Reconstructions

For the most part, these are found in memoirs of performers and playgoers, but for some recent productions personal communication and interviews have been used to supplement other documents. Although this type of source, like a review, reflects the taste of the person at least as much as the details of stage practice, it has been invaluable in putting in perspective productions from Quayle (1951) through Hands (1980).

(4) Souvenir Programs and Cast Sheets

Most early productions, if documented at all, simply list performers and their roles. Particularly in the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre, however, souvenir programs, which are small pamphlets full of photographs, commentary and interviews with production personnel, directors, and performers, have been used heavily in characterizing the overall thrust of a production concept and the influences upon it.

(5) Production Designs

Ground plans, costume designs and plots, properties lists, cue sheets, etc., if available, have been considered to have primary authority.

(6) Photographs/Engravings

Whenever available, these have been considered of primary importance in characterizing productions, not only because of the visual corroboration they provide, but also because of the fact that directors, producers, or actors consciously chose to record the production at that particular moment and from that particular point of view.

The Cast Lists which follow are arranged chronologically for the most part, according to the first night of performance in a major theatre with a full, professional production. Under "Location" is the name of the theatre where the production was mounted, and the date of the first night of performance, if known.

If no information is available regarding casting, no performer's name is listed for the part as it is found in the Folio Dramatis Personae. This may indicate either a simple lack of information or that the part had been cut entirely. Single asterisks (*) indicate doubling.

Additional characters: minor additions have been listed with no special notation; if the additional character was significant in the production, triple asterisks (***) have been used to indicate the addition.

APPENDIX C
PRODUCTION DETAILS AND CAST LISTS

Production: Theobald
 Location: Lincoln's Inn Fields, London: 10 December 1719
 Materials: Text published by G. Strahan, 1720; SasS J R2/12.
 Text also in Dublin Smock Alley Promptbook in
 Folger, prep. Thomas Elrington: Rich II, 7;
 Shattuck #1; SasS S R2/1.
 Notations: Adaptation/travesty: includes added scenes and
 characters.
 Cast: Richard II Ryan
 Gaunt
 Bolingbroke Leigh
 Mobray
 Duch of Gloucester
 Marshall
 Aumerle Smith; Quin
 Green
 Bagot
 Bushy
 York Boheme
 Queen Mrs. Bullock; Mrs. Seymour
 Ross Diggs
 Willoughby Coker
 Northumberland Ogden
 Percy
 Berkeley
 Salisbury Egleton
 Welsh Captain
 Carlisle Bullock
 Scroope
 Gardener
 Fitzwater
 Surrey
 Westminster
 Duch of York
 Exton
 Groom
 Keeper
 *** Lady Percy Mrs. Spiller; Mrs. Bullock

Production: Covent Garden
 Location: Covent Garden, London: 6 February 1738
 Materials: Promptbook prep. John Roberts in Folger: R II, 2nd Folio; Shattuck #2, SasS S R2/2; Text from F2 (1623) with cuts, alterations, some ground plans. Engravings of some actors in Birm. Ref. Library.
 Notations: Relatively full text. See James McManaway, Shakespeare Quarterly 15 (1964) 161-175.
 Cast:

Richard II	Delane
Gaunt	Johnson
Bolingbroke	Ryan
Mobray	
Duch of Gloucester	Mrs. James
Marshall	Mullart
Aumerle	Hallam
Green	Arthur
Bagot	Salway
Bushy	Rosco
York	Walker; Rosco
Queen	Mrs. Horton
Ross	Ridout
Willoughby	Ryan
Northumberland	Bridgewater
Percy	Hale
Berkeley	
Salisbury	Lyon; Stephens
Welsh Captain	
Carlisle	Chapman
Scroope	Aston
Gardener	
Fitzwater	Stevens
Surrey	
Westminster	Stoppelaer
Duch of York	Mrs. Hallam
Exton	
Groom	Clarke
Keeper	

Production: Kean/Wroughton
Location: Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London: 9 March 1815
Materials: Text published by Miller, 1815, with preface.
 Promptbook prep. G. C. Carr in Folger: Rich II, 3;
 Shattuck #3, SasS S R2/3; prep. copy in Harvard
 Theatre Coll.: TS.2587.63; Shattuck #4, SasS
 S R2/4. 11 playbills, engraving at V&A.
Notations: Adapted by Richard Wroughton, a provincial Aumerle.
 Massive cuts, 200 lines added from other plays.
Cast:

Richard II	Edmund Kean
Gaunt	Alexander Pope
Bolingbroke	William Elliston; Spenley
Mobray	Rae
Duch of Gloucester	
Marshall	
Aumerle	Wallack
Green	
Bagot	
Bushy	
York	Holland
Queen	Mrs. Bartley
Ross	
Willoughby	
Northumberland	Powell
Percy	Barnard
Berkeley	
Salisbury	
Welsh Captain	
Carlisle	
Scroope	
Gardener	Gattie
Fitzwater	
Surrey	
Westminster	
Duch of York	
Exton	
Groom	
Keeper	

Production: Designer: Mr. Greenwood; Costumes: Mr. Banks, Miss Rein;
 Armor: Mr. Morris.
 Music: J. F. Burrowes.

