

**SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORY
OF KING HENRY THE
FOURTH. PART II**

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Shakespeare's history of King Henry the Fourth. Part II by William Shakespeare & W. J. Rolfe

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE & W. J. ROLFE

**SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORY
OF KING HENRY THE
FOURTH. PART II**



STREET IN LONDON

SHAKESPEARE'S
HISTORY OF
KING HENRY THE FOURTH
PART II

EDITED, WITH NOTES

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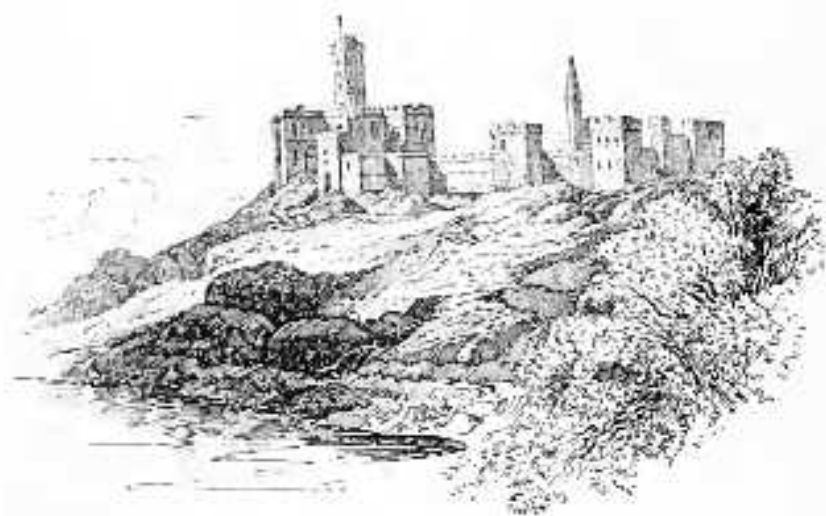
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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS play, first edited by me in 1880, is now thoroughly revised on the same general plan as *The Merchant of Venice* and the other plays that have preceded it in the new series.

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WARKWORTH CASTLE



HENRY IV

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND PART OF KING HENRY THE FOURTH

THE HISTORY OF THE PLAY

It is almost certain that 2 *Henry IV* was written immediately after 1 *Henry IV*, and before the entry of the latter on the Stationers' Registers, February 25, 1598;¹ for that entry shows that the name of Oldcastle, originally given to the fat knight in both plays, had already been changed to Falstaff. It was certainly written before Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, which was acted in 1599; for in that play Justice Silence is alluded to by name.

The earliest edition of the play was a quarto printed

¹ As the year did not then end until March 25, the date "February 25, 1597," on the Registers was of course February 25, 1598.

in 1600; and in this the prefix "*Old*," was accidentally retained before one of the speeches of Falstaff (i. 2. 113): "Very well, my lord, very well," etc. In some copies of the quarto the first scene of act iii is wanting. The error seems to have been discovered after part of the edition had been printed, and was rectified by inserting two new leaves. For these the type of some of the preceding and following leaves was used, so that there are two different impressions of the latter part of act ii and the beginning of iii. 2.

No other edition of the play appears to have been issued before the publication of the folio of 1623, in which it was probably printed either from a transcript of the original manuscript, or from a complete copy of the quarto collated with such a transcript. "It contains passages of considerable length which are not found in the quarto. Some of these are among the finest in the play, and are too closely connected with the context to allow of the supposition that they were later additions inserted by the author after the publication of the quarto. In the manuscript from which that edition was printed, these passages had been most likely omitted, or erased, in order to shorten the play for the stage." On the other hand, the quarto contains several passages which do not appear in the folio. Some of these were probably struck out by the author, and others by the Master of the Revels.

The play is inferior to *1 Henry IV* in dramatic interest, and long ago disappeared from the stage. Furnivall remarks: "All continuations do fall off, and this is no