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A STAGE HISTORY OF HENRY THE FIFTH: 1583-1859

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Robert Roy Spanabel, B.S., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1969

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
Division of Theatre
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VITA

July 7, 1931               Born - East Palestine, Ohio
1949-1953 .                United States Navy
1957 . . .                 B.S., Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
1957-1958 .                Technical Assistant, Department of Speech and
                          Dramatic Art, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
1958 . . .                 M.A., University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
1959-1961 .                Artistic Director, Pit and Balcony, Saginaw, Michigan
1961-1963 .                Instructor, Department of Speech, University of
                          Minnesota, Duluth, Minnesota
1963-1964 .                McKnight Fellow, University of Minnesota,
                          Minneapolis, Minnesota
1965-1969 .                Teaching Associate, Division of Theatre, The Ohio
                          State University, Columbus, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Theatre

Studies in Theatre History. Professors William Reardon (University of
Iowa), William Melnitz (University of Minnesota), and John H.
McDowell and John C. Morrow (The Ohio State University).

Studies in Theatre Criticism. Professors John H. McDowell and John
C. Morrow (The Ohio State University).

Studies in Dramatic Literature. Professors Alrik Gustafson (University
of Minnesota), and Harold Walley and John C. Morrow (The
Ohio State University).

Studies in Advanced Theatre Directing. Professors Frank Whiting
(University of Minnesota), and Roy H. Bowen (The Ohio State University).
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

For a period of nearly three centuries—from 1599 through 1859—every major English Shakespearean actor and actor-manager produced Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth or an adaptation of it. Of all these actors, only David Garrick chose to play the role of Chorus rather than that of the King.

In addition to Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth and the various cut and interpolated texts of it which followed, this period witnessed five additional versions of the play, or plays using the same story and many of the same characters. The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth, by an anonymous author, appears to have been the first version, and was produced in the 1580's. A shorter but considerably more loosely structured work than Shakespeare's, it served the Elizabethan interest in the chronicle play. An entry in Henslowe's Diary for 1595 lists receipts for a Harey the V.\(^1\) In 1599, according to most textual and historical scholars, Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth was first produced, and this was the version staged until shortly before the closing of the theatres in 1642. Following the restoration of Charles II, Roger Boyle's version of the play, patterned on the French verse form and

with its strict adherence to the neoclassic ideals of love-and-honor and decorum, was highly successful. Betterton and Harris, two of the period's greatest actors, performed the major roles. In 1720 His Majesty's Servants produced Charles Molloy's, The Half-Pay Officers, a comedy modeled partially on some of the scenes in Shakespeare's play. From 1723 to 1736 Aaron Hill's adaptation of the story of King Henry catered to this age's appetite for love interest and intrigue. By 1738 Shakespeare's text was again being produced, and with only two exceptions it was the version produced on the London stage through 1859. These two exceptions were a one-act version of the play, The Conspiracy Discovered, which had a brief run in 1746, and a short-lived revival of Hill's adaptation which appeared in the same year.

Even with all the performances given Henry the Fifth and the various versions and adaptations produced during these 276 years, this play was not one of the more popular of Shakespeare's works. Indeed, it was not the most popular of his history plays in terms of number of productions or performances. During the eighteenth century all versions of this play received only 142 performances in London, and it was eighteenth in popularity of all the plays of Shakespeare produced in London from 1701 to 1800.²

Although this play did not maintain the production popularity

of Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Richard III, Henry IV, or Romeo and Juliet during this period, Henry the Fifth has been the object of wide differences of literary and theatrical critical opinion. Three schools of thought appear to have developed about this play: (1) those that find the play and its hero a waste of dramatic effort and not worthy of theatrical consideration; (2) those that are enamored of the work and believe it to be a unique stage piece; and (3) those that attempt to remain neutral. It has been praised by some critics for its great epic nature and damned by others for a lack of dramatic cohesiveness. Shakespeare's use of a Chorus to introduce each act has been hailed by some as a brilliant dramatic achievement, while others have condemned it as evidence of the fact that the dramatist's imagination had failed him, or that the story of Henry and Agincourt is impossible to realize within the dramatic form.

Hailed by some as the flag of England, Henry the Fifth has been produced with all the jingoistic fervour possible, exalting the hero as "the mirror of all Christian kings." These same productions have antagonized other critics who contend that the play is Shakespeare's personal, ironic, political statement and must be so treated. The avid defenders of the play who see it as Shakespeare's deep perception of the three Henrys—the King, the soldier, and the man—decry other interpretations as demonstrations of literary and/or theatrical biases. The arguments seem endless regarding the play's dramatic merit and its theatrical validity.
The major cause of this divergent critical reaction may lie in the unique nature of the play itself; *Henry the Fifth* is possibly Shakespeare's most "English" play. Unlike many of his other works—comedies, histories and tragedies—this play is not and cannot be set in another locale, an Elyria, a Verona or Padua, a Rome, or an antebellum South. Unlike *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Henry IV*, and *Henry VIII*, it does not deal primarily with a weak man-king, a villain, an apprenticeship toward kingship, or a despotic (if affable) monarch. It is not concerned with internecine struggles of the commonwealth. More than any other of Shakespeare's works, *Henry the Fifth* is a product of its time and place. Patterned after the English chronicle play as a biographical pageant of the English hero-king, it is an epic rather than a tragic history. The concept of Henry as the ideal Prince and King is certainly a manifestation of one of the most important themes in the social and political thinking of the English Renaissance. And yet as a product of its time and perhaps as the culmination of the English dramatic-epic centering around a single central figure, it has provided a battleground for literary critics and a dramatic vehicle for a wide variety of theatrical interpretations since the date of its composition.

**Purpose and limitations of the study**

The general purpose of this study is to trace the professional London stage history of *Henry the Fifth* from the earliest known
production in the 1580's through Charles Kean's revival in 1859. The earliest recorded play dealing with the story of King Henry is *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, produced by The Queen's Men sometime between 1583 and 1588. Recognized by most scholars as a source for Shakespeare's play, *The Famous Victories* provides the obvious initial date. The terminal date of 1859 has been selected for two major reasons. First, Charles Kean's 1859 production was the most detailed and elaborate production of the play in the nineteenth-century actor-manager tradition. The four other productions in the remainder of the century made no significant contributions to either the text or the staging. And second, since 1900 many of the most significant productions of the play have been staged elsewhere than London and have involved techniques of the New Stagecraft. To attempt to deal with these twentieth-century productions would entail the examination of entirely too much material for a study of this nature.

The specific purpose of this study is threefold: (1) to examine all the available materials—textual, visual and critical—in order to discover as much as possible about the production of this play by each actor-manager and company, (2) to compare the different productions within pre-established chronological periods, and (3) to determine the significant variations in thrust and sweep in the

Arguments opposing this view are examined in Chapter Two of this study.
production of this most English of Shakespeare's plays between the initial and terminal dates selected.

Review of the literature

No stage history of Henry the Fifth has been written. Two studies of individual actor's productions of this play are J. V. Cutler's, William Charles Macready's June 10, 1839 Production of Shakespeare's King Henry V, a master's thesis written at the University of Illinois in 1959, and D. J. Watermeier's, A Reconstruction of Samuel Phelps's Production of Shakespeare's King Henry the Fifth at the Theatre Royal, Sadler's Wells, also a master's thesis written at the University of Maryland in 1965. These are the only works dealing specifically with the play as staged.

Secondary sources of a general nature include a number of eighteenth and nineteenth-century histories of the drama and the stage. Some of the more valuable to this study are: John Doran's Annals of the English Stage; F. G. Fleay's Chronicle History of the London Stage; and John Downes' Roscius Anglicanus. A major work devoted specifically to staging is George C. D. Odell's Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving. A History of the English Drama, 1660-1900 by Allardyce Nicoll provides brief but important sidelights on some of the adaptations done in the eighteenth century.

Information about the play in its Elizabethan context--textually and in staging--can be found in two works by E. K. Chambers. The
Elizabethan Stage, and William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems; in F. G. Fleay's Chronicle History of the Life and Works of William Shakespeare; and in John T. Murray's English Dramatic Companies, 1558-1642. Among the many articles devoted to textual studies of the play and arguing the case for folio or quarto adaptation, one of the most important is the lengthy one by H. T. Price, The Text of Henry V.

Compilations of material listing names, dates, companies, productions, and occasionally some critical commentary provide information that is nearly impossible for the individual researcher to gather from the original sources. Some Account of the English Stage by Genest is certainly the major pioneer work of this type. Three others of equal importance to this study are: Charles B. Hogan's Shakespeare in the Theatre, 1701-1800; The London Stage: 1660-1800, edited by Emmett L. Avery and others; and Charles Shattuck's The Shakespeare Promptbooks.

Among the most important primary materials for this study are five promptbooks for nineteenth-century productions of Henry the Fifth, microfilm copies of which are in the Ohio State University Theatre Collection. However, these five promptbooks account for only four different actor-manager productions. Two of them are for the 1819 and 1839 productions of William Charles Macready, one is for the 1811 production of J. P. Kemble, one is for the 1852 production of Samuel Phelps, and one is for the 1859 production of Charles Kean. Also in the Theatre
Collection on microfilm are the Charles Kean scrapbook with some costume designs, scene designs for Kean's production, J. P. Kemble's partbook copied in his own hand, and three eighteenth-century editions of the play which may have served as the bases for particular productions.

Engravings and sketches from eighteenth and early nineteenth-century productions and a photograph from Charles Kean's 1859 production comprise important visual evidence. Personal reminiscences and memoirs of actors and actresses and many theatrical reviews provide additional primary materials.

Of major importance in establishing dates for some of the early productions of Henry the Fifth are: Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I; Thomas Nashe's Pierce Penilesse; The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert; Payne Collier's editions of Memoirs of Edward Alleyn, and The Alleyn Papers; W. W. Greg's edition of Henslowe's Diary, and The Henslowe Papers; and Foakes's and Rickert's more recent study, Henslowe's Diary.

Facsimiles of the following are used for textual reference: the first folio of Shakespeare's works; the first and third quartos of Henry the Fifth; and the 1600 quarto of The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth. Additional textual reference comes from the following: a first edition of Aaron Hill's Henry V; Roger Boyle's Henry the Fifth (in, The Dramatic Works of Roger Boyle, edited by Clark); and The Half
Pay Officers by Charles Molloy.

Plan of the study

This study is presented in four major chapters exclusive of the
Introduction (Chapter I) and the Summary and Conclusion (Chapter VI).
Chapters II through V deal with the productions of the play and include:
examination of the text; rehearsal and staging methods (when such infor-
mation is available); critical reaction; and illustrations.

Chapter II. The Queen's Men to Aaron Hill: 1583-1738.--Some-
time between 1583 and 1588 the Queen's Men staged the first recorded
production of a play about the hero of Agincourt. This chapter begins
with an examination of the earliest records of a pre-Shakespearean pro-
duction and compares the earliest extant text—the quarto facsimile of
The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth—with the first quarto of Shake-
speare's play. Next, different critical theories about the quarto and
the folio versions of Shakespeare's text are examined as they relate
to the earliest possible production of his play. Textual studies of
these two versions along with entries in The Stationers Register supply
additional information about the production history in the late
sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Roger Boyle's version of the play, written and produced during
the Restoration, had its last performance in 1668. Then for a period
of fifty-three years there is no record of any production of a play
on this subject. In 1720 Charles Molloy's work, The Half-Pay Officers,
a farce compiled from Shakespeare's play and at least two other plays, opened and was presented intermittently during the ensuing decade. A discussion of Aaron Hill's adaptation of Henry the Fifth, produced initially in 1723, concludes this chapter.

Chapter III. The Shakespearean revival and the early actor-managers: 1738-1789.--This chapter examines the period beginning with the first recorded performance of Shakespeare's play following the confirmed account of the 1605 court performance and continues until John Kemble's first production. The factors resulting in the Shakespearean revival of the late 1730's, and the first performances of Shakespeare's play in the early actor-manager tradition are considered, including those of: Dennis Delane (1738-1740); Sacheverel Hale (1744-1746); Spranger Barry (with Garrick, 1747-1754); William Smith (1755-1773); and Richard Wroughton (1778-1782).

The 1746 season included two other productions about which little information exists. Aaron Hill's adaptation was revived for one performance. The Conspiracy Discovered, or, French Policy Defeated, a one-act adaptation by an anonymous playwright, was given three performances in this same season at Drury Lane. Also, it was during this period that the play was first used as a political vehicle.

While literary criticism of Henry the Fifth is generally outside the scope of this study, the 1738-1789 period presents a special problem. Therefore some extensive examination of Samuel Johnson's
criticism is included within the chapter.

Chapter IV. Kemble to Macready: 1789-1839.---The productions in this period begin with John Philip Kemble's first presentation of the play at Drury Lane in 1789 through his last at Covent Garden in 1811. Interim productions between those of Kemble and William Charles Macready include: R. W. Elliston (1803); William Conway (1813-1814); and Edmund Kean (1830). The chapter concludes with a detailed examination of Macready's final production of Henry the Fifth in 1839.

The most important primary sources for this period are the promptbooks for Kemble's and Macready's productions. In addition, illustrations are used to supplement textual study and critical reaction.