Production: Macready
Location: Haymarket, London: 2 December 1850
Materials: Two promptbooks in V&A Forster Library:
 (1) 7919: F.48.C.17: Bell's Acting Edition 1812
 Shattuck #5, SasS S R2/5; notations and
 cuts in production copy;
 (2) 7915: F.48.C.15: Pickering Edition 1825;
 Shattuck #6, SasS S R2/6; prep. copy.
 Engravings in V&A, Birm. Ref. Library.
Notations: Performed only 2 times, almost full text, large
 scale production.
Cast:

Richard II	William Charles Macready
Gaunt	
Bolingbroke	Davenport
Mobray	
Duch of Gloucester	
Marshall	
Aumerle	
Green	
Bagot	
Bushy	
York	Warner
Queen	Mrs. Reynolds
Ross	
Willoughby	
Northumberland	Harrington
Percy	
Berkeley	
Salisbury	
Welsh Captain	
Carlisle	
Scroope	
Gardener	
Fitzwater	
Surrey	
Westminster	
Duch of York	Mrs. Cooper
Exton	
Groom	
Keeper	

Production: Charles Kean
 Location: Princess's, London: 12 March 1857
 Materials: Numerous Records in Folger and V&A Enthoven
 Collection: Promptbooks, sketches, watercolors,
 scrapbooks; some photos and engravings of actors in
 Birm. Ref. Library; 2 major promptbooks in Folger,
 prep. George Ellis, stg. mgr., from published text:
 Rich II, 2; Shattuck #7, SasS S R2/7; Rich II, 8;
 Shattuck #9, SasS S R2/9.
 Notations: Lavish production, long run (85 perf. in 1857),
 interpolated scene; text was F2 in Steevens ed. of
Works, Kean's version published by Chapman, 1857.
 Cast: Richard II Charles Kean
 Gaunt Walter Lacy
 Bolingbroke Ryder
 Mobray
 Duch of Gloucester
 Marshall
 Aumerle
 Green
 Bagot
 Bushy
 York
 Queen Mrs. Kean
 Ross
 Willoughby
 Northumberland
 Percy
 Berkeley
 Salisbury
 Welsh Captain
 Carlisle
 Scroope
 Gardener
 Fitzwater
 Surrey
 Westminster
 Duch of York
 Exton
 Groom
 Keeper

Production: Benson (1896, 1899-1900)
Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford: 23 April 1896;
 1899; Lyceum, London: 15 March 1900
Materials: Programs, photographs, scrapbook of notices/reviews
 at Shakespeare Centre Library: 50.27, 72.27.
Notations: No promptbook. Text assumed to be Charles Kean's
 or one very similar. Benson's production had been
 performed previously in the provinces.
 Cast for Lyceum unavailable but basically the same
 as the 1899 Stratford touring production.

Cast:	1896 Stratford	1899 Stratford
Richard II	F. R. Benson	F. R. Benson
Gaunt	F. Victor	Arthur Grenville
Bolingbroke	Frank Rodney	Frank Rodney
Mobray	Oscar Asche *	Oscar Asche *
Duch of Gloucester	Madge McIntosh	Lily Brayton
Marshall	F. Howe	
Aumerle	W. Graham Browne	H. R. Hignett
Green	F. James	Gerald Kay Souper
Bagot	E. H. Langley	C. Quartermaine
Bushy	C. Crawford	M. Lang
York	E. Lyall Swete	Edward A. Warburton
Queen	Constance Benson	Constance Benson
Ross		
Willoughby	W. Jones	Harcourt Williams
Northumberland	George Fitzgerald	George Fitzgerald
Percy	H. R. Hignett	J. W. Foster
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	Oscar Asche *	Oscar Asche *
Scroope		
Gardener	O. B. Clarence	George Weir
Gardener's Man	F. Anney	H. O. Nicholson
Fitzwater	H. James	
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York	Elinor Aickin	
Exton	M. Sherard	M. Dalton
Groom		M. Sherrard
Keeper		

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
 Music (1899): Mr. Barkworth, conductor

Production: Poel

Location: London University Lecture Hall: 11 November 1899

Materials: Promptbook in V&A Enthoven Collection: Shattuck
#25, SasS S R2/25.

Notations: Single perf. under pseudo-Elizabethan conditions,
numerous cuts on F2-based full text.

Cast: Richard II Harley Granville-Barker
Gaunt
Bolingbroke
Mobray
Duch of Gloucester
Marshall
Aumerle
Green
Bagot
Bushy
York
Queen
Ross
Willoughby
Northumberland
Percy
Berkeley
Salisbury
Welsh Captain
Carlisle
Scroope
Gardener
Fitzwater
Surrey
Westminster
Duch of York
Exton
Groom
Keeper

Production: Director: William Poel

Production: Benson (1901, 1904)
Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 23 April 1901, 19 April 1904
Materials: Programs and scrapbook of notices/reviews at
 Shakespeare Centre Library, 50.27.
Notations: Essentially the same production as 1896; an attempt
 at presenting a history "cycle," King John,
Richard II, 2 Henry IV, Henry V, 2 Henry IV,
Richard III, in succession.

Cast:	1901 Stratford	1904 Stratford
Richard II	F. R. Benson	F. R. Benson
Gaunt	E. Lyall Swete	W. Hampden *
Bolingbroke	Frank Rodney	Arthur Whitby
Mobray	Oscar Asche	Cyril Knightly
Duch of Gloucester	Elsie Chester	Gertrude Scott
Marshall		Henry Herbert
Aumerle	Harcourt Williams	George Buchanan
Green	Charles A. Bibby *	
Bagot	Henry Herbert	J. E. Stevenson
Bushy	A. Matheson Lang	Steven Douglas
York	Alfred Brydone	H. O. Nicholson
Queen	Margaret Halstan	Constance Benson
Ross		
Willoughby	Arthur Machen	Percy D. Owen
Northumberland	G. Fitzgerald	B. A. Pittar
Percy	Henry Ainley	Philip Sanders *
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	Arthur Whitby	Henry Herbert
Scroope		
Gardener	George R. Weir	George R. Weir
Gardener's Man	S. Edgar	G.F.Hannam-Clark
Fitzwater		Mr. Plinge
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York		
Exton	O. P. Bart	Walter Hampden *
Groom	Charles A. Bibby *	Saville Percy
Keeper	A. Dorian	G.F.Hannam-Clark

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
Music: Christopher Wilson, conductor (1901)
 G. W. Collins, conductor (1904)

Production: Beerbohm Tree

Location: His Majesty's, London: 10 September 1903

Materials: Numerous records in V&A Enthoven Collection: promptbooks, sketches, music scores, photos, playbills and souvenir programs; best prompt is Enthoven Tree, 250, Shattuck #29, SasS S R2/29.

