

THE TRAGEDY OF RICHARD THE THIRD

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649385911

The tragedy of Richard the Third by George B. Churchill

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

GEORGE B. CHURCHILL

**THE TRAGEDY OF
RICHARD THE THIRD**



EDMUND KEAN AS RICHARD III

THE TUDOR

SHAKESPEARE

The Tragedy of
Richard the Third

EDITED BY

GEORGE B. CHURCHILL, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
IN AMHERST COLLEGE



New York

The Macmillan Company

1914

All rights reserved

141547
27/1/17

MADE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Text used is the Neilson Text copyrighted in 1906
by William Allan Neilson



PR
222
H.C.
124

Copyright, 1912

By The Macmillan Company

First edition of this issue of "The Tragedy of Richard the Third"
printed June, 1912. Reprinted July, 1914.

Introduction

Text. — The first edition of *Richard III* (Q₁) has the following title-page: "*The Tragedy of King Richard the third. Containing, His treacherous Plots against his brother Clarence: the pittieful murder of his innocent nephewes: his tyrannical vsurpation: with the whole course of his detested life, and most deserued death. As it hath beene lately Acted by the Right honourable the Lord Chamberlaine his servants. At London Printed by Valentine Sims, for Andrew Wise, dwelling in Paules Church-yard, at the Signe of the Angell. 1597.*" This edition was reprinted, by Thomas Creede, in 1598 (Q₂), without essential change; but the title-page bears the name of the author: "*By William Shakespeare.*" The third Quarto (Q₃), 1602, professes falsely to be "*Newly augmented,*" but is actually only a reprint of Q₂. Other quartos (4-8) followed in 1605, 1612, 1622, 1629, 1634, all deriving ultimately from Q₁.

The text of the play, as it appears in the first Folio, 1623, is an independent version which differs greatly from that of the quartos. Besides a very large number of unimportant variations, each has passages of its own that cannot be spared from the context, and the Folio has, moreover, many additions which, though they are not necessary to the context, are entirely in keeping with it, both in content and style. How far Shakespeare's revising hand is to be seen in these variations, which of the versions

approximates most closely the ultimate original, which is, in short, the more authoritative, are questions involving great difference of opinion, probably impossible to determine exactly. Recent opinion, however, tends strongly to the view that there is no sufficient reason to suppose that Q_1 was printed from a transcript of Shakespeare's original Ms., but that it is on the contrary "an exceptionally correct short-hand writer's report of the play," revised by an assistant of the printer; and that the text of the Folio comes nearest to the form in which Shakespeare wished it to stand. On the Folio version, therefore, is based the present text.

Date of Composition.—The earliest direct evidence as to the date of the play is furnished by the entry of Q_1 in the Stationers' Registers: "Andrewe wise Entred for his copie vnder th andes of Master Barlowe, and master warden man The tragedie of King Richard the Third with the death of the Duke of Clarence . . . vjd," dated October 20, 1597. The words of the Quarto's title-page, "As . . . lately acted by . . . the Lord Chamberlaine his servants," cannot carry the presentation of the play farther back than April 17, 1597, when the company's patron, Lord Hunsdon, became Lord Chamberlain. This gives 1596 as the latest possible date of composition. There is in Weever's *Epigrammes*, published in 1599, but, if we may trust the author's own statement, written at the latest in 1596, a reference to Shakespeare's Richard; and this is presumably, but not certainly, Richard III, not Richard II. The earliest possible date is determined by the fact that *Richard III* is clearly a continuation of

3 Henry VI, for which we may safely assume a date of about 1592. Thus *Richard III* was quite certainly composed between 1592 and 1596.

Internal evidence, however, enables us to establish with nearly equal certainty a more exact date. "The marks of Shakespeare's early style," the strongly apparent influence of Marlowe, the Senecan conception of Margaret's rôle, the set lyric passages of lamentation, the abundance of argument, rhetoric, and oratory, the lack of subtlety and complexity in the characterization, make it safe to ascribe the play to about 1593; and there is a very general agreement upon this date.

Source of the Plot. — The basis of the play is the account of Richard's career given in *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, by Raphael Holinshed. That Shakespeare used the second edition of this work, published January 1, 1587 (O.S. 1586), is proved by the fact that the play follows (V. iii. 324) the misprint by which Richard is made to say that Richmond was brought up "by my moothers (instead of *brothers*) means." Holinshed's material, however, was obtained from preceding chroniclers. His account of the reign of Edward IV is based upon that of Halle's *The Union of the Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York*, published by Grafton in 1548, second edition 1550, with some excerpts from other chroniclers. For Richard's course from the death of Edward IV Holinshed depended on Sir Thomas More's *The History of King Richard the thirde*, which he followed not as adopted by Halle, but as published by

Rastell in his edition of More's works, 1557. But More's book breaks off just before the insurrection of Buckingham, and from this point Holinshed again follows Halle, with some abridgment, and with some use of Grafton's chronicle. That Shakespeare made direct use of Halle's chronicle, and not merely as it appeared in Holinshed, is shown by the fact that he makes use of some of Halle's matter that Holinshed omitted. To Halle, for example, are due the two bishops that accompany Richard in III. vii, and the mention of Burdet's case in III. v. 76. Holinshed and Halle are, therefore, the direct historical sources of the play.

But just as Holinshed had based the major portion of his account on the work of More, so Halle, where he had not been able to make use of More, had based his account on the work of Polydore Vergil, an Italian who had been resident at the court of Henry VII, and who published an *Historia Angliæ* in 1534. Many other chroniclers besides More and Vergil had from the time of Richard's death been busy with his career. They were subject to the influence of a Tudor court, and occupied themselves in blackening the character and deeds of a king who must be believed a villain and a usurper if Henry's dynasty was to be justified. Thus by their work, strengthened and expanded by popular tradition and by various literary and dramatic productions mentioned below, there was built up a Richard myth or saga, which, though often uncorroborated by evidence, and often demonstrably untrue, has, because it passed into Shakespeare's play, remained to the present time the popularly accepted history of Richard.