Chapter V. The age of Phelps and Kean: 1839-1859.---This chapter examines the renaissance in Shakespearean staging that resulted under the managements of Samuel Phelps at Sadler's Wells and Charles Kean at The Princess's as exemplified by their productions of Henry the Fifth. Phelps's accomplishment under the most unfavorable conditions stands as a unique phenomenon in English theatre history. Kean, catering to an entirely different clientele in a fashionable section of London, was able to realize higher standards in Shakespearean production than any of his predecessors.

Six appendixes follow the Summary and Conclusion. Appendix A is a chronological list of productions of Henry the Fifth from 1583
to 1859. This table includes the date of production, theatre, company or actor, title of the play, author, number of performances, and source from which the information was gathered.

Appendix B is a copy of "An Occasional Address To The Volunteers," a patriotic epilogue appended to Kemble's 1803 production, designed to rally Englishmen to the threat of the Napoleonic invasion. The "Address" is an excellent example of one of the means employed by managers to parallel King Henry's patriotic campaigns with contemporary events of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Appendixes C through F are comparisons of the texts of Henry the Fifth used by Kemble, Macready, Phelps, and Kean respectively, with the control text for this study. These tables detail scenes, list the number of lines cut, and include remarks on special inversions and transpositions of dialogue.

**Control text**

In order to determine the degree to which the productions differ from each other textually, it is necessary to have a control text, that is, a text from which all variations are noted. This study uses the Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare, The Life of King Henry the Fifth, edited by Louis B. Wright and the late Virginia A. LaMar. This text is based upon the folio copy and incorporates all emendations from the quartos and from individual editors agreed upon by the majority of the textual scholars. A more detailed consideration
of the arguments for and against the First Folio copy appears in Chapter II.
Our knowledge of the first one hundred-fifty years of the stage history of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth and the other versions of the play must be based to a large extent on speculation and assumption. This is particularly true for the period from the early 1580's through 1600, because during this time there are references to two Henry V plays, and a third, The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth, was published. Then in 1600 the first quarto of Shakespeare's play appeared.

Scholars differ widely in opinion about the sources and nature of these plays and their relationships to each other. But only by examining the few primary records available which relate to this early period, and the subsequent critical speculation, is it possible to provide a background, however tenuous, for Shakespeare's play onstage.

The Early Records

The earliest reference to any play dealing with King Henry is found in Tarlton's Jests.

At the Bull at Bishops-gate was a play of Henry the fift, wherein the judge was to take a box on the eare; and because he was absent that should take the blow, Tarlton himselfe, ever forward to please, tooke upon him to play the same judge, besides his owne part of the clowne: and Knel then playing Henry the fift, hit Tarlton a sound boxe indeed, which made the people laugh the more
because it was he, but anon the judge goes in, and immediately Tarlton in his clowones cloathes comes out, and askes the actors what newes: O saith one hadst thou been here, thou shouldest have seene Prince Henry hit the judge a terrible box on the ear: What, man, said Tarlton, strike a judge? It is true, yfaith, said the other. No other like, said Tarlton, and it could not be but terrible to the judge, when the report so terrifies me, that me thinkes the blow remains still on my cheeke, that it burnes againe. The people laught at this mightily: and to this day I have heard it commended for rare; but no marvell, for he had many of these. But I would see our clowns in these dayes do the like: no, I warrant ye, and yet they thinke well of themselves to.¹

A civic order of November 28, 1583 assigned the Bull Inn, Bishops-gate Street, to the Queen's Men for their first winter season.²

The actor, Richard Tarlton, died in 1588. The performance described above can therefore be dated as sometime during this five year period. Exactly what play of Henry the Fifth is referred to in this quotation from the Jests has long been a matter of debate. A summary examination of this argument is important here, not to provide an answer, but rather to show the possibility of a relationship of this play to Shakespeare's.

Halliwell indicates in a footnote to the above quotation that it refers not to "... Shakespeare's play of that name, but an earlier drama, which has probably come to us in a mutilated shape, entitled 'The


FamousVictoriesofHenrytheFifth,'fromwhichShakespearemayhavetakentheideaoftherobberyatGadshillinhisHenryIV. Halliwell'scommentisimportantfortworasons.First,hesoundswhatcanbeconsidere dthekeynотeofthecontroversywithehisstatementthattheplay wasTheFamousVictories;andsecond,hesuggeststhattheversionwe haveisnottheoneoriginallyperformedbytheQueen'sMen. P. A. Daniel,inhisintroductiontothefacsimileofTheFamousVictories, whilequestioningtheauthenticityoftheJestsreport,agreeswith Halliwellabouttheplay.

...itwasphysicallyimpossiblefortarletontodoubplet heparts ofDerrickandtheChiefJusticeinasceneinwhichbothappeared (see sc. iv. of Facsimile);neverthelessitseemsprobablethatthe HenrytheFifthplayherementionedwaseourFamousVictories: TarletonwasfromthefirstamemberoftheQueen'sCompany,whichwas formedin1583,andeTheFamousVictories,ifwemaybelievethet itle-page,wasaqueen'sCompany'sPlay.4

Beforeproceedingwiththecontroversy,itisnecessarytouseamare whichtheargumentcenters.

TheearliestwrittenrecordwehaveofTheFamousVictoriesof HenrytheFifthisintheStationers'RegisterwheremonMay14,1594, itwasenteredtothomasCreedee"abookeentituled/.Thefamous victeriesofHenryetheFfyst/conteyningethehonorablebattellof


However, the earliest quarto extant is that of 1598, on the title page of which is printed: "As it was plaide by the Queenes Maiesties Players." Another edition appeared in 1617 printed by Bernard Alsop. The texts of both editions are identical.

The play is written entirely in prose. However the publisher, with the apparent intention of giving the play an up-to-date appearance—by 1598 blank verse had become the vogue—cut up the prose into lines approximating ten syllables. The style is plain and not ostentatious or rhetorical. The play is divided into twenty scenes, not indicated as such, but by entrances and exits. The line count of the 1598 quarto is 1,5787, or less than one-half of the lines in the folio version of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth. But brief as it is, The Famous Victories covers the events from the robbery at Gadshill—in Shakespeare's Henry IV, Part One—through the vows between King Henry V and Princess Katherine with which Shakespeare concludes his Henry the Fifth.

Fleay believes The Famous Victories was first performed in 1585 or 1586. The key to this lies, he says, in the play itself. In many of the early English chronicle plays or "histories," the Christian

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6Famous Victories, p. 1.

7Famous Victories.
names of the comic characters are taken from the real names of the actors themselves. Thus, in The Famous Victories, the character of John Cobbler was played by John Laneham, Robin Pewterer by Robert (Robin) Wilson, Lawrence Costermonger by Lawrence Dutton; etc., actors known to have been members of the Queen's Men in 1585. However, Chambers argues against the validity of Fleay's reasoning, dismissing it as one more manifestation of Fleay's "blundering conjectures." Fleay believes the play was written by Tarleton. This he bases primarily on the repetitions in writing which correspond, he says, exactly with what we know of Tarleton's other writing. H. D. Sykes, using the same type of evidence as Fleay uses, presents a case for Samuel Rowley being the author of The Famous Victories. Sykes's argument is based on a stylistic comparison of certain phrases spoken by similar characters in this play and in Rowley's play, When You See Me You Know Me. He further supports his thesis by citing the use of the clown figure in both of these plays. Chambers, while indicating that there is no external evidence to connect Rowley with the Queen's Company, maintains that


9Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, II, p. 108.

10Fleay, London Stage, p. 67.

the stylistic case presented by Sykes deserves consideration.\textsuperscript{12}

The question of the relationship of The Famous Victories to Shakespeare's play received renewed interest in 1918 in articles by John Dover Wilson and Alfred Pollard, in which they suggested that The Famous Victories was neither a source for Shakespeare's Henry IV or Henry V nor the play of the Queen's Company in which Tarleton acted.\textsuperscript{13} Rather, they believed it to be a debased and an abridged version of two plays belonging to the Queen's Company. A. E. Morgan agreed with Daniel's remark that it was physically impossible for Tarleton to double the roles of Derrick and the Chief Justice in the 1598 edition of The Famous Victories, and like Pollard and Wilson, posited an earlier play to which Shakespeare was indebted. But he modified their thesis, suggesting two possibilities: one, that the Admiral's Men acquired some of the play books of the Queen's Men, among these, the Henry V play which they then revised and played from 1595 to 1598. This revision is probably what we know today as The Famous Victories. Or, at some time the manuscript of an earlier version of the play or of The Famous Victories itself passed from the Admiral's Men to the Chamberlain's Men, and that this text was reworked by Shakespeare. This could have taken place while these two companies worked together on tour in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12}Chambers, \textit{Elizabethan Stage}, III, p. 472.
  
  \item \textsuperscript{13}A. W. Pollard and J. Dover Wilson, "The 'Stolne and Surrectionous' Shakespearean Texts," \textit{The Times Literary Supplement}, March 13, 1919. See also: TLS, January 9, January 16, August 7, and August 14, 1919 for the other four articles in this series.
\end{itemize}
1593, or in 1594 at Newington Butts Theatre.\textsuperscript{14} Chambers, while agreeing that the extant edition of \textit{The Famous Victories} is probably an abridged one, taken perhaps from a two-part play, found no substantiation for Morgan's theory.

\dots there is little ground for Morgan's theory that the original was in verse, that it passed to the Admiral's men and was produced by them in a revised form, as their \textit{Henry V} of 1595-6, and that it was then transferred by them to the Chamberlain's, and became Shakespeare's source for \textit{Henry IV} and \textit{Henry V}. Conjecture for conjecture, it is much more likely that an edition of the \textit{Famous Victories}, as we now know it, was issued about 1594, but is now lost, and that this was used as a source by Shakespeare, and perhaps independently by a writer for the Admiral's. There is no evidence, and little probability, that the Chamberlain's and the Admiral's ever interchanged play-books.\textsuperscript{15}

Dover Wilson, in an article written twenty-five years after initial inquiry into this particular subject, detailed and amplified his original thesis.

That \textit{F.V.} is a 'bad' quarto there cannot now be any reasonable doubt. \dots it is a memorial reconstruction, by a touring troupe attached, as the title-page shows, to the Queen's men, of a full-length play or plays, which that unhappy company had been forced to sell during the disastrous plague years of 1592-4, when the London theatres were generally closed and the players obliged to eke out a precarious existence by travelling in the provinces. And if \textit{F. V.}, \dots is probably the worst dramatic text that has survived from that period, \dots the explanation is, I believe, that it compresses what were originally two full-length plays within the limits of 1,580 lines, \dots

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{A. E. Morgan, Some Problems of Shakespeare's 'Henry the Fourth.' A Paper Read Before the Shakespeare Association on Friday, November 23rd, 1922} (London: Published for the Shakespeare Association by Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1924), pp. 10-16.

But Tarlton, dying in 1588, can have had nothing to do with a text produced by the plague years; and the play in which he acted, . . . must therefore have been a complete Henry IV belonging to the London repertory of the Queen's company before it fell on evil days, while the second half of F.V. indicates that with such a Henry IV went a Henry V also.16

Wilson believes that Nashe's reference to a performance of a Henry V play in 1592 is strong evidence that the play was being acted on the London stage before the closing of the theatres that year. But whether it was produced by the Queen's company or another company remains unknown.

We do know, however, that the Queen's had sold Orlando before 21 February, 1592, since it was being acted on that date by their rivals, the Lord Strange's men, and . . . they may have sold the 'book' of their Henry IV and Henry V at the same time and to the same company. In any event, the close connexion already noted between F.V. and Shakespeare's three history plays would be explained if we supposed (i) that his company acquired the old 'books' directly or indirectly from the Queen's men, who then proceeded to act them in the provinces as best they could from memory; (ii) that the memorized text was first compressed into the limits required for a single provincial performance and further adapted, corrupted, and vulgarized as time went on; and (iii) that a member or members of the troupe made a few shillings by writing down what remained of the original, together with the accretions, after three years' degradation, and selling it to the printer in 1594.17

C. A. Greer, in two articles published within a few months of each other, agreed with Morgan and with Wilson that a lost play was the common source of both The Famous Victories and Shakespeare's Henry


17Ibid.
But he contends that Morgan's reasoning was invalid, that he did not make sound use of his material. Unfortunately, Greer's own reasoning is suspect, because he insists that Shakespeare borrowed heavily from *The Famous Victories* and that he made very little use of Holinshed. A surface comparison of Shakespeare's play with Holinshed negates Greer's argument.

Finally, a completely different idea about the relationship of these two plays is presented by Seymour M. Pitcher who cites considerable external evidence to support his thesis that Shakespeare wrote *The Famous Victories*. Following his examination of various criteria, among which are character and language, he summarizes his "Facts and Inferences."

... the play was first printed by Thomas Creed, of all Elizabethan stationers the most alert to Shakespeare's marketability; he printed it in the year which marks Shakespeare's attainmment of general notoriety.