Notations: Lavish production, revived through 1906; added scenes of Richard's London humiliation, Bolingbroke's coronation.

Cast:	Richard II	Herbert Beerbohm Tree
	Gaunt	Brandon Thomas
	Bolingbroke	Oscar Asche
	Mobray	William Haviland
	Duch of Gloucester	
	Marshall	
	Aumerle	Basil Gill
	Green	Cecil Rose
	Bagot	Francis Chamier
	Bushy	Eric Leslie
	York	Lyn Harding
	Queen	Lily Brayton
	Ross	
	Willoughby	
	Northumberland	Richard Temple
	Percy	Selwyn Seymour
	Berkeley	
	Salisbury	
	Welsh Captain	
	Carlisle	J. Fisher White
	Scroope	
	Gardener	Lionel Brough
	Fitzwater	
	Surrey	
	Westminster	
	Duch of York	
	Exton	P. Forbes
	Groom	
	Keeper	

Production: Designer: W. T. Hemsley, Joseph Harker, Walter Hann;
Costumes: Percy Anderson; Heraldry: A. Lee.
Music: J. C. Ames; Percy Pitt.

Production: Benson (1905, 1906)

Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
1 May 1905, 30 April 1906

Materials: Programs and scrapbook of notices/reviews at
Shakespeare Centre Library, 50.27.

Notations: Essentially same production as 1896. In both years
some attempt at history cycles was made: 1905,
Edward II (Marlowe), Richard II, 1 Henry IV,
2 Henry IV, Henry V; 1906, Richard II,
2 Henry IV, 1,2,3 Henry VI, Richard III.

Cast:	1905 Stratford	1906 changes
Richard II	F. R. Benson	
Gaunt	B. A. Pittar	
Bolingbroke	Arthur Whitby	William Haviland
Mobray	Cyril Keightly	
Duch of Gloucester	Mabel Moore	Mildred Forster
Marshall	G. F. Hannam-Clarke	M. Carrington
Aumerle	George Buchanan	
Green		Arthur Fayne *
Bagot	Gerald Ames	Edward Harrison
Bushy	Steven Douglas	J. P. Wilson
York	H. O. Nicholson	
Queen	Gertrude Scott	Nora Lancaster
Ross		
Willoughby	Henry Willis	
Northumberland	Philip Sanders	Philip Sanders
Percy	Clarence Derwent	
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	Percy D. Owen	
Scroope		
Gardener	George R. Weir	
Fitzwater	Walter Plinge	
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York		
Exton	Bernard Peters	
Groom	R. Davis	
Keeper	Mr. Gaston	
Murderer	Mr. Sanders	Mr. Plinge

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
Music: (1905) George W. Collins, conductor; (1906)
Henry Caville, conductor

Production:	Benson (1907-1909)		
Location:	Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon: 4 May 1907, 29 April 1908, 27 April 1909		
Materials:	Programs and scrapbook of notices/reviews at Shakespeare Centre Library, 50.27.		
Notations:	Largely same production as 1896, in repertory each festival for a performance or two.		
Cast:	1907 Stratford	1908 Stratford	1909 Stratford
Richard II	F. R. Benson	F. R. Benson	F. R. Benson
Gaunt	E. Warburton	H. O. Nicholson	E. Warburton
Bolingbroke	Clarence Derwent	E. Warburton	A. Goodsall
Mobray	G. Buchanan	G. Buchanan	Hannam-Clark
Duch of Glouc	Mildred Forster	Mildred Forster	Estelle Stead
Marshall	M. Carrington		
Aumerle	J. P. Wilson	J. P. Wilson	J. P. Wilson
Green	C. Warburton	Guy B. Rathbone	
Bagot	A. Murray	P. Harvey	J. A. Howell
Bushy	Fred Gee	Harry Caine	M. A. Lacker
York	H. O. Nicholson	F. G. Worlock	F. G. Worlock
Queen	Helen Haye	Olive Noble	Olive Noble
Ross			
Willoughby	Mr. Stanley	Mr. Plinge	Mr. Richardson
Northumberland	G. Hannam-Clarke	M. Carrington	M. Carrington
Percy	R. McLeod	W. R. Haines	Alfred Wild
Berkeley			
Salisbury			
Welsh Captain			
Carlisle	Percy D. Owen	Stanley Howett	J. M. Johnston
Scroope			
Gardener	George R. Weir	George R. Weir	Harry Caine
Gardener's Man	Mr. Plinge	J. M. Johnston	W. Caithness
Fitzwater	J. P. Wilson		
Surrey			
Westminster			
Duch of York			
Exton	F. G. Worlock	Mr. Look	R. Haines
Groom	S. Howlett	Mr. Plumpton	Guy Rathbone
Keeper	Mr. Hardy	Mr. Wood	J. Aberdeen
Murderer	Mr. Plinge	Mr. Caine	Mr. Wood
Production:	Director: F. R. Benson		
Music:	(1907, 1908) Henry Caville, conductor; (1909) Alfred Gilmer, conductor		

Production: Benson (1910)
 Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 28 April 1910, 3 August 1910
 Materials: Programs and scrapbook of notices/reviews at
 Shakespeare Centre Library, 50.27.
 Notations: Essentially the same production as 1896. Perf. in
 both the spring and summer festivals 1910.

Cast:	Spring 1910	Summer changes
Richard II	F. R. Benson	
Gaunt	Alfred Brydone	
Bolingbroke	Murray Carrington	
Mobray	Eric Maxon	
Duch of Gloucester	Marion Foreman	
Marshall		
Aumerle	J. Plumpton Wilson	
Green		
Bagot	Frank Conroy	J. F. Outram
Bushy	John Howell	
York	Edward Harrison	W. Caithness
Queen	Nora Lancaster	V. Farebrother
Ross		
Willoughby	Trevor Roller	Harold Meltzer
Northumberland	Guy B. Rathbone	G. Hannam-Clarke
Percy	Alfred Wild	
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	J. Moffat Johnston	
Scroope		
Gardener	Harry Caine	
Gardener's Man	W. Caithness	
Fitzwater		
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York		
Exton	Wilfred Caithness	J. Fraser Outram
Groom	M. A. Lacker	
Keeper	F. M. Conroy	F. Plinge
Murderer	Walter Plinge	Mr. McLean

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
 Music: Mark Strong, conductor

Production: Benson (1911)
Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 25 April 1911, 10 August 1911
Materials: Programs and scrapbook of notices/reviews at
 Shakespeare Centre Library, 50.27.
Notations: Essentially the same production as 1896. Perf. in
 both the spring and summer festivals 1911.

Cast:	Spring 1911	Summer changes
Richard II	F. R. Benson	
Gaunt	Alfred Brydone	Balliol Holloway
Bolingbroke	Murray Carrington	
Mobray	Eric Maxon	P. Gedge Twyman
Duch of Gloucester	Ethel McDowell	M. Fielden
Marshall	Moffat Johnston	
Aumerle	Alfred Wild	Frank Cochrane
Green		Cecil Dighton
Bagot	George Manship	Rupert Conwick
Bushy	John McLean	Harry Caine
York	Wilfred Caithness	
Queen	Violet Farebrother	Ethel McDowell
Ross		
Willoughby	Cecil Dighton	John McLean
Northumberland	John Howell	
Percy	Reginald Coplestone	D. Neilson-Terry
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	J. Moffat Johnston	
Scroope		
Gardener	Harry Caine	
Gardener's Man	John McLean	
Fitzwater		
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York		
Exton	Wilfred Caithness	J. Fraser Outram
Groom	Harry Caine	F. Cochrane
Keeper	Victor McClur	George Manship
Murderer	Mr. Probyn	

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
 Music: Mark Strong, conductor

Production: Benson (1913)

Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
21 April 1913, 11 August 1913

Materials: Programs, scrapbook of notices/reviews, scores of
original incidental music at Shakespeare Centre
Library, 50.27.

Notations: Essentially the same text as 1896. Resident music
dir. Ralph Vaughan-Williams composed and adapted
incidental music. Many backdrops, sets, staging
were changed apparently as a result of the work of
F. Randle Ayrton, "scenic advisor."

Cast:	Spring 1913	Summer changes
Richard II	F. R. Benson	
Gaunt	J. Moffat Johnston	Edmund Warburton
Bolingbroke	Murray Carrington	
Mobray	Rupert Conrick *	
Duch of Gloucester	Rosa Burgess	
Marshall	W. Calvert	
Aumerle	Mark Turner	Basil Rathbone
Green	Ambrose Flower	Alfred Harris
Bagot	Hugh Rendle	George Manship *
Bushy	Darby Foster	
York	Reginald Goode	W. Calvert
Queen	Ethel McDowell	
Ross	Oswald Roberts *	Leonard Parrish
Willoughby	James Stanners	
Northumberland	W. Calvert	C. Warburton
Percy	Frank Matthews	
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	Frank Cochrane	
Scroope		
Gardener	Harry Caine	
Gardener's Man	John McLean	
Fitzwater		
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York		
Exton	Rupert Conrick *	George Manship *
Groom	Harry Caine	
Keeper	O. Roberts *	Walter Plinge

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
Designer: F. Randle Ayrton
Music: Ralph Vaughan-Williams; Guy Ambrose, conductor

Production: Benson (1914, 1915)
 Location: Shakespeare Mem. Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 5 August 1914, 3 August 1915
 Materials: Programs and scrapbook of notices/reviews at
 Shakespeare Centre Library, 50.27.
 Notations: Essentially the same as 1913. The play was
 less and less popular with audiences and was only
 played sporadically, in the summer festival
 when budgets were lower and more local people cast.

Cast:	1914 Stratford	1915 Stratford
Richard II	F. R. Benson	F. R. Benson
Gaunt	Randle Ayrton	A. E. George
Bolingbroke	Murray Carrington	Henry Baynton
Mobray	Rupert Conrick	J. M. Johnston
Duch of Gloucester		
Marshall		Stanley Howett
Aumerle	Basil Rathbone	Basil Rathbone
Green	Alfred Harris	James Mageean *
Bagot	George Manship *	Hugh Rendle
Bushy	Darby Foster	Frank Milray *
York	William Calvert	O. Roberts
Queen	Ethel McDowell	Dorethie Pidcock
Ross	James Stanners	Compton Rickett
Willoughby	Leonard Parrish *	Grosvenor North
Northumberland	Charles Warburton	Stanley Howett
Percy	Frank Matthews	Reginald Denham
Berkeley		
Salisbury		
Welsh Captain		
Carlisle	Frank Cochrane	B. A. Pittar
Scroope		
Gardener	Henry Caine *	H. O. Nicholson
Gardener's Man	John McLean	L. Grosvenor
Fitzwater		
Surrey		
Westminster		
Duch of York		
Exton	George Manship *	W. H. Quinton
Groom	Henry Caine *	James Mageean *
Keeper	Walter Plinge *	Frank Milray *
Murderer	L. Parrish *	Arthur Heale

Production: Director: F. R. Benson
 Designer: F. Randle Ayrton
 Music: Guy Ambrose, conductor

Production: Bridges-Adams (1920, 1924)

Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
22 April 1920, 19 July 1924

Materials: Two promptbooks and scrapbook of notices/reviews at
Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.21. Promptbooks
nearly identical, Shattuck #35 and #36,
SasS S R2/35,36, both following the F2 readings.

Notations: Bridges-Adams was a student of William Poel; the
presentation and text preparation are in the
"Elizabethan Purist" tradition of full texts and
simple staging.