That it was certainly a Queen's play, written in 1586, also lends probability to my thesis; Shakespeare may very well have begun his work in London at about that time, and his association with the Queen's is at any rate traditional... Tarlton acted in the play, and this is consistent with the belief that Shakespeare was early associated with him. The eighteenth-century subscription to the engraving of Tarlton, though of uncertain origin, offers some further substantiation.

All in all, it seems to me fair to claim that the external data and documentary evidence strengthen the likelihood of Shakespeare's

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authorship of *The Famous Victories*.  

The preceding summary of little fact and considerable assumption about the earliest play on the Henry V story emphasizes the difficulty or impossibility of establishing anything more than speculation about the manner in which the play was staged. And yet such sketchy information does indicate the possibility of a textual precedent for Shakespeare's play. Other partial records from the last decade of the sixteenth century indicate that the story of the English hero-king, in plays using different titles, was of continuing interest to Elizabethan audiences.

The next record of a Henry V play appears in Henslowe's Diary. In the first accounts of a repertory season by Lord Strange's Men at the Rose Theatre, Philip Henslowe lists receipts of thirty-two shillings for a performance of "harey of cornwell the 25 of february 1591" (1592 according to the reformed calendar). Three other performances of this play are recorded in the Diary for March 23, April 29, and May 13 of the same year. The only other mention of this play by this title is found in a letter from Edward Alleyn to his wife dated August 1,  

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1593. Alleyn was traveling with Lord Strange's Men in the provinces during one of the plague seasons in London. In this letter Alleyn wrote:

if you send any mor letters send to me by the cariers of shrowsbery or to west chester or to york to bekeptt till my lord stranges players com and thus sweett hartt w^t my harty comenda to all of frends I sess from bristo this wensday after saynt Jame his day being redy to begin the playe of harry of cornwall. . . .

The Oxfordians have used this information for more fuel for their particular fire, and one of their faith, Charles Barrell, argues that Shakespeare's Henry V is the Harey of Cornwell in Henslowe's Diary. Barrell's reasoning includes the following: that Henslowe did not use his usual mark to indicate that the play was new, and therefore it was an older piece performed prior to the recorded 1592 performance; that no character is known to British history or literature as "Harey of Cornwell" outside of Henslowe's Diary and Alleyn's letter; that this title is consistent with Henslowe's penchant for applying nicknames to current successes; and, that the scene between the King and Pistol offers the source of the nickname. If Barrell's reasoning leads to proof of anyone's authorship, I have been unable to discover it.

On August 8, 1592, Pierce Penilesse His Supplication to the Divell, written by Thomas Nashe, was entered in the Stationers'
Register and was published in the same year. At one point in this pamphlet, Nashe defends plays, saying that the great men of the past—he uses Sir John Talbot as a specific example—lying long-dead in their tombs, through plays can live again. He also attacks the usurers who are only interested in people like themselves and who do not appreciate art.

All Artes to them are vanitie: and, if you tell them what a glorious thing it is to have Henrie the fifth represented on the Stage, leading the French King prisoner, and forcing both him and the Dolphin to swear fealty, I, but (will they say) what do we get by it? Respecting neither the right of Fame that is due to true Nobilitie deceased, nor what hopes of eternitie are to be proposed to aduentrous mindes, to encourage them forward, but onely their execrable luker, and filthie vnquenchable avarice.

In the final scene of The Famous Victories King Henry makes the French King and the Dauphin swear fealty upon his sword. Such stage business does not occur in Shakespeare's play. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Nashe saw a performance of either The Famous Victories in the extant version or an earlier source play for The Famous Victories.

The last recorded performances in the sixteenth century of a play about Henry V appear in Henslowe's Diary. Opposite the date of November 28, 1595, are listed receipts of three pounds, six shillings for a performance of Harey the V. This play, performed by the


26Foakes and Rickert, eds., Henslowe's Diary, p. 33.
Admiral's Men, has thirteen recorded performances from November 28, 1595 through July 15, 1596. Considerable speculation and argument about the relationship of this play to The Famous Victories, Harry of Cornwall, and Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth have arisen from the marking "ne" which Henslowe included in the receipt listing. Collier believed this marking indicated a new play, not previously produced, and suggested that Harry the V might be Shakespeare's play. Fleay, noting obvious discrepancies in Henslowe's use of "ne"—it occasionally appears opposite plays known to have been produced earlier—as well as date irregularities and misalignment of titles and receipts, attributed these to carelessness and a basic ignorance of stage matters and dramatic art on the part of Henslowe. Greg found both Collier's and Fleay's conclusions too restrictive. He believed that Henslowe's use of "ne" attached to an account of a performance indicated one of three things: that the play was (1) new to the stage and had never been performed, (2) new to the particular company concerned, or (3) new in its particular form. Chambers affirmed the last two of Greg's suggested possibilities. But Foakes and Rickert, while acknowledging Greg's


28Fleay, London Stage, p. 117.


30Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, II, pp. 145-146.
contribution to the elucidation of the mysteries of the Diary, challenge the rather long-standing assumption of Henslowe's basic business illiteracy and stage ignorance.

Concerning the meaning of 'ne', there is no reason to think that Henslowe made errors in his use of this unexplained note; it is better to find an interpretation of 'ne' which fits all occurrences . . . One possibility . . . is that this refers to the licensing of a playbook for performance by the Master of the Revels. Several instances of Henslowe paying 7s. for this purpose are recorded in the Diary from 1598 onwards . . . , but these are entered in the Diary by chance, and others must be lost. The company would need increased takings for such plays in order to recoup the sum spent on licensing, and a new licence may itself have been a good advertising point. A license was required for a new play, presumably for a revival, at least when substantial revision had been made of the play, and also, it is probable, in a variety of other circumstances. . . .

Solutions to such problems as the meaning of the lined entries, or the meaning of 'ne', can at best be offered as probabilities, and the most acceptable are those which can most easily be reconciled with the evidence of the Diary; Henslowe certainly made some mistakes, but it is unfortunate that a view of him has been accepted which encourages a trust in his deficiencies. It is better to assume that he is right unless he can be proved wrong.31

Again, with a variety of interpretations of Henslowe's relatively simple but unexplained records of receipts, it is impossible to determine exactly what script by which playwright provided the text of Harey the V.

In addition to the records of receipts for Harey the V in the Diary, there are inventories of play-books, properties, and costumes belonging to the Admiral's Men. These inventories, first printed by Malone, have since disappeared. However, Greg, and Foakes and Rickert

31Foakes and Rickert, eds., Henslowe's Diary, pp. xxx-xxx.
believe these lists to be genuine, and they have reprinted them in their respective editions of the *Diary*. They appear as follow:

*The booke of the Inventory of the goods of my Lord Admeralles men, tucke the 10 of Marche in the year 1598.*

Gone and loste.

*Item*, Harey the fyftes dublet.
*Item*, Harey the fyftes vellet gowne.32

*The Enventory of all the apparell for my Lord Admiralles men, tucke the 10 of marche 1598.--Leaf above in the tier-house in the chest.*

*Item*, j payer of hosse for the Dowlfen.33

*The Enventorey of all the apparell of the Lord Admeralles men, taken the 13th of Marche 1598, as followeth:*

*Item*, Harye the v. velvet gowne.
*Item*, Harye the v. satten dublet, layd with gowld lace.34

These items in the *Diary* inventories, though brief, assume a special importance because so little production information of any kind is available for this period.

**Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth**

Problems of text and of date of composition of Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth* are considerably less complicated than are such problems relating to many of his other plays. Internal and external

32Ibid., p. 317.
33Ibid., p. 319.
34Ibid., pp. 321-323.
evidence tend to support one another quite strongly. And in a rare
instance Shakespeare, in this play, refers to datable historical evidence.
This is not to say that some critics have not taken exception to other-
wise generally accepted conclusions. But the concensus of scholarly
opinion is that the following evidence fixes the initial date of per-
formance of this play.

External evidence

In Palladis Tamia by Francis Meres, registered on September 7,
1598, and published in same year, there is a list of twelve noteworthy
Shakespeare plays in existence at that time.35 Among the plays Meres
included are Richard II, Richard III, Henry IV, and King John. But
since Henry the Fifth was not mentioned, it is reasonable to assume
that it had not yet appeared.

In the Epilogue to the second part of King Henry IV, written
and produced about 1597-98, the speaker says: "Our humble author will
continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair
Katharine of France; where, for anything I know, Falstaff shall die of
a sweat, unless already a be kill'd with your hard opinions."36

35Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia, With an Introduction by Don
279-287.

36William Shakespeare, The Second Part of King Henry IV, ed.
by A. R. Humphreys (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University
The Prologue to Jonson's Every Man In His Humour contains a rather direct reference to a passage in the speech of Chorus preceding Act I of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth: "Where neither Chorus wafts you oer the seas." Jonson's play was produced in 1598, but the date of composition of the prologue is uncertain. It was not printed in the quarto edition of the play in 1601, but appeared first in the folio edition of Jonson's works in 1616. Prologues and epilogues were often added to plays to suit special circumstances of performance.

In the Induction to Every Man Out Of His Humour, Jonson has written what appears to be still another allusion to the Chorus in Henry the Fifth: "We see so many seas, countries, and kingdoms, passed over with such admirable dexterity." Murray believes that Every Man Out Of His Humour was acted at the Globe shortly after Henry the Fifth. He fixes the premiere performance of Jonson's play as sometime between the latter part of July and August 10, 1599.

Arguments that a play of Henry the Fifth with Choruses existed prior to 1599 are summarily dismissed by Price, whose examination of


the text of this play is one of the most detailed and thorough.

... the whole weight of external evidence is against the theory that there was a play of Henry V. with choruses before 1599. The only Chorus that can be dated most probably belongs to the year 1599. Meres is silent about the play, and we have no quotations from Henry V., no imitations of it, no reference to it in the contemporary literature before 1599. After that date there is a constant stream of quotation and imitation. The external evidence fits the traditional date like "the fist in the eye." 40

The earliest unmistakable references to Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth appear in the Stationers' Register. The first, under the date of August 4, 1600, lists As You Like It, Henry the Fifth, Every Man In His Humour, and Much Ado About Nothing, indicating that all of these were "to be staied," that is, not to be printed. 41 Ten days later the staying action was removed, 42 and the first quarto appeared in the same year. The first of these two entries does not appear in regular chronological order in the Register, and no year is attached to the August 4 date, but the proximity of the date 1600 in previous entries has led scholars to nearly unanimous agreement on the year 1600.

Internal evidence

The most important piece of evidence for dating Henry the Fifth is the direct allusion made by Shakespeare to a contemporary event, the

41 Arber, Registers of the Company of Stationers, III, p. 37.
42 Ibid., p. 63.
expedition of the Earl of Essex to Ireland to put down the revolt led by Hugh O'Neal, Earl of Tyrone. This appears in the Chorus to Act. V.

Were now the general of our gracious Empress
(As in good time he may) from Ireland coming,
Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,
How many would the peaceful city quit
To welcome him!43

Essex left London for Ireland on March 27, 1599 and returned, unsuccessful, on September 28 of the same year. But prior to his return—by the end of July—the London public was aware that things were not going well for Essex. Consequently, the most plausible period for the initial performance of Henry the Fifth was sometime between the late Spring and early Summer. This reasoning has been hotly contested by a few critics. Among the most vehement is Warren Smith, who contends that the passage cited above refers not to Essex but to his successor, Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy.44 Smith indicates that Blount not only was more popular than Essex, he succeeded in Ireland where Essex did not. Smith believes that the Choruses were added to the play at a later date for a court performance. He cites Shakespeare's use of particular words and phrases to support his thesis. However, the validity of Smith's reasoning, based on the examples he uses, is seriously challenged by Robert Law,


who reinforces the Essex allusion theory.\textsuperscript{45}

If the phrase, "this wooden O," of the Act I Chorus refers to the Globe Theatre, then the argument for the 1599 date is strengthened. The lease for the site of this theatre was executed on February 21, 1599.\textsuperscript{46} And the Globe was constructed early in 1599 by Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, using much of the material from the older Theatre in Shoreditch.\textsuperscript{47} The major objection to the Globe as the site of the initial performance of Henry the Fifth was presented by Ordish, who argued that it was presented at the Curtain Theatre.\textsuperscript{48} His reasoning is as follows: first, the Curtain was located near Finsbury fields, a martially spirited neighborhood where military training took place, and where this play would be very popular; and second, the Curtain was noted for its fencing matches and was thus a likely theatre for a play of this type. He infers that it was the second playhouse built in London, that it was near the neighborhood of The Theatre, and states absolutely that these two houses were not rivals for the public audiences. Yet he admits we know nothing about the beginning of The Curtain—who built it, the cost of construction, the date of opening, etc.


\textsuperscript{46}Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, II, p. 415.

\textsuperscript{47}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{48}T. Fairman Ordish, Early London Theatres (London: Elliot Stock, 1894), pp. 84-85.
Both Chambers\textsuperscript{49} and Murray\textsuperscript{50} have dismissed Ordish's arguments, recognizing the fact that there simply is no evidence to support them.

Finally, the language and style of the play lends additional support to the 1599 date. In the introduction to his edition of the play, Hudson details the versification and diction of the work, and then summarizes his examination.

The diction of \textit{King Henry the Fifth}, the quality of the blank verse, the proportion of prose to verse, the use of rhyme, the rhetorical quality of the play as a whole, the prevalence of epic and lyrical interest over dramatic, and the general spirit of the play which never touches the deep note of pathos except in the brief account of Falstaff's death, support the external and the other internal evidence that the date of composition falls between the closing months of 1598 and the midsummer of 1599. The sonority and superb movement in the blank verse of the speeches of Chorus would almost suggest a later date for their composition. But the other evidence is against this.\textsuperscript{51}

\section*{The texts: Quarto I and Folio I}

The scant information available about the initial staging method of Shakespeare's \textit{Henry the Fifth} resides almost entirely in the texts. Although a majority of textual scholars accept the folio version as the only authoritative one, the major differences between the folio text and quarto texts and the various aspects of the folio-quarto

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49} Chambers, \textit{Elizabethan Stage}, II, p. 415.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Murray, \textit{English Dramatic Companies}, pp. 99-100.
\end{itemize}
controversy need to be reviewed. This is not an attempt to examine the entire controversy in detail, but merely to provide the reader with some background for the conclusions which textual scholars have accepted.

Three quarto editions of the play were published: 1600, 1602, and 1619. The 1619 edition was falsely dated on the title page as 1608. All three quartos are similar enough so that for purposes of comparison with the folio text, the first quarto can be used. Approximately one half the length of the folio text, the quarto contains 1,623 lines.52 The following scenes are entirely eliminated: All the Choruses; I, i; III, i; IV, ii; and the Epilogue. Large segments of the following scenes are missing: I, ii; II, ii; III, ii; III, iii; III, v; III, vii; IV, i; and V, ii. IV, iv and IV, v are reversed. Occasionally, passages are transposed within a scene, as well as from one scene to another. Eleven speaking roles that are in the folio version do not exist in the quarto.

The earliest version we have of the folio text is that of the 1623 edition. Longer than the quarto by some 1,700 lines—the control text for this study totals 3,373 lines—the folio text is thought by some editors to have been taken directly from Shakespeare's "foul-papers." Chambers' summary of a comparison of quarto and folio texts

provides a concise statement of the basis from which the quarto-folio controversy stems.

If QI is read side by side with FI, it is impossible to regard it as anything but a continual perversion of the same text. Some of the verse-lines are truly rendered; others contain words related to those of FI as variants of inflexion or indifferent alternatives, or words which read like mishearings. Many phrases are omitted, resulting in misstatements. Line after line is bungled metrically, by a writer incapable of handling blank verse. Larger omissions cause lacunae in the sense. Sometimes Q gives a mere paraphrase of the substance of F. The prose scenes are even more fragmentary, and are throughout in lines of irregular length and capitalized as verse. As a paradoxical result, Pistol's speeches resume verse form. There are some transpositions in the order of the dialogue, especially in the prose scenes. Two scenes (iv.4, 5) change places. One passage, at the end of iii. 7, appears in F at iv. 2. 62-63. There is at least one phrase, at the end of ii. 3, of indecent 'gag'. This corruption is far beyond what can be attributed to errors of transcription and printing, and can only be explained by some process of reporting.53

The various theories that have been advanced in the controversy fall into two major groups: those who believe that quarto I is a first sketch and the folio a later revision, and those who believe the quarto is a pirated abridgment of the folio text. Daniel, in his commentary on the parallel texts edition, concluded that the folio version was the original and that the quarto was an abridgment for stage representation made from an imperfect manuscript surreptitiously obtained.54 In his detailed examination of the texts, Price agreed with Daniel, stressing that evidence of the closest possible relationship between Holinshed.

53Chambers, Shakespeare, I, p. 391.

54King Henry V, Parallel Texts, pp. x-xi.
and the folio text denies the use of any intermediate version by Shakespeare. Craig could not accept the quarto as the work of a pirate-actor. He found the folio developing and amplifying themes of the quarto, as well as introducing new themes of its own. Craig argued that chance omission or selected excision of such themes by a pirate-actor was highly improbable. Albright based her theory of quarto abridgment on what she felt were political reasons and censorship, suggesting that the folio text was intended for a special performance before a particular group. Arguing for a playhouse origin of the first quarto, Simison differed both with Price and with Craig. She stated that, granting the abridgment, quarto may well be an authorized abridgment for performance and not a pirated version. Comparing quarto stage directions with those of the folio text, she found the former as often complete as the latter; that is, as many different times, recognizing that both texts seldom have the same degree of completeness for each direction. Simison then compared the quarto directions with directions in the

55Price, Text of Henry V, p. 36.


extant plots and with those in extant promptbooks, arriving at the following conclusion:

... I believe that one can show that the first Quarto of Henry V is a printing from a stage-abridgement, probably a transcript for use as a prompt-book, and that the so-called mistakes of the Quarto, or the passages wherein the Quarto differs from the Folio can be imputed to a multiplicity of causes: to the handwriting of the author, to the scribe who produced the transcript, and to the printer who printed it, but, above all, to the stage-adapter, who cut ruthlessly enough into the longer original as prepared by Shakespeare, and as extant, mayhap, in an edited form, in the First Folio.59

Price replied to Simison's theory within a year, sparing few words to refute both her evidence and her interpretation of it. Citing many specific examples, he reinforced his stand that not only do the quarto stage directions not compare favorably with those of the folio, but that there is no comparison at all.60

Price's refutation was published in 1933. There have been a number of articles since then re-affirming both sides of the controversy with variations on the basic themes proposed by each side. And while this study is not specifically concerned with the controversy—all productions with any supportive evidence from 1738 through 1859 use the folio text as a point of departure—it seems likely that the folio text was the original and the quarto an abridgment. The following summation by Okerlund seems to make the most sense, using all the

59Ibid., pp. 55-56.

evidence and explaining the various possibilities.

1. Shortly after the play had been completed, and before it had received its final form represented in the folio, the manuscript was copied by a pirate, who, if he was not himself a hired man with the Chamberlain's company, probably worked with the connivance of one.

2. The piracy was made in order to provide an irregular company of strolling actors with a play to be performed in the provinces.

3. The leader of the strolling players then adapted the stolen version for their own purposes, shortening it to a little more than half its length, dropping passages which he thought were unsuitable or unnecessary, simplifying the actors' parts, and carefully compressing the style.

4. A new prompt-book was then prepared in which the conventional prose and verse lineation was disregarded. This became the basis of the quarto version of 1600.

5. Subsequently to the piracy, some changes were made in the authentic theatre manuscript designed to strengthen the contrast between the French and English leaders, and to simplify the casting of the speaking parts. This version was then printed in the 1623 folio.

Under this hypothesis all the differences between the folio and the quarto versions are explainable. Some of the variations may be due to adaptation, some to errors of transcription, some to revision made in the folio version, and some to any one of the three possibilities, but all can be accounted for if the history of the play is as it has been here outlined. If the quarto ultimately, then, rests upon the theatre manuscript, it takes on some slight shade of authority in those few instances where the folio reading is unintelligible while the quarto makes sense.61

Management of time and place

Historically, a period of six years is covered by the events of the play, beginning with the Dauphin's gift of the tennis balls in the early Spring of 1414, and ending with Henry's formal betrothal to

Katharine in May, 1420. In the play the events of these six years are concentrated into nine or ten days. Ribner points out the particular dramatic importance of Shakespeare's abridgment of the military campaigns of Henry the Fifth,

... which historically included two campaigns in France, the first culminating in the victory at Agincourt in 1415 and the second in the Treaty of Troyes in 1420. Shakespeare achieves dramatic intensity by concentrating all of the military events into a single campaign which includes the siege of Harfleur, the falling back to Calais and the great triumph at Agincourt. This is followed immediately by the Treaty of Troyes, although the prologue to Act V does tell of the King's return to England where the Holy Roman Emperor came to intercede on his part of France, an event which historically occurred in May, 1416.62

Neither quarto nor folio texts provide much information in stage directions as to place. Indeed, the only one is in Act III, sc. i (Actus Secundus in the folio) where we read: "Enter the King, Exeter, Bedford, and Gloucester. Alarum: Scaling Ladders at Harfleur."63 The speeches of Chorus also provide help in determining locality. Indications are that the play begins in London (even though according to Holinsheshd the events in the first scene actually took place at Leicester), moves to Southampton, and thence to France.


Stage directions

While certainly not unique, some of the stage directions in the folio text are of interest in helping to re-create parts of an imaginative picture of what the 1599 production might have been like.

Charlotte Porter has analyzed the use of one such direction and its dialogue relationship, peculiar to this play.

Alarums, Drums, the Flourish, and Sennet and Tucket of Trumpets are matters of frequent occurrence in the First Folio stage directions; but not until 'Henry V' does this direction appear—Chambers goe off. That meant, of course, the explosions of the tiny cannon of the day fired by inserting loaded compartments of 'chambers' in the breach of the gun. This direction figures twice in 'Henry V'...

Does not Jonson refer to such a bit of theatrical claptrap, as if it were unwonted, when he speaks in the prologue already mentioned of the 'nimble squib' that makes 'afeard the gentlewomen?' And is not his disdain of it significant of a special effectiveness won by it? It is too slight and unascertainable a matter to put much stress upon or absolutely to affirm. Yet there remains the fact, in addition to Jonson's allusions, here, to 'Chorus' and to 'Squib,' that on the new stage of the Globe, referred to by Shakespeare with such unique directness in his opening Chorus at the 'unworthy Scaffold' of this 'Woodden O,' the thunder of cannon-report was arranged for in this particular stage direction in a peculiarly adroit and unusual way. It does not occur first in the regular action, but in the third Chorus. There it interrupts, in a novel way, the single voice of the speaker, and with a flash of dramatic significance, lifting the report above the merely theatrical and making it worthy of Shakespeare's inventiveness. It is there, practically the reply of Henry to the French King's overtures for peace. Thus employed it is a sudden symbol of a deed in lieu of a word,—instead of talk, action.64

Two other stage directions in the folio text strongly suggest

the use of particular parts of the stage in the original production of the play. At the beginning of III, iii, the following appears:

"Enter the King and all his Traine Before the Gates." We know these are the gates of Harfleur from the direction preceding III, i. The reference to "Gates" suggests three possibilities in terms of what we have been able to surmise about the physical nature of the Elizabethan public playhouse. A liberal viewpoint might suggest that a movable scenic structure was used for the gates. Another possibility is the use of a stage door with the French Governor appearing at the window overhead. I prefer to think that the inner-above or top of the pavilion-like structure, which may have formed the second level of the stage facade, was where the Governor of Harfleur appeared in response to Henry's edict to surrender, and that the "gates" were then the opening of the inner-below. The second stage direction appears at the beginning of V, ii: "Enter at one doore, King Henry, Exeter, Bedford, Warwick, and other Lords. At another, Queene Isabel, the King, the Duke of Bourgongne, and other French." This mention of two doors is strong evidence in support of the thesis (Adams's, among others) that two stage doors, opposite each other, were permanent architectural features of

Stage directions referring to sound appear eighteen times in the folio text. These include: "Flourish," "Sound Trumpets," "A Parley," "Drums and Colours," "Tucket," and "Sennet." A direction for physical action--"Strikes him"--appears twice, once in IV, viii, when Williams strikes Fluellen with the glove, and once in V, i, when Fluellen beats Pistol. The folio copy is nearly complete in listing entrances and exits. A comparison of the folio text with the control text for this study shows the folio lacking only nine exits, as follow: II, iv, line 72; III, i, line 36; III, iii, line 51; III, vi, line 170; IV, iii, line 16; IV, iv, line 65; IV, vi, line 66; IV, vii, line 122; and the exit for Chorus following the Epilogue. All of these directions for the use of sound, for character business, and for entrances and exits, while not detailing production procedure in the 1599 performances, do help us to sense the rhythms and the mobile quality of Shakespeare's play.

Actors in the 1599 production

If Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth was produced by the Lord Chamberlain's company in 1599, it is possible to speculate on certain actors playing particular roles. Certain evidence makes some of this speculation a little more than mere guesswork. J. Payne Collier described a copy of an elegy on Richard Burbage written soon after his death in 1619-20, listing the characters he played. This third manuscript
copy—Collier had found two others earlier, each of which included four Shakespearean roles—mentioned twenty roles, of which twelve were in plays by Shakespeare. Among these roles was King Henry V. De Banke suggested, as have others, that Shakespeare was tailoring roles for this leading man of the Chamberlain’s company.

From 1594 to 1602, Shakespeare wrote youthful leads for him. In fact, Burbage’s actual age is sometimes mentioned as that of the character he was playing: in 1596, Prince Hal (Henry IV, Parts I and II) is said to be twenty-two; in 1599, as Henry V, he is twenty-five; and as Hamlet, in 1603, he is thirty.

Other actors of this company seem to have been given serious consideration by Shakespeare while creating his characters.

A glance at predominant types that appear in the plays will give us more than a hint of the characteristics of the rest of the leading actors of Shakespeare’s company.

There is the middle-aged swashbuckler who belongs in the category of “high comedians.” Whether he is playing the cowardly braggart or the ranting villain, his physical attributes are the same: he is a tall, heavy man with a stentorian voice. Such a man was Thomas Pope, who probably joined the company in 1594 and who died sometime between 1603 and 1604. He doubtless played Fluellen in Henry V, . . .