Cast:	1920 Stratford	1924 Stratford
Richard II	Murray Carrington	Arthur Phillips
Gaunt	Harvey Adams	Alfred Harris
Bolingbroke	Edmund Willard	Baliol Holloway
Mobray	Charles G. Carson	Eric Maxon *
Duch of Gloucester	Gwen Richardson	Doris Johnstone
Marshall		
Aumerle	Mark Stanley	Ralph Truman
Green	W. Earle Grey	Mark Turner *
Bagot	Oswald Roberts	B. Marsh-Dunn
Bushy	Bertram Marsh-Dunn *	George Howe
York	George Cooke	Oliver Crombie
Queen	Phyllis Relph	Ethel Carrington
Ross	Fred Kitchen, Jr.	Ernest Hare
Willoughby	Laurence Wynne	John H. Moore
Northumberland	Stanley Lathbury	Frank Darch
Percy	Leon Tavare	Seton Blackden
Berkeley	Richard Fielding *	
Salisbury	Kenneth Wicksteed *	
Welsh Captain	John Maclean *	
Carlisle	Harvey Adams	Eric Maxon *
Scroope	Richard Fielding *	
Gardener	John Maclean *	Mark Turner
Fitzwater	Richard Fielding *	
Surrey		
Westminster	Bertram Marsh-Dunn *	
Duch of York	Ethel Warwick	Rosa Burgess
Exton	Charles G. Carson	B. Marsh-Dunn *
Groom	John Maclean *	
Keeper	Kenneth Wicksteed *	Alan Edmiston

Production: Director: William Bridges-Adams
Designer: Walter Drury; 1924 Costumes: Tom Heslewood
Music: (1920) A. W. Gilmer, conductor; (1924) Rosabel
Watson, conductor

Production: Bridges-Adams (1926, 1929, 1930)
Location: Shakespeare Temp. Theatre (Cinema), Stratford-upon-Avon: 14 April 1926, 16 April 1929, 2 May 1930
Materials: Promptbooks and scrapbook of notices/reviews at Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.29.
Notations: Old theatre in Stratford burned 6 March 1926; this staging, based upon previous ones, held the stage in Stratford until the new theatre was opened. The production was part of the repertory of an American Tour in 1930.

Cast:	1926 Stratford	1929 Stratford	1930 Stratford
Richard II	Randle Ayrton	George Hayes	George Hayes
Gaunt	K. Wicksteed *	K. Wicksteed *	K. Wicksteed
Bolingbroke	George Skillian	George Skillian	G. Skillian
Mobray	H. Worrall *	Eric Maxon *	Eric Maxon *
Duch of Glou	Esme Vernon	Georgina Wynter	Olive Walter
Marshall			
Aumerle	Ernest Hare	Ernest Hare	Ernest Hare
Green	Sebastian Shaw	C. R. Gadsby *	C. R. Gadsby *
Bagot	Fred Morgan	Gordon Bailey	Gordon Bailey
Bushy	Leonard Trollope	Arthur Chisholm	W. Calvert
York	Roy Byford	Roy Byford	Roy Byford
Queen	R. Courtneige	Mary Holder	Mary Holder
Ross			
Willoughby			
Northumberland	Frank Darch	Oliver Crombie	Oliver Crombie
Percy	Kenton Godfrey	Laurier Lister	Noel Iliff
Berkeley			
Salisbury	John H. Moore	Edward Wilkinson	Gordon Bailey
Welsh Captain			
Carlisle	H. Worrall *	Eric Maxon *	Eric Maxon *
Scroope			R. Eric Lee
Gardener	K. Wicksteed *	K. Wicksteed *	K. Wicksteed *
Fitzwater			
Surrey			
Westminster	Howard Bach	C. R. Gadsby *	C. R. Gadsby *
Duch of York	Rosa Burgess		
Exton			
Groom	J. Denton Thompson		G. Wilkinson
Keeper			

Production: Director: William Bridges-Adams
 Designer: Tom Heslewood, W. Bridges-Adams
 Music: (1926, 1930) Rosabel Watson, conductor

Production: Guthrie

Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
21 April 1933

Materials: Program, promptbook, scrapbook of notices/reviews
at Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.21 At 7937,
Shattuck #37, SasS S R2/37.

Notations: At new Memorial Theatre. Aumerle scenes cut in
full.

Cast:	Richard II	George Hayes
	Gaunt	Stanley Rathbury
	Bolingbroke	Anew McMaster
	Mobray	R. Eric Lee *
	Duch of Gloucester	Alice O'Day
	Marshall	
	Aumerle	John Wyse
	Green	C. Rivers Gadsby
	Bagot	Stanley Howett *
	Bushy	Jon Brown *
	York	Eric Maxon
	Queen	Hilda Coxhead
	Ross	Kenneth Wicksteed *
	Willoughby	G. K. Souper
	Northumberland	Reginald Jarman
	Percy	Pat Peirson
	Berkeley	
	Salisbury	R. Eric Lee *
	Welsh Captain	
	Carlisle	Laidman Browne
	Scroope	Stanley Howett *
	Gardener	Kenneth Wicksteed *
	Fitzwater	Jon Brown *
	Surrey	
	Westminster	
	Duch of York	
	Exton	R. Eric Lee *
	Groom	John Denis
	Keeper	Kenneth Wicksteed *

Production: Director: Tyrone Guthrie
Designer: Tyrone Guthrie; Costumes: Eric Maxon
Music: Anthony Bernard, conductor

Production: Early Gielgud
Location: Old Vic, London: 29 October 1929; Queen's, London: 6 September 1937
Materials: Available currently only for 1937: promptbook at Lincoln Center Library, MWEZ NC 14,151, not in Shattuck or in SasS.
Notations: Copious notations and blocking in promptbook to middle of Welsh Shore scene (III.iii); seemingly text except for omission of Act V Aumerle scenes; extremely influential for interpretation, style, and popularity of the play as performed for the following several decades--many future major stars held minor or supporting roles in the 1937 cast.