Finally, a supposition by Dover Wilson, while lacking any supportive evidence, is an intriguing possibility.

I am inclined to believe, . . . that, . . . the part of Chorus,


68Ibid., p. 110.
which with its 223 lines is next in importance to the part of Henry, and which David Garrick was to regard as not beneath his dignity, had been originally played by an actor called William Shakespeare. It is only a guess; but I find it helps me to understand Chorus and play alike, and think it may help others also. Certainly the diffident and apologetic tone, which the Chorus adopts throughout, and which sounds awkward, not to say ungracious, if interpreted, with most critics, as the impatience of an author girding against the resources of his theatre and the limitations of his actors, becomes at once natural and engaging when taken as a personal apology and plea by somebody who was author, player, and producer in one.69

Seventeenth-Century Productions of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth

The only extant record of a performance of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth in the seventeenth century is in the account book of the Office of the Revels. In Book XII for the year 1605, the following listing appears:

By his Matis On the 7 of January was played the play of Henry the plaiers fifty70

This performance at Court for James has stimulated some argument about the scene which includes the Scotch Captain, Jamy (III, ii). Fleay believed that this scene, which is not in the quarto, was a special addition for this court performance, "... to please King James,


70Extracts From The Accounts of the Revels at Court in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I., From the Original Office Books of the Masters and Yeomen, with an Introduction and Notes by Peter Cunningham (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1842), p. 204.
who had been so annoyed that year by depreciation of the Scots on the stage." Chambers, however, suggests what seems to be a more logical answer:

... while Captain Jamy is not unsympathetically drawn, would the king have altogether approved the selection of the name for a comic character? An alternative and perhaps more plausible conjecture is that the passage was censored in 1599, because of earlier offence given to James by theatrical references to Scotland. If so, we cannot suppose that it was restored when he saw the play on 7 January 1605 ..., but the F printer may, quite properly, have ignored a deletion mark.72

Greg agrees with Chambers about both the 1599 and the 1605 performances.73 Their conclusions seem even more valid considering the very broad Scottish brogue given to Jamy by Shakespeare. It is doubtful that King James would have appreciated, any more than his countrymen, such a vocal stereotype.

The listing of this 1605 performance at Court is the only extant record of Shakespeare's play in performance until the eighteenth century. But it is reasonable to suggest that Henry the Fifth was a popular play with wide audience appeal, and that there were many performances, both at Court and in the public playhouses. However, until 1664, when a Restoration version of the play was produced, there is


72Chambers, Shakespeare, I, p. 393.

basis for nothing but speculation.

Roger Boyle's Henry the Fifth

Roger Boyle, the Earl of Orrery, as a soldier, statesman, and dramatist was a personal favorite of both Oliver Cromwell and King Charles II. As a member of the coterie attending the King, he manifested the tastes and temper of the Court. His literary efforts and successes followed closely upon an established political and military career. More than two centuries of relative neglect and obscurity of his literary work following his death may have been at least partially signaled by Cibber, who was born a few years before Boyle's death.

It is difficult to give a full and accurate account of this nobleman's compositions; for it must be owned, he was a better statesman than a poet, and fitter to act upon the wide theatre of life, than to write representations for the circumscribed theatre of the stage. In the light of an author he is less eminent, and lived a life of too much hurry to become a proficient in poetry, a grace which not only demands the most extensive abilities, but much leisure and contemplation. But if he was not extremely eminent as a poet, he was far removed above contempt, and deserves to have full mention made of all his writings; and we can easily forgive want of elegance and correctness in one who was of so much service to his country, and who was born rather to live than to write a great part.  

The impulse for Boyle's initial dramatic effort appears to have come from a conversation with King Charles and a group of courtiers late

in 1660. Following a discussion about the merits of the French rhymed heroic drama versus the English, the King suggested to Boyle that he experiment and compose a play in rhymed verse. The General, completed in the Spring of 1661, was sent to Charles who gave it to Thomas Killigrew for future production. D'Avenant, an old friend of Boyle, not wanting to be outdone by his rival Killigrew, asked Boyle to write a play for him also. This second play, now lost, apparently was never produced. Boyle then wrote a third play, Henry the Fifth, for D'Avenant. With both language and rhymed verse far superior to The General, Henry the Fifth was a perfect example of the English version of the French heroic play, with total emphasis on heroic virtue, love and honor.

The play is written in five acts composed of twenty-five scenes, none of which is indicated as such by the author. The entire play is set in France. Adhering to the strict conventions of the French heroic, Boyle has avoided any stage directions indicating time or place. Consequently, during an act, English characters leave the stage and French characters enter with no indication of a change of time or place. Nor are there any allusions in the dialogue to lapse of time which would add to the improbability. The martial atmosphere of preparation for battle, realized so well by Shakespeare, does not exist here. We do not see Henry bravely leading his army into battle. Rather, the

battles are reported to us by the French. With the single exception of the scene in which Henry disarms the Dauphin, physical violence is absent.

Boyle begins his story considerably later than Shakespeare with the battle of Agincourt. In the first scene the great friendship of King Henry and Owen Tudor is established. The introduction of the character Tudor has no historical basis. He is simply brought into the story as the third member of the love triangle, the others being King Henry and Princess Katherine. This triangle comprises the main theme of the dramatic action and provides the basis for the conflict between friendship and love. The problems which concern Shakespeare's Henry—justification for the war against France, the title to the French throne, the responsibilities of kingship—do not exist in this play. The focus is on Henry as the honnete homme, on Tudor for whom friendship is a religion, and on Katherine whose paramount obligation is duty. Katherine's role is much larger here than in Shakespeare's play. Where Shakespeare ends with the love relationship between the King and Katherine, Boyle begins with it. Love and honor rather than political considerations determine everything. Boyle even uses a secondary love plot between Katherine's sister, Princess Anne, and Bedford, Henry's brother. Burns aptly summarizes the major differences between Shakespeare's Henry and the King as Boyle presents him, in terms of motivational priority.
..., if the motivating forces of Orrery's Henry were listed in order of importance, they would come in approximately the following sequence: (1) the desire to win Katherine, (2) the desire to win personal glory (primarily for the purpose of impressing Katherine, but also for its own sake), (3) the desire to perform all the duties and obligations of friendship, and (4) the desire to regain the English possessions in France. If one substituted for "friendship," "kingship" and for "personal glory," "national glory," the motives of Shakespeare's Henry would follow in almost precisely the inverse order. Now, of course, this is an oversimplification; in neither play could such rigid distinctions be made, but the pattern is surely accurate. And this pattern very clearly illustrates the difference in point of view of the two playwrights.76

There are twenty-three speaking roles in Boyle's play, about half as many as in Shakespeare's. The King of France never appears, and is only referred to. The Queen, as regent, rules the country. The Dauphin is a despicable villain, a foil to Henry. His entire character and purpose is evidenced in his first line of dialogue: "Let me despise what I can ne're obtain."77 In order to maintain the necessary decorum of the heroic, there are no comic scenes in the play. And the only commoners are the servants to royalty and the nobility.

There is little similarity in Boyle's version to historical happenings. A few things—the Salique Law, Henry's order to kill the French prisoners, the list of the French nobles killed in battle—


harken back to Holinshed. But Boyle uses the events and persons of history strictly to develop his main interest in the sentimental conflict between love and honor.

According to Clark, Boyle completed his version of Henry the Fifth and sent it to D'Avenant as early as the end of 1662 for an immediate production which did not materialize. If Clark is correct about this date, D'Avenant must have delayed some time before securing a license for the play's performance because the Master of the Revels licensed the play on November 3, 1663. Boyle arrived in London in June, 1664, and his presence apparently stirred D'Avenant to production because the play opened at the Duke's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in August. The first reference to the performance is in Pepys's Diary.

August 13, 1664. Mr. Creed dining with me I got him to give my wife and me a play this afternoon, lending him money to do it, which is a fallacy that I have found now once, to avoyde my yove with, but never to be more practised I swear, and so to the new play, at the Duke's house, of "Henry the Fifth"; a most noble play, writ by my Lord Orrery, wherein Betterton, Harris, and Ianthe's parts are most incomparably wrote and done, and the whole play the most full of height and raptures of wit and sense, that ever I heard; having but one incongruity, or what did not please me in it, that King Harry promises to plead for Tudor to their Mistresse, Princesse Katherine of France, more than when it comes to it he seems to do; and Tudor refused by her with some kind of indignity, not with a difficulty and honour that it ought to have been done

78Clark, Works of Roger Boyle, I, p. 34.

It is difficult to determine if August 13 was the opening date. Downes indicates that the play was "Acted 10 Days Successively." If this is so and Pepys saw the premiere, then the play was probably produced through August 24. But as Summers has indicated, Downes made errors in his dating. And a later Diary entry by Pepys reads:

August 17, 1664. Very merry discoursing of the late play of Henry the 5th, which they conclude the best that ever was made, but confess with me that Tudor's being dismissed in the manner he is is a great blemish to the play.

It is impossible to determine whether by "late" play, Pepys meant that it had just recently opened or had just closed. Summers states that the play was produced on August 11, but he gives no evidence for this. If Pepys saw the final performance of ten consecutive performances, the play opened August 3 (assuming the theatre dark on Sundays). If he saw the premiere, it ran through August 24.

Primary source information on the staging of this play is limited to a few remarks on the costumes. Downes writes: "This Play was


82 Ibid., p. 193.

83 McAfee, Pepys on the Restoration Stage, p. 178.

Splendidly Cloath'd: The King, in the Duke of York's Coronation Suit: Owen Tudor, in King Charles's: Duke of Burgundy, in the Lord of Oxford's, and the rest all New."85 With Boyle, an intimate of King Charles, in town awaiting the long-delayed production of his play, and Killigrew preparing The General for its opening (also strangely delayed), D'Avenant probably did everything he could to enlist the interests of the Court in his production of Henry the Fifth.

As to the play's success, Clark states that upon opening it was the "hit" of London,86 and that the success of Henry the Fifth and The General "... at once placed Orrery in the popular estimation at the forefront of contemporary dramatic poets. His pioneering in rimed verse was being talked about on all sides."87 The play was revived in subsequent years. Pepys refers to it again twice, one of the revivals taking place at Court.

December 28, 1666. To White Hall, and got my Lord Bellasses to get me into the playhouse; and there, after all staying above an hour for the players, the King and all waiting, which was absurd, saw "Henry the Fifth" well done by the Duke's people, and in most excellent habits, all new vests, being put on but this night. But I sat so high and far off, that I missed most of the words, and sat with a wind coming into my back and neck, which did much trouble me. The play continued till twelve at night.88

87Ibid., p. 37.
88McAfee, Pepys on the Restoration Stage, p. 178.
The King was apparently in a good mood this evening of performance because although the Duke's players were an hour late in taking up the curtain, they received the usual payment of twenty pounds.\(^9\) The final record of a performance of the play during this period is two years later, when Pepys made reference to Betterton's reappearance following the actor's long illness.

July 6, 1668. My wife and company to the Duke's house, to see "Henry the Fifth" . . . Thence I to the playhouse, and saw a piece of the play, and glad to see Betterton.\(^90\)

This last record of the play on the stage seems to indicate, as Clark believes, that its popularity had waned to the point where by 1670 it was removed permanently from the repertoire of the Duke's company.\(^91\)

**The Half-Pay Officers**

A farce in three acts attributed to Charles Molloy by Whincop,\(^92\)

The *Half-Pay Officers* is a peculiar compilation of situations, characters, and speeches from Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, D'Avenant's *Love and Honour*, and Shirley's *The Wedding*. The

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\(^90\)McAfee, *Pepys on the Restoration Stage*, p. 178.


\(^92\)Thomas Whincop, *Scanderbeg: or, Love and Liberty. A Tragedy*. To which are added a List of all the Dramatic Authors, with some account of their lives; and of all the Dramatic Pieces ever published in the English Language, to the Year 1747 (London: W. Reeve, 1747), p. 262.
author, or, as he refers to himself, "transcriber," readily admits his heavy borrowings and his purpose in the Preface to the play.

This thing was brought upon the Stage with no other design, but that of showing Mrs. Fryar, the House being willing to encourage any thing, by which it might propose to entertain the Town; therefore the Author, or rather the Transcriber, did not think himself any way concern'd in its Success, as to the Reputation of a Writer; I say Transcriber, the greatest Part of it being old: The Part of Mrs. Fryer is in an Old Play, call'd Love and Honour, which she acted when she was Young, and which was so imprinted in her memory, she could repeat it every Word; and it was to an accidental Conversation with her, this Farce ow'd its Being; she acted with so much Spirit and Life, before two or three Persons who had some Interest with the House, that we judg'd it would do upon the Stage; she was prevail'd upon to undertake it; upon which this Farce was immediately projected, and finish'd in Fourteen Days; it was got up with so much Hurry, that some of the Comedians, who are allow'd to be Excellent in their Way, had not time to make themselves Masters of their Parts; therefore not being perfect in the Dialogue, they could not act with that Freedom and Spirit, they are observ'd to do, upon other Occasions.

The Character of Fluellin has been esteem'd, (next to that of Sir John Falstaff) the best and most humorous, that Shakespeare ever wrote; there are many other Things in this, that have been reckon'd good Comedy: This we may venture to say, without incurring the Censure of vain; for it can be no Offence to Modesty, for a Man to commend what is not his own:93

As Odell has indicated, this play probably never would have been connected with Shakespeare had the author not stolen outright the character of Fluellen. The character of Culverin is largely an adaptation of Shakespeare's Pistol, and Molloy's MacMorris retains some of his dialogue and dialect form Henry the Fifth. Like Shakespeare, Molloy

93 Charles Molloy, The Half-Pay Officers; a Comedy: As it is Acted By His Majesty's Servants (2nd ed.; London: A. Bettesworth, et al., 1720) pp. iii-v.
attempts to indicate the Welsh and the Irish dialect of Fluellen and MacMorris in his writing.

*The Half-Pay Officers* premiered January 11, 1720, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the play ran for seven performances.\(^{94}\) The production must have been very successful because a comment in the *Weekly Journal or Saturday's Post* of January 16 read: "On Wednesday Night the House was so full, that no less than three or four hundred People were obliged to go away for want of Room to get in."\(^{95}\) The same article, referring to this play and the afterpiece, *Hob's Wedding*, indicated that "they have hit the Humour of the Town, and . . . take exceedingly well."\(^{96}\) Undoubtedly a large part of the success of the production was due to the novelty of Peg Fryer's performance as the Widow Rich. At 85 years of age, this was her first performance since the Restoration. There was some confusion as to the name Mrs. Fryer used and to the name of the character she played. The list of *Dramatis Personae* in the second edition of the play refers to her as Mrs. Vandervelt.\(^{97}\) Both


\(^{95}\)Ibid., p. 563.

\(^{96}\)Ibid., p. clxviii.

\(^{97}\)Half-Pay Officers, p. viii.
Genest and Summers suppose Fryer and Vandervelt the same person. The bills referred to her role as Lady Richlove.

The play had two revivals, one on January 28, 1723, and the other on March 12, 1730, both at the Haymarket. For the final performance, a new prologue and a new epilogue were used.

Aaron Hill's Henry the Fifth

If Roger Boyle's Henry the Fifth, with its absolute commitment to love and honor and rhyming couplets, fulfilled the ideal Restoration heroic drama, Aaron Hill's version of the play produced in 1723 was certainly a prime example of what happened to Shakespeare's histories at the hands of eighteenth-century adapters. Odell referred to it as the "last of these historical murders." In the preface to his play Hill acknowledged his debt to Shakespeare and wrote: "Mine is a New Fabrick, yet I built on His Foundation;" Hill's prologue is

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98 John Genest, Some Account of the English Stage, from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830 (10 vols.; Bath: H. E. Carrington, 1832), III, p. 36.

99 Summers, Playhouse of Pepys, p. 17.

100 Whincop, Scanderbeg, p. 262.


filled with adulation of Shakespeare. Yet in the play that follows, Shakespeare is soon lost in a plethora of pathos, sentimentality, and melodramatic effect. A brief summary of some of the events and characters Hill used exemplifies just how much reweaving he did on his "New Fabrick."

The setting for the entire play is France, most of it taking place before Harfleur or Agincourt. With the scenes shifting only from English camp or pavilion to French camp or pavilion there is no problem of the unities being disturbed. Hill uses only fourteen speaking roles, twelve from Shakespeare and two of his own. One of these additions has prompted the following comment from Brewster: "One can for-tell with some accuracy what eighteenth-century adapters will cut out of a Shakespearean play; but only a genius akin to their own can con-ceive what they will put in."104 Hill introduces "gentle Harriet," Scroop's niece who, we are told, is just one of countless young ex-maidens devastated by King Henry's virile prowess before he ascended the throne. Apparently this Prince Hal didn't spend all his time drinking and playing tricks on Falstaff. The English conspirators, Scroop, Gray, and Cambridge, are aided by Harriet in their attempt to kill King Henry. Harriet, disguised throughout as a boy, visits Princess Katherine and the Dauphin to enlist their aid in the plot.

Katherine, violently opposed to her father's demands for her marriage to King Henry, discovers upon hearing the King's voice that he is not the man she thought but rather the English courtier she had seen in France some time before and with whom she had fallen madly in love. The Dauphin, however, will have nothing to do with this marriage; he insists on fighting the English. Katherine, distraught at the thought of her lover being injured, sends her servant Charlot (Hill's other character addition) to the English King's tent to warn him about the plot on his life. Henry orders the young Englishman traitor (Harriet disguised) captured and brought to his tent. Enter "gentle Harriet," bound by her captors, and exorcising her tortured soul with language that would make the female characters of Shakespeare's version either cringe or faint. With a series of platitudes Hill's Henry convinces her that he has always loved her but that because kings are "our People's Properties" he has had to forego his own wishes. Immediate reconciliation is followed by Harriet stabbing herself fatally. The traitors are captured, accused, and eliminated. Princess Katherine makes another of her unlikely appearances on the battlefield on her way to spend the night at the castle of Agincourt. Alarums! The Dauphin attacks, but nightfall temporarily halts the battle. At daybreak the sound of a charge is followed by a description of ensuing battle. The French are routed, a parley takes place between the two armies, the Dauphin praises Henry and offers him his sister and the
regency of France, and all except the slain soldiers and gentle Harriet live happily ever after. Thus ends Hill's five-act melodrama.

At times in his play, Hill quotes entire speeches from Shakespeare. At times he adapts them. Often he transfers speeches from one scene to another and from one character to another entirely out of context. For example, in Act II Hill gives Henry's speech on Ceremony to Katherine. Many of the characters Shakespeare used to provide a variety of interest have here been eliminated, including the Archbishop, Gower, Fluellen, Jamy, MacMorris, and all the low-comedy characters. The Chorus is replaced by a prologue, and bits and pieces of his speeches are given to other characters throughout the play. Hill has simplified the language, the characters, the theme, and the situations. Consequently, the imagery is lost. Although Hill still retains some of the personal glory and honor found in Boyle's version, there is much more patriotism and jingoism in his work. Henry's major objective is to reclaim his French title, but both thematically and characteristically this is all but lost with so much of the focus on Harriet and Katherine. The most dramatic scene in the play takes place in Henry's tent. With Harriet's accusations, reconciliation, and death, it is a scene bathed in sentiment and pathos. The character of the King is overwhelmed by those of Harriet and Katherine. He is neither the man of Shakespeare's play nor the symbol of Boyle's. All the characters suffer from a lack of believability, and as a consequence the play lacks depth. In standard eighteenth-century fashion, all the loose ends are neatly tied at the
end of the play, and Odell's summary comment states the case for aesthetic criticism.

Compared with Shakespeare's manly, heroic play, this thing, with its maudlin sentimentality and Eighteenth-Century affectation, is trifling in the extreme. The blight of artificiality is upon it; Henry V has certainly been made to join the body dandiacal, with a vengeance. Hill has minced the good roast beef of old England.  

Hill's *Henry the Fifth* opened at Drury Lane on December 5, 1723, and ran for six performances. Information about the staging is minimal. Stage directions in the published edition are slight. Yet, by comparing those that do exist with some information from other sources, some possibilities are suggested. I, i takes place in "The English Camp, before Harfleur; A Chair of State." II, i is "The French Camp. King of France, Dauphin, Duke of Orleans, as in Councell." Halfway through the act, Hill writes: "Scene changes to the Princess's Pavilion. III, i is "A French Pavilion." Half-way through this act one of the more detailed and interesting directions appears.

Scene changes to a Barrier, on a Bridge, Trumpets from Both Sides; Enter, on one Part, the French King, on the Bridge, attended by the Dukes of Orleans, and Bourbon, etc. below:---------On the other Side of the Bridge, King Henry, with the Dukes of Exeter, and York, Scroop, Cambridge, and Gray, below: The Kings Embrace over the Bar. 

Act III, sc. ii.

A few lines later in this same scene we read: "Enter the Dauphin on

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106 All stage directions cited here are from the 1723 edition of the play described in footnote #103.
the Bridge, leading the Princess in a Veil, attended by Charlot." Act IV takes place in "The English Pavilion." The scene of the last act is described as: "A large Champian, with the Castle of Agincourt at a Distance: on the one side, the English Camp; on the other, the French."

Throughout this act, English and French forces take turns entering and exiting. Then, when the French give the battle cry, the following direction appears: "Sound of a Charge, with Drums, Trumpets, etc. The Genius of England rises, and sings." And this "Genius of England," whoever or whatever he is, proceeds to describe the battle of Agincourt in what amounts to three verses of song.

If Aaron Hill's playwriting left something to be desired—even for the eighteenth century—his significance as a leader in scenic art during the first half of the century is an established fact. Indeed, Nagler refers to him as, "The first English dramatist, who insisted on realistic propriety in costuming and, at the same time, had any eye for the artistic qualifications of stage dress."107

No specific evidence exists about the costumes or the settings for Hill's production of Henry the Fifth. A few scattered references to this and to two other productions occurring within a seven year period have occasioned some speculation by Kalman Burnim.108


dedication to his play, *The Fatal Vision*, produced in 1716, Hill wrote that the costumes and scenery differed extremely from anything lately seen on the English stage. The critic for the *Pasquin*, previewing a rehearsal of *Henry the Fifth* in 1723 wrote that the scenery was "to be disposed in a new Manner and Method."\(^{109}\) Victor claimed that the scenery cost two hundred pounds.\(^{110}\) Odell, accepting Victor's figures, insisted that such a small amount of money was insufficient to pay for any major scenic innovation.\(^{111}\) But Burnim believes there is a possibility that Hill's *Henry the Fifth* made use of angular asymmetrical perspective, Ferdinando Bibiena's *scena per angolo*. Burnim cites the following as suggestive evidence. The scenographer, John De Voto, was using this technique in London in 1719 and is known to have painted an entirely new set of scenery for a production of *Julius Caesar* which opened just six weeks prior to Hill's *Henry the Fifth* and at the same theatre. Hill was intimately involved with Italian opera, and he obviously knew De Voto and his work. Finally, an advance notice for the production of *Henry the Fifth* reported that the scenery was to be

\(^{109}\)Tbid., p. 29.

\(^{110}\)Victor, *History of the Theatres of London and Dublin*, From the year 1730 to the present time. To which is added, an Annual Register of all the Plays, etc. performed at the Theatres-Royal in London, from the year 1712. With Occasional Notes and Anecdotes, by Mr. Victor, late one of the managers of Theatre Royal in Dublin (2 vols.; London: T. Davies, et al., 1761), II, p. 123.

\(^{111}\)Odell, *Shakespeare*, I, p. 309.
designed by Signior Angelo, an Italian.\textsuperscript{112}

All of these rather unconnected bits of information lead to nothing more than speculation, and Burmin stresses that more evidence is needed. But it is possible that Hill's \textit{Henry the Fifth} may have used Bibiena's scenic technique. If so, it is the only production of this play in the history of the London theatre staged in this manner.

Hill's \textit{Henry the Fifth} failed on the stage, despite the scenic innovations used and what Doran called "... the brilliant Katherine of Mrs. Oldfield, and the Dauphin of Wilks."\textsuperscript{113} And although Hill's addition of the character Harriet was a stock-in-trade item of the playwrights of the period, Brewster indicates that the public did not take kindly to it. Booth's explanation for the public's indifference was that it saw the play not as a new play but simply as an adaptation from Shakespeare.

"The many beauties you have improved from him," Booth remarks, "and some noted speeches you have made use of with no very material alteration ... have possessed the gross imaginations of the audience that most of the fine passages of your own are his too. ... This I have found from some whose education, understanding, and acquaintance ... might have taught them better; and yet their knowing his manner of writing so well, perhaps, might the sooner lead them into the mistake."\textsuperscript{114}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{112}Avery, ed., \textit{London Stage}, Part II, Vol. II, p. 748.
  \item \textsuperscript{113}John Doran, \textit{Their Majesties' Servants: Annals of the English Stage from Thomas Betterton to Edmund Kean} (2 vols.; Philadelphia: David McKay, 1890), I, p. 255.
  \item \textsuperscript{114}Brewster, \textit{Aaron Hill}, p. 107.
\end{itemize}
The production, while unsuccessful, caused some bickering back and forth between two periodicals, *Pasquin* and the *True Briton*. Two days before the play opened, *Pasquin* rhapsodized a parallel between the souls of Shakespeare and Hill, and in an article on December 13, *True Briton* was amazed that Harriet had not affected the ladies in the audiences more strongly. On December 20, "Menander" in *Pasquin* scorned the above praise, saying that the expressions used by Hill's characters to disguise the obviousness of the sentiments were labored. "Menander" also belittled the manner in which Hill's Henry made love, compared to the Henry of Shakespeare. Unfortunately "Menander" mistook the strawberry and nettle passage for one of Hill's additions, thus exposing himself to the *True Briton*'s retort of not knowing the difference between Hill and Shakespeare. Hill then wrote a letter to the supposed author of the *Pasquin* article, and in rather sharp language damned "Menander" while defending himself. To add more confusion, the editor of Hill's letters confused the periodical *Pasquin* with Fielding's play, *Pasquin*, and addressed Hill's letter to Fielding.