1937 Selected

Cast:

Richard II	John Gielgud
Gaunt	Leon Quartermaine
Bolingbroke	Michael Redgrave
Mobray	Glen Byam Shaw *
Duch of Gloucester	Dorothy Green
Marshall	Anthony Quayle
Aumerle	Alec Guinness *
Green	Dennis Price
Bushy	Harry Andrews *
York	George Howe
Queen	Peggy Ashcroft
Carlisle	Harcourt Williams
Scroope	Glen Byam Shaw *
Gardener	George Devine
Exton	Harry Andrews *
Groom	Alec Guinness *

Production: Director: John Gielgud
 Designer: Motley
 Lighting: George Devine

Production: Evans

Location: Various: 1930-1940, at the Old Vic, London,
and the St. James, New York

Materials: Programs, sound recordings, promptbook, scrapbook
of notices and reviews at Lincoln Center Library,
MWEZ NC 14151, for 1937 run, Shattuck #38, SasS
S R2/38.

Notations: Extremely successful interpretation by Maurice
Evans; very elegant and beautiful production most
noted for verse speaking.

Selected

Cast:	Old Vic 1934	St. James's 1937
Richard II	Maurice Evans	Maurice Evans
Gaunt	Alfred Sangster	Augustin Duncan
Bolingbroke	Abraham Sofaer	Ian Keith
Aumerle		Sherling Oliver
York	Frank Napier	Lionel Hogarth
Queen		Olive Deering
Northumberland		Charles Dalton
Gardener		Whitford Kane

Production:	Director:	Henry Cass	Margaret Webster
	Designer:	David Ffolkes	David Ffolkes

Production: Iden Payne

Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
23 April 1941

Materials: Program, photographs, scrapbook of notices/reviews
at Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.21. No promptbook
available for examination.

Notations: Little information available about final season
with Payne as resident Festival director. The
production seems like Guthrie's.

Cast:	Richard II	George Hayes
	Gaunt	Baliol Holloway
	Bolingbroke	Godfrey Kenton
	Mobray	Marcus Insley *
	Duch of Gloucester	Freda Jackson
	Marshall	
	Aumerle	Michael Ingham
	Green	C. Rivers Gadsby
	Bagot	Anthony Wallis *
	Bushy	Roy Siddons *
	York	Gerald Kay Souper
	Queen	Olga Edwardes
	Ross	George Manship *
	Willoughby	G. F. Hannam-Clark *
	Northumberland	Stanley Howett *
	Percy	Robert Marsden *
	Berkeley	
	Salisbury	Anthony Wallis *
	Welsh Captain	
	Carlisle	Marcus Insley *
	Scroope	John Miller
	Gardener	Jay Laurier
	Gardener's Man	Andrew Leigh
	Fitzwater	Roy Siddons *
	Surrey	
	Westminster	
	Duch of York	
	Exton	G. F. Hannam-Clarke *
	Groom	George Manship *
	Keeper	Robert Marsden *

Production: Director: Ben Iden Payne
Designer: Peggy Neale; Costumes: Barbara Curtis
Music: Anthony Bernard, composer and conductor

Production: Atkins
Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 22 May 1944
Materials: Program, photographs, promptbook, scrapbook of
 notices/reviews at Shakespeare Centre Library,
 71.21, Shattuck #30, SasS S R2/40.
Notations: Well-documented set/scene designs. Settings
 were similar (backdrop, legs, a few flats and
 set pieces) to earlier productions, but more
 carefully executed.

Cast:

Richard II	George Hayes
Gaunt	W. E. Holloway
Bolingbroke	Anthony Eustrel
Mobray	David Read
Duch of Gloucester	Margaret Boyd
Marshall	
Aumerle	John Byron
Green	C. Rivers Gadsby *
Bagot	Peter Bell *
Bushy	David March *
York	Raymond Rollett
Queen	Helen Cherry
Ross	Jack Lynn *
Willoughby	Andrew Faulds *
Northumberland	Clement Hamelin
Percy	John Williams
Berkeley	
Salisbury	Peter Upcher *
Welsh Captain	
Carlisle	G. Hannam-Clarke
Scroope	Peter Bell *
Gardener	Cliff Weir
Gardener's Man	Michael Martin-Harvey
Fitzwater	Andrew Faulds *
Surrey	
Westminster	
Duch of York	
Exton	David March *
Groom	C. Rivers Gadsby *
Keeper	Jack Lynn *

Production: Director: Robert Atkins
 Designer: Herbert Norris
 Music: Arthur Dulay, conductor

Production: Hudd
Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 13 June 1947; His Majesty's, London: 13 October
 1947; provincial tour in Britain
Materials: Program, photographs, promptbook, scrapbook of
 notices/reviews at Shakespeare Centre Library,
 71.21, Shattuck #41, SasS S R2/41.
Notations: Very elaborate production with all new sets and
 costumes, well documented with photographs.
Cast:

Richard II	Robert Harris
Gaunt	John Ruddock
Bolingbroke	Michael Golden
Mobray	Myles Eason
Duch of Gloucester	Beatrix Lehmann
Marshall	
Aumerle	Donald Sinden
Green	John Warner
Bagot	David Oxley
Bushy	John Harrison
York	Douglas Seale
Queen	Joy Parker
Ross	Joss Ackland
Willoughby	Maxwell Jackson
Northumberland	William Avenell
Percy	Laurence Payne
Berkeley	
Salisbury	George Cooper
Welsh Captain	Anthony Groser *
Carlisle	Paul Stevenson
Scroope	William March *
Gardener	Dudley Jones
Gardener's Men	Leigh Crutchley, John Randall
Fitzwater	Leonard Pearce
Surrey	
Westminster	William March *
Duch of York	Gwen Williams
Exton	Duncan Ross
Groom	Anthony Groser *
Keeper	Richard Penny

Production: Producer: Barry Jackson
 Director: Walter Hudd
 Designer: Hal Burton; Costumes: Barbara Curtis
 Music: John Simon

Production: Richardson

Location: Old Vic, London: 23 April 1947

Materials: No production records currently available.

Notations: Cast lists and production details in company histories and memoirs from Old Vic members; interpretation and text reportedly similar to the Webster and first Gielgud productions in 1930, 1934, and 1937.

Selected

Cast:	Richard II	Alec Guinness
	Gaunt	Ralph Richardson
	Bolingbroke	Harry Andrews
	York	Lewis Casson
	Northumberland	Nicholas Hannan

Production: Director: Ralph Richardson
Designer: Michael Warre

Production: Quayle
Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 24 March 1951
Materials: Program, photographs, production records,
 promptbook, scrapbook of notices and reviews at
 Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.21 and S-42,
 Shattuck #42, SasS S R2/42.
Notations: Act V Aumerle conspiracy scenes omitted in full.
 One of the first unit sets on the Stratford stage;
 records very detailed with full business and set
 design information recorded for all four histories
 presented that season. Typescript in Shakespeare
 Centre Library of detailed production notes is very
 useful in augmenting official records.

Cast:

Richard II	Michael Redgrave
Gaunt	Hugh Griffith
Bolingbroke	Harry Andrews
Mobray	William Fox
Duch of Gloucester	Rosalind Atkinson
Marshall	
Aumerle	Basil Hoskins
Green	Michael Meacham
Bagot	Peter Jackson
Bushy	Richard Wordsworth
York	Michael Gwynn
Queen	Heather Stannard
Ross	Phillip Morant
Willoughby	Michael Bates
Northumberland	Alexander Gauge
Percy	Robert Hardy
Berkeley	Brendon Barry
Salisbury	Peter Norris
Welsh Captain	Raymond Westwell
Carlisle	Duncan Lamont
Scroope	Peter Williams
Gardener	Godfrey Bond
Gardener's Man	Edward Atienza
Fitzwater	Peter Halliday
Surrey	Jack Gwillim
Westminster	Peter Henchie
Duch of York	Jean MacArthur
Exton	William Squire
Groom	John Gay
Keeper	Reginald Marsh

Production: Director: Anthony Quayle; Stg. Director: Patrick Donnell
 Designer: Tanya Moiseiwitsch
 Sound: StageSound, Ltd.
 Music: Leslie Bridgewater

Production: Gielgud/Scofield

Location: Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
15 December 1952 (preview for Lyric, London)

Materials: Program, small scrapbook of notices and reviews
for Stratford performance at Shakespeare Centre
Library; no promptbook presently available at
any major research facility.

Notations: Reportedly similar to versions in which Gielgud
performed the role of Richard; extremely elegant
and sophisticated production.

Selected

Cast:	Richard II	Paul Scofield
	Gaunt	Herbert Lomas
	Bolingbroke	Eric Porter
	Aumerle	Leo Ciceri
	York	Richard Wordsworth
	Northumberland	Brewster Mason
	Percy	John Bennet

Production: Director: John Gielgud
Designer: Loudon Sainthill
Lighting: Joe Davis

Production: Benthall

Location: Old Vic, London: 18 January 1955

Materials: Promptbook, production records, scrapbook of notices and reviews, National Theatre (Old Vic) archives, Shattuck #43, SasS S R2/43.

Notations: Elegant star-studded production; all Act V Aumerle scenes omitted; revived for 1956 season to continued successes and long run.

Selected

Cast:	Richard II	John Neville
	Gaunt	Meredith Edwards
	Bolingbroke	Eric Porter
	York	Michael Bates
	Northumberland	Laurence Hardy

Production: Director: Michael Benthall
Designer: Leslie Hurry

Production: Hall

Location: Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
15 April 1964

Materials: Program, photographs, production records,
promptbook, scrapbook of notices/reviews at
Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.21, not in Shattuck,
SasS SS R2/405.

Notations: Nearly full text for intricate staging of the
entire Wars of the Roses plays.

Cast:	Richard II	David Warner
	Gaunt	Roy Dotice *
	Bolingbroke	Eric Porter
	Mobray	William Squire
	Duch of Gloucester	Madoline Thomas
	Marshall (Blunt)	Maurice Jones
	Aumerle	Charles Thomas
	Green	Jeffrey Dench *
	Bagot	Derek Waring
	Bushy	David Hargreaves
	York	Paul Hardwick
	Queen	Deborah Stanford
	Ross	
	Willoughby	John Corvin
	Northumberland	David Waller
	Percy	Roy Dotrice *
	Berkeley	
	Salisbury	Michael Rose
	Welsh Captain	Gareth Morgan
	Carlisle	Clive Morton
	Scroope	Jeffrey Dench *
	Gardener	Malcolm Webster
	Gardener's Man	Tim Wylton
	Fitzwater	
	Surrey	
	Westminster	
	Duch of York	Patience Collier
	Exton	Philip Brack
	Groom	Peter Geddis
	Keeper	Ted Valentine
	Exeter	Donald Burton

Production: Director: Peter Hall (John Barton, Clifford Williams)
Designer: John Bury; Costumes: John Bury, Ann Curtis
Music: Guy Woolfenden

Production: Barton Theatre-go-round
Location: Various locations around Britain; first, Newcastle:
 29 March 1971
Materials: Program, groundplans, promptbook, scrapbook of
 notices and reviews, Shakespeare Centre Library,
 71.21, not in Shattuck, SasS SS R2/408.
Notations: Heavily edited text with a great deal of
 cast doubling, for a touring production. Simple
 staging which varied according to playing space.

Cast:	Richard II	Richard Pasco
	Gaunt	Anthony Langdon *
	Bolingbroke	Morgan Sheppard
	Mobray	Don Henderson *
	Duch of Gloucester	Anne Dyson *
	Marshall	
	Aumerle	Gordon Reid
	Green	Matthew Robertson *
	Bagot	
	Bushy	Ted Valentine *
	York	Gordon Gostelow
	Queen	Lisa Harrow
	Ross	Don Henderson *
	Willoughby	Dennis Holmes *
	Northumberland	Richard Mayes
	Percy	Matthew Robertson *
	Berkeley	
	Salisbury	Anthony Langdon *
	Welsh Captain	Ted Valentine *
	Carlisle	Dennis Holmes *
	Scroope	
	Gardener	Anthony Langdon *
	Gardener's Men	Dennis Holmes, * Roger Rees *
	Fitzwater	
	Surrey	
	Westminster	Ted Valentine *
	Duch of York	Elizabeth Spriggs
	Exton	Roger Rees *
	Groom	Dennis Holmes *
	Keeper	
	Queen's Lady	Janet Whiteside

Production: Director: John Barton
 Designer: Ann Curtis
 Lighting: John Bradley, Brian Harris
 Music: Guy Woolfenden

Production: Barton 1973-1974

Location: Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon: 10 April 1973; Aldwych Theatre, London

Materials: Program, photographs, music cue sheet, promptbook, scrapbook of notices and reviews at Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.23, not in Shattuck, SasS SS R2/411 (used in both seasons).