Booth was convinced that after a period of rest, the play would

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115 I have been unable to locate copies of either of these periodicals, and have taken the jist of this controversy from: Brewster, *Aaron Hill*, pp. 108-109.

be revived with success and assume its place in the ranks of great tragedy. He could not have been farther from the truth. It was revived for nine performances at Goodman's Fields during the 1735-36 season with "new scenes and clothes," and received a single performance in the New Theatre by the Pound at Tottenham Court Fair on August 4, 1736. The last record of the play on the stage lists a single performance in 1746 at the James Street Theatre, Haymarket.

Summary

During the 1580's and 1590's the English chronicle play reached its peak of favor among both the court audiences and the public audiences of London. This type of play, with its action and theme built around the successes (and occasionally the failures) of a particular national political figure, provided the ideal framework for the exploits of Henry V, England's hero-king. Apparently both Queen Elizabeth and James I were fond of the story of Henry's exploits because plays treating this subject—Harey of Cornwall, Harey the V, Henry the Fifth—are recorded in publication and on the stage from Tarleton's years with the company of the Queen's Men (1583-1588) into and during the first decade

of the seventeenth century.

The Restoration theatre, mirroring for the most part a court-centered life, demanded a drama of love and honor in which the honnette homme was the hero. It was to this demand that Roger Boyle's Henry the Fifth responded with a king as symbol and not, as had Shakespeare, with a king as a man. Decorum dictated, and form followed function.

During the first thirty-five years of the eighteenth century the makeup of theatre audiences broadened to include a much wider spectrum of social class and, consequently, taste. Although the theatre was still a fashionable place, members of the middle class and the serving class formed a larger part of the audience. A theatre depending upon a sizable number of commoners for its box-office receipts could not survive presenting the same or similar dramatic fare demanded by the coterie of Charles II. The shopkeepers and liverymen demanded a more basic human situation to respond to. Aaron Hill's version of Henry the Fifth, an excellent example of an early eighteenth-century adaptation of Shakespeare's history plays, provided the pathos and sentiment with which the vast majority of the playgoers could identify.

Information on the staging of these plays of Henry the Fifth during the period covered in this chapter is minimal. An occasional stage direction in the text compared with external source material provides a basis for speculation. With no prompt-books or illustrations available for these productions, it is impossible to go beyond
speculation in re-creating any of the productions thus far.

Critical reference of the versions of *Henry the Fifth* from its initial date in the 1580's through the 1730's is nearly as minimal as information on staging. For the Elizabethan period, other than brief comments mentioned in Tarleton's *Jests* and Nashe's *Pierce Pennilesse* about two productions witnessed, the only criticism of the play is that implied by Ben Jonson in the prologue to *Every Man In His Humour* and in the induction to *Every Man Out Of His Humour*, where he disparages Shakespeare's use of the Chorus. There is no extant contemporaneous critical reference to the Restoration version of the play. For the early eighteenth century, the only critical response to the play comes from Alexander Pope. In his edition of Shakespeare published in 1723, he makes only one comment about *Henry the Fifth*. Referring to Katherine's English lesson with Alice (III, iv), Pope writes: "I have left this ridiculous scene as I found it; and am sorry to have no colour left, from any of the editions, to imagine it interpolated." Not until the next period under consideration in this study does any significant amount of criticism appear about this play or its production.

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CHAPTER III

THE SHAKESPEAREAN REVIVAL AND THE EARLY

ACTORS-MANAGERS: 1738-1789

The early years of the second quarter of the eighteenth century saw a marked increase in the theatrical fare in London. There was an infusion of novel types of plays and a large increase in the total number of new plays. The number of theatres and acting troupes expanded.

A third theatre in Goodman's Fields opened in the fall of 1729. In addition to creating a demand for new authors and more plays, this theatre started a school to develop young actors. By November, 1730, for the first time in more than one hundred years, five plays were being offered to the London public on the same day. ¹

Along with this increase in new plays and their production was the revival of interest in Shakespearean drama. No one cause seems to have been responsible for this revival. Several factors, occurring within a relatively short period of time, appear to have contributed to it. A brief discussion of these factors is essential for an

understanding of the rising popularity of Shakespeare's plays on the London stage during the 1730's and 1740's.

Causes and Effects of the Revival

In his analysis of this phenomenon, Professor Scouten suggests that one of the contributing factors was the publication record of Shakespeare's plays in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. In addition to the three printings of Rowe's edition early in the century, there were Pope's (1723-25, 1728), Theobald's (1733, 1740), Hanmer's (1744, 1745, 1747), and Warburton's (1747). But these, as Scouten points out, were expensive editions and consequently not within financial reach of the general public.

Of more importance than these edited sets was the appearance at a very low price of great quantities of printed texts of single plays as a result of the Tonson-Walker copyright war in 1734 and 1735. Walker had entered the lists against Tonson by offering a separate printing of The Merry Wives of Windsor at fourpence (a shilling was the customary price for a play) and by proposing to print all the plays of Shakespeare separately. Tonson retaliated by reducing his price to threepence, and then to a penny, as long as Walker continued. Walker persisted, however, and brought out about five plays a month for about seven or eight months. The upshot was that (together with a few other publishers) they offered for sale 115 different separate printings of all thirty-seven plays in 1734 and 1735.

A second factor that contributed to the revival was the


3Ibid.
Shakespeare Ladies Club, an organization formed by some ladies of rank and distinction for the purpose of raising funds by subscription to stage Shakespeare's plays. Scouten claims that this Club was furthering the "... new cycle of Shakespearean popularity ... by the 1734-35 season. Avery states that it was organized in the late months of 1736,

... to persuade London's theatrical managers to give Shakespeare a greater share in their repertories. Genuinely successful in their effort, these women, whose identity has eluded our times, began a movement which restored many of Shakespeare's neglected plays to the boards, increased the frequency with which many of the familiar ones were presented, brought his works a great deal of publicity in an exceedingly short time, and became a model to later groups which similarly wished to improve the stage. The earliest influence of the Club appeared in January, 1737. With the exception of one command performance of Hamlet, every announcement of each performance of a Shakespearean play at Drury Lane during January, 1737, had the following inclusion in its heading: "At the Desire of several Ladies of Quality."

It is necessary to interrupt the discussion of the Shakespeare Ladies Club in order to mention still another major contributing factor to the Shakespearean revival. On June 21, 1737, the Licensing Act was passed, the terms of which prohibited the acting of legitimate drama at

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6Ibid., p. 154.
any place not sanctioned by a Royal Patent, as was Covent Garden, or
licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, as was Drury Lane. The great upsurge
in playwriting which had started only a few years before was suddenly
quelled. The market for playwrights diminished in two ways: first, by
the prohibition against the unlicensed theatres; and second, because the
audiences' resentment of the Act led them to shout down any new play
presented at either of the licensed theatres. Such public reaction be-
gan to cost the managers of these two theatres money, and their only
recourse was to increase production of older plays, particularly Shake-
speare.

While the Shakespeare Ladies Club was effective in increasing
the numbers of performances of Shakespeare during the 1736-37 season,
it was apparently even more successful the following year. Avery be-
lieves that the Ladies focused their attention this second season upon
John Rich, manager of Covent Garden. For not only did his theatre show
the greatest increase in Shakespearean performances, it also presented
many Shakespearean plays for the first time in the eighteenth century.

In 1737-1738 the playhouses gave 306 performances, of which 68
(22.2%) were Shakespearian... In 1737-1738 it was Covent
Garden's showing which was more impressive: of 148 performances
there, 41 (27.7%) were Shakespearian. To appreciate the achieve-
ment of the Ladies, one should remember that this great increase in
Shakespearean performances took place in the theatre whose manager
... for many seasons had been scorned by many Londoners because
he was considered the principal promoter of pantomime and spectacle
at the expense of more legitimate drama. Whereas Drury Lane had
often given Shakespeare a good share in its repertory, it was only
under the influence of the Ladies that Rich became the rival of
Drury Lane in the elevation of Shakespeare's plays to a very large
proportion of the seasonal offerings. 7

According to Avery, these two seasons were the heart of the active campaign of the Ladies Club. But in addition to the concrete results this group achieved, they accomplished something equally important. They made Shakespeare fashionable. 8 Their success is certainly apparent when one compares what percentage Shakespeare's plays comprised of the total number of performances during successive periods in the first half of the eighteenth century. From 1703 - 1710 Shakespeare's plays accounted for about 11% of the total performances; from 1710 - 1717 about 14%; from 1717 - 1723 about 17%; during the 1740 - 1741 season, just four years after the Ladies Club initial effort, the ratio increased to one play of Shakespeare for every four performances or 25% of the total repertory. 9

Had the Shakespearean revival simply brought an increase in the eighteenth-century adaptations of Shakespeare's works, there would be little reason for rejoicing. To be sure, more than one of the highly over-sentimentalized versions by Tate, Cibber, or Hill still saw production. But the revival worked overwhelmingly in favor of many of Shakespeare's plays previously disregarded, as well as abandoning the earlier altered versions. Hogan lists fifteen plays that were seen for

7 Ibid., p. 156.
8 Ibid., p. 157.
the first time in more than one hundred years as Shakespeare wrote them. These include seven comedies: *All's Well That Ends Well*, *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Winter's Tale*; three tragedies: *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*; and five histories: *King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV* (Part I), and *Henry V*. For whatever combination of reasons—the publication record of Shakespeare's works in inexpensive volumes, the Tonson-Walker copyright war, the Shakespeare Ladies Club, the Licensing Act—the Shakespearean revival did come, providing honest texts and interested audiences for the actors of the London theatres.

**The Text of Henry the Fifth**

H. L. Ford's listing of separate plays published between 1700 and 1740 shows four individual editions of *Henry the Fifth* printed: one in 1734, two in 1735, and one in 1736. Three of these editions are not available for examination, but the 1735 text is nearly identical to the folio text. However, Hogan indicates that there were no acting

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12 OSUTC Film No. 2219. From a copy in the Shakespeare Memorial Library, Birmingham. The title page of this edition reads: *The Life of King Henry V*. As it is Acted At the Theatres. By Shakespeare. London: Printed in the Year M.DCC.XXXV.
editions of *Henry the Fifth* published before 1750,\(^{13}\) that this 1735 edition was strictly a reading edition, and that consequently we cannot assume it was the text used for stage presentation.

The cast lists recorded by Hogan indicate one Shakespearean character, Alice, singularly absent from all productions of *Henry the Fifth* in the eighteenth century.\(^{14}\) Nevertheless, Odell's obvious satisfaction that all other characters in the play, including all the low-comedy characters, are included in the published cast lists of the period, can be truly appreciated, because in 1738 theatrical art in London was still giving obeisance to Augustanism. Yet, "... the whole crowd of comic personages that reverence for the unities in 1738 might have induced a stage-manager to curtail, if not wholly to lop away,"\(^{15}\) are in evidence, including Fluellen, Pistol, MacMorris, Jamy, Williams, Nym, Bardolph, the Boy, and the Hostess.

The available information about the productions of *Henry the Fifth* during the second and third quarters of the century is minimal and comes from newspaper listings, occasional reviews, and playbills. But by examining and comparing these fragments of information, it may be possible to discover some of the more significant aspects of the


\(^{14}\)Ibid., I, pp. 196-202; II, pp. 278-294.

performances of this play by the early actors and actor-managers.

Dennis Delane

The first recorded production of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth following the January 7, 1605, performance at the Court of James I was at Covent Garden on February 23, 1736. The role of King Henry was performed by Dennis Delane. John Rich, the manager of this theatre, apparently had succumbed by this date to the pressures of the Shakespeare Ladies Club, because the following appeared in the advertisements: "Not acted these forty years. At the desire of several Ladies of Quality. Written by Shakespeare." The reference to the "forty years" is obviously an attempt by the management to stress the significance of the revival, and does not imply that the play was presented during the last decade of the preceding century. There are certainly no records to support such a statement, nor is it reasonable to assume that Shakespeare's text would have received any attention whatsoever in the 1690's. A total of seven performances of Henry the Fifth were "bespoken" by "Ladies of Quality" or "Persons of Quality" between the seasons of 1737-38 and 1743-44.

16 Unless otherwise indicated, all dates of performances noted for the eighteenth century are taken from the following works: Hogan, Shakespeare in the Theatre; and, Scouten (and others), The London Stage.


18 Ibid., pp. 704, 710, 718, 764, 824, and 1103.
Information about the actual staging of this production of Henry the Fifth, as well as for those during the next thirty years, appears to be non-existent. However, a few items about the casting and the textual inclusions are of interest. In the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century the role of Chorus was usually cut from production, but it was retained in nearly all of the productions from 1738 through 1759. During this twenty-one year period, the actor Ryan performed the role in all of the Covent Garden performances, working with four different actors who played King Henry—Delane, Hale, Barry, and Smith. Listings in two advertisements for two different performances of the play seem to testify to Ryan's excellence in the role. The newspaper advertisement for the January 11, 1739, performance includes: "Chorus, after the manner of the Ancients, by Mr. Ryan." 19 And in an advertisement for the March 11, 1740, performance we read: "Mr. Ryan being very hoarse, we are obliged to omit the Chorus." 20 Apparently both Rich and Delane felt there was no one else capable of handling a role that they obviously believed to be one of great importance.