Notations: Richard Pasco and Ian Richardson alternated as Richard and Bolingbroke in a symbolic and ritualistic staging with dumbshows and hobby horses.

Cast:	Richard II	Richard Pasco/Ian Richardson
	Gaunt	Tony Church
	Bolingbroke	Ian Richardson/Richard Pasco
	Mobray	Dennis Holmes *
	Duch of Gloucester	Janet Whiteside
	Marshall	Richard Mayes *
	Aumerle	Nickolas Grace
	Green	Ray Armstrong
	Bagot	
	Bushy	Robert Ashby *
	York	Sebastian Shaw
	Queen	Janet Chappell
	Ross	Charles Keating
	Willoughby	Gavin Campbell
	Northumberland	Clement McCallim
	Percy	John Abbott
	Berkeley	
	Salisbury	Richard Mayes *
	Welsh Captain	
	Carlisle	Brian Glover
	Scroope	
	Gardener	Dennis Holmes *
	Gardener's Men	Peter Machin, Wilfred Grove
	Fitzwater	
	Surrey	
	Westminster	Robert Ashby
	Duch of York	Beatrix Lehmann
	Exton	Anthony Pedley
	Groom	
	Keeper	
	York's Servant	David Suchet

Production: Director: John Barton
 Designer: Timothy O'Brien, Tazeena Firth
 Lighting: David Hersey
 Music: James Walker

Production: BBC Shakespeare

Location: BBC Studios (no location taping): 12-17 April 1978

Materials: Videotape widely available; text published with photographs by BBC as part of BBC-TV Shakespeare series.

Notations: A traditional, documentary style in designs, with sets constructed to replicate the actual sites of historical action.

Cast:	Richard II	Derek Jacobi
	Gaunt	John Gielgud
	Bolingbroke	Jon Finch
	Mobray	Richard Owens
	Duch of Gloucester	Mary Morris
	Marshall	
	Aumerle	Charles Keating
	Green	Alan Dalton
	Bagot	Damien Thomas
	Bushy	Robin Sachs
	York	Charles Gray
	Queen	Janet Maw
	Ross	David Dodimead
	Willoughby	John Flint
	Northumberland	David Swift
	Percy	Jeremy Bulloch
	Berkeley	Carl Oatley
	Salisbury	John Barcroft
	Welsh Captain	David Garfield
	Carlisle	Clifford Rose
	Scroope	William Whymper
	Gardener	Jonathan Adams
	Gardener's Man	Alan Collins
	Fitzwater	John Curless
	Surrey	Jeffrey Holland
	Westminster	Bruno Barnabe
	Duch of York	Wendy Hiller
	Exton	Desmond Adams
	Groom	Joe Ritchie
	Keeper	Paddy Ward

Production: Producer: Cedric Messina

Director: David Giles

Designer: Tony Abbott; Costumes: Robin Fraser-Paye;

Lighting: John Summers; Make-up: Ann Rayment

Music: David Lloyd-Jones (Advisor)

Production: Hands
 Location: Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon:
 11 April 1981; Aldwych Theatre, London
 Materials: Program, photographs, scrapbook of notices and
 reviews at Shakespeare Centre Library, 71.23
 (no promptbook available in 1981).
 Notations: Perhaps fullest text used in modern production
 history, according to accounts and reviews.
 Cast:

Richard II	Alan Howard
Gaunt	Raymond Westwell
Bolingbroke	David Suchet
Mobray	John Bowe
Duch of Gloucester	Judith Harte
Marshall	Terry Wood
Aumerle	Jonathan Hyde
Green	Billie Brown
Bagot	Gordon Dulieu
Bushy	Paul Webster
York	Tony Church
Queen	Domini Blythe
Ross	Pip Miller
Willoughby	Hugh Ross
Northumberland	Bruce Purchase
Percy	Chris Hunter
Berkeley	Dennis Clinton *
Salisbury	Michael Sidbury
Welsh Captain	Sion Tudor-Owen *
Carlisle	Trevor Baxter
Scroope	Brett Usher
Gardener	Dennis Clinton *
Gardener's Men	Jimmy Gardner, * Sion Tudor-Owen*
Fitzwater	
Surrey	
Westminster	Paul Webster
Duch of York	Eve Pearce
Exton	Terry Wood
Groom	Jimmy Gardner
Keeper	Dennis Clinton *
Queen's Ladies	Jo Anderson, Sara Moore
York's Servant	Killian McKenna
Murderers	Michael Fitzgerald, William Armstrong

Production: Director: Terry Hands
 Designer: Farrah
 Lighting: Terry Hands (Clive Morris)
 Music: Guy Woolfenden

VITA

Phillip Jay Gibson was born in Maryville, Tennessee, on 27 February 1952. He attended elementary schools there and graduated from Maryville High School in June 1970. An ALCOA Foundation scholarship recipient, he took a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Maryville College in June 1974. In 1975 he entered the Graduate School of the University of Tennessee and accepted a teaching assistantship there in 1976. He was awarded a Master of Arts degree in August 1977.

After teaching for one year at Webb School of Knoxville, he returned to the University of Tennessee in September 1978, as a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree and as a teaching assistant in English. He was awarded an Alwin Thaler Traveling Fellowship for research in the United Kingdom in September 1981. He received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in English in March 1986.

The author is currently a Financial Analyst in Delegated Market Risk Supervision for the Bank of America N.T. and S.A. in San Francisco, California, with whom he has been employed since 1982.