Another role that seems to have been quite popular in this play was that of Ancient Pistol who, along with Fluellen, is one of the

19 Newspaper clipping, Covent Garden File, 1739, Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

two most important comic characters. An actor successful in this role was Theophilus Cibber who, according to Doran, had been carefully instructed in this role by his father.\textsuperscript{21} Cibber played this role in three different seasons at Covent Garden beginning in 1740 with Delane's King Henry.\textsuperscript{22} One of the earliest critical comments about Cibber's portrayal of Pistol is found in \textit{The Dramatic Censor}. In 1770, a writer for this magazine, decrying the performance of Dyer in this role wrote: "Mr. The Cibber made more of the popgun Ancient Pistol than possibly ever will be seen again, by a laughable importance of deportment, extravagant grimaces, and speaking it in the sonorous cant of old tragedi-zers, he exhibited a very entertaining piece of acting merit."\textsuperscript{23} More than a century later, Baker wrote of Cibber: "As an actor, he was chiefly remarkable for his impersonation of Ancient Pistol, by which name he was known among his associates; his voice was shrill, his person ungainly, his features ugly, and his style of acting exaggerated."\textsuperscript{24}

Tradition held that Pistol should wear a ridiculously large hat. Just when this custom began is difficult to determine. The


earliest reference to it is found in a mid-eighteenth-century issue of The Gentleman's Magazine in an article discussing Dryden's favoritism toward the actress Nell Gwyn. It seems that the actor Nokes, in a play at the Duke's Theatre,

... had appeared in a hat larger than Pistol's, which gave the town wonderful delight, and supported a bad play by its pure effect. Dryden, piqued at this, caused a hat to be made the circumference of a hinder coach wheel, and as Nelly was low of stature, and what the French call Mignonne & piquante, he made her speak under the umbrella of that hat, the brims thereof being spread out horizontally to their full extension. The whole theatre was in a convulsion, of applause; nay, the very actors giggled, a circumstance none has observed before. 25

Francis Grosse referred to this same type of hat in his advice to young military officers: "Ever since the days of Antient Pistol, we find that a large and broadrimmed beaver has been peculiar to heroes. A hat of this kind worn over your right eye, with two large dangling tassels, and a proportionate cockade and feather, will give you an air of courage and martial gallantry." 26 Indeed, Pistol's hat came to be something of a brand name in literature. Tobias Smollett completed a rather detailed description of a character in one of his novels by saying that the captain wore a hat "... very much of the size and cock of Pistol's." 27


This hallmark of the character seems to have been fully exploited by Theophilus Cibber (Figure 2).

Cibber's own comments about the public image of himself as the character Pistol were somewhat at odds with those of his critics:

In that Year when the Stage fell into great Commotions and the Drury Lane Company asserting the glorious Cause of Liberty and Property, made a Stand against the Oppressions in the Patentees. In that memorable Year when the Theatric Dominions fell in labour of a Revolution under the Conduct of myself, that Revolt gave occasion to several Pieces of Wit and satyrical Flirts at the Conductor of the Enterprise. I was attack'd, as my Father had been before me, in the publick Papers and Journals; and the burlesque Character of Pistol was attributed to me as a real one. Out came a Print of Jack Laguerres, representing, in most vile designing, this Expedition of ours, under the Name of the Stage Mutiny; in which, gentle Reader, Your humble Servant, in the Pistol Character was the principle Figure. This I laugh'd at, knowing it only a proper Embellishment for one of these necessary Structures to which Persons only out of Necessity repair.--But now comes the grand Attack; a Summer Company was at this Juncture performing at Covent-Garden Theatre; and our Transactions, and my Character, were thought worthy to be represented on the Stage. Accordingly a young Spark, who was just come from Trinity College at Cambridge, to set up for an Author in Town, and who had just before wrote a Farce, call'd the Mock-Lawyer thought this a proper Time to exercise his Genius. To Work he went, and Pistol was to be his Heroe: A Farce was wrote, and perform'd, and the Bent of it was to ridicule poor me: My Tone of Elocution, my buskin Tread, my Elevation of Countenance, my Dignity of Gesture, and expressive Rotation of Eye-balls; in short, all my Manner was burlesqu'd, and a Mock-Pomp of Words, which were a Parody of Tragedy Speeches, and Pistol's Bombast, ran through the Character.  

Cibber admitted that the parody was well-timed and well acted. He claimed that he took a side-box where all the audience could see him

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28 Theophilus Cibber, An Apology for the Life of Mr. T. C., Comedian. Being a Proper Sequel to the Apology for the life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian. With an Historical View of the Stage to the Present Year. Supposed to be written by Himself. In the Stile and Manner of the Poet Laureat. (London: J. Mitchell, 1740), pp. 16-17.
and his reaction, and that he joined in the laughter. But whether he or his critics more objectively evaluated his acting ability, as a performer he is most vividly remembered for his portrayal of Ancient Pistol.

Delane performed the role of King Henry a total of fifteen times; nine performances in 1738, two in 1739, one in 1740, and three in 1750. Six of these performances were bespoken. Two were command performances. On January 11, 1739, a command performance was given for George II. The London Daily Post & General Advertiser indicated this was His Majesty's first appearance at any public diversion since the death of the Queen. On November 29, 1750, another command performance was given for the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Sacheverel Hale

The eight performances of Henry the Fifth in which Hale played the King took place at Covent Garden between April, 1744, and May, 1746. Again, there is almost a complete absence of information about the staging of these productions or about Hale in the title role. However, the political climate of this two year period was such that for the first time in the recorded history of this play, it was used as a vehicle not for a star but for a cause.

By the mid-eighteenth century the London stage was particularly


responsive to the local and national issues of the day. In 1745, London and much of England was aroused by the fourth attempt of the century by the Stuarts to capture the throne of England. As his father's representative Prince Charles Edward led this last Jacobite Rebellion. The French Catholic support given to this final Stuart pretender elicited violent reaction from the London newspapers. "The General Advertiser bawled protest against Prince Charlie by lining its margin with slogans in large boldface type: 'No Pretender! No Popery! No Slavery! No Arbitrary Power! No Wooden Shoes!' The London stage committed itself to the patriotic fervor, and plays having anti-Catholic or anti-Stuart themes or that could be used as such were revived. Rich loaned his vacant playhouse in Lincoln's Inn Fields to the government for a garrison headquarters for London. At Drury Lane Lacy, the manager, offered to recruit a company of soldiers drawn from the male actors of London to train and fight. Of all the newspapers, the Daily Advertiser was perhaps the most committed to aiding the stage's efforts on behalf of the Hanoverian cause.

On September 28, 1745, a comment in the Daily Advertiser noted: "The Audience in Drury Lane were agreeably surprised by the Gentlemen belonging to that house performing the anthem 'God save our Noble King,' the universal applause it met with being encored with repeated huzzas, sufficiently denoting in how just an abhorrence they hold the arbitrary schemes of our invidious enemies, and detest the despotic attempts of Papal power."32

In this political and patriotic cause furthered by the stage,

31 Ibid., p. xxvii. 32 Ibid., p. xxviii.
Henry the Fifth served the purpose well. A notice appearing in the General Advertiser for Hale's opening performance on April 19, 1744, is indicative of the production's purpose.

In the play will be properly introd'ed the Songs To Arms and Britons Strike Home, by Leveridge, Beard, Reinhold, etc. With a New Prologue for the Occasion... Benefit Hale and Mrs. Hale. Mainpiece by Shakspear, reviv'd by particular desire Containing the Memorable Battle of Agincourt, with the total overthrow of the French Army, and many other Historical Passages. In order to preserve a proper decorum, and that this play may not be interrupted in its performance, the Publick may be assured there will not be any building on the stage.33

The performance the next evening was delivered without the prologue.

The newspaper comment the following day read in part: "Last night Shakespear's play of King Henry the Fifth, was performed at Covent Garden, with the many incidents that are applicable to the present Juncture of Affairs with France, occasioned the Whole to be received with an uncommon Applause."34 Notices of subsequent performances of the play usually included the phrases: "With the total overthrow of the French Army," or, "The Glorious victory of the English against the French." As far as Rich and his audiences were concerned, Agincourt of 1415 was witnessing the defeat of an eighteenth-century French army.

An interesting coincidence appears with the notice of the "New Prologue" announced for Hale's first performance of the play. Sometime during the height of this last Jacobite Rebellion--1744, 1745--the

34Ibid.
actress Peg Woffington appeared in men's clothes in the character of a Volunteer to speak an epilogue (Figure 3). Stone refers to it as "probably the bawdiest Epilogue of the mid-century." There does not seem to be any record of exactly what play was accompanied by this epilogue. Considering the nature and obvious purpose of this speech, it seems likely that it was attached to a performance of a play presented for its immediate patriotic value. Two revivals produced during this particular time and so designed were Fielding's The Old Debauchees (retitled The Debauchees; or the Jesuit Caught) and Cibber's The Nonjuror. Either of these would have been a suitable mainpiece for the epilogue. But Henry the Fifth, by the very nature of its content and given a strong jingoistic treatment, would have been equally appropriate. It is certainly an interesting speculation and in line with England's national political affairs of mid-century.

The Conspiracy Discovered

A particular event of the Jacobite Rebellion appears to have occasioned a one-act play adapted from Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth. The trial of the Lords Kilmarnock, Cromarty, and Balmerino for participation in the Rebellion with its parallel to the trial of Lords Scroop, Grey, and Cambridge in Shakespeare's drama was dramatized by an unknown playwright and presented as an afterpiece entitled The Conspiracy

Discovered; or, French Policy Defeated. The play received a total of four performances on August 4, 6, 8, and 11, 1746. The cast for this afterpiece was not listed. The only extant comments about the play and its production are from the Daily Advertiser and the General Advertiser. The bill in the former of July 31 carried the following description:

An Historical Dramatic Piece of one act, taken from Shakespear, will be perform'd, after a play, at Drury Lane; it will be a Representation of the trials of Lords Cambridge, Scroop, &c for High Treason, in the reign of King Henry the Fifth. The Characters are to be dressed in rich antique Habits of the times.

And a brief notice in the General Advertiser for August 5 read:

Last night the Dramatic Piece call'd The Conspiracy Discover'd; or French Policy Defeated, with a representation of the Trials of the Lords for High Treason, was acted at DL, with great applause, and will be performed again tomorrow night at the desire of several persons of Distinction.

Following the performance of August 11, there is no further record of this play on the London stage.

Spranger Barry

A native of Dublin, Spranger Barry first appeared on stage at the Smock Alley Theatre. In 1746 he began his London engagement at Drury Lane working with Garrick and playing Othello. During his four

36 These four performances are recorded in, The London Stage, Part III, Vol. II, pp. 1244-1245. Hogan, Shakespeare In The Theatre, lists only the first three of these performances.


38 Ibid.
seasons at Drury Lane he performed the role of King Henry five times. In each of these performances Garrick played Chorus. And in the first of these, on December 16, 1747, a former King Henry—Delane—played the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In 1750 Barry left Drury Lane and went to Covent Garden where he became Garrick's major competitor, and between 1750 and 1758 Barry played King Henry seven times. In five of these seven performances the Chorus was retained and was played by Ryan, long experienced in the role (Figure 4).

It is impossible to determine exactly what treatment was given the text by Barry, because there are no acting editions with which his name was associated. But from cast lists we do know that the low-comedy characters were retained throughout and that the character Alice was not, thereby eliminating the English lesson scene.

In 1770 The Dramatic Censor, reflecting on various actors who had performed in the role of the King, found Barry's portrayal to be its first choice. "Mr. Barry, in this part, steps far beyond any degree of competition, within our knowledge; his figure and manner happily unite to fill up our idea of the fifth Henry."39 Tate Wilkinson referred to Barry's performance of King Henry on December 3, 1755 as

"enchancing," while acknowledging and lamenting the small house for that performance.40

William Smith

A tall, striking, pleasant young man from Cambridge who received his early stage tutoring under Spranger Barry, William Smith made his London stage debut at Covent Garden in January, 1753. His handsome appearance and exceptional manners earned him his nickname, and "Gentleman" Smith proceeded to establish the largest number of performances by an actor in the role of King Henry the Fifth in the eighteenth century. Indeed, not until 1859 when Charles Kean completed eight-four performances in the same role was Smith's record broken. Between 1755 and 1779 Smith played King Henry fifty-seven times.41

There does not appear to be any detailed information concerning the text used by Smith in his early productions of Henry the Fifth. However, in 1769 a reading edition appeared with the following information on the title page: "The Life of King Henry V. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane and Covent Garden." And over the


41This figure is based upon a comparison of the records in The London Stage, with those in, Shakespeare in the Theatre. There is some confusion about one of these dates—December 2, 1760—for which some newspaper bills appear to have announced a performance of Tancred and Sigismunda. However, the weight of proof supports a production of Henry the Fifth on this evening.
According to Hogan only two performances of the play were done at Covent Garden during 1768: one on November 4 and the other on November 22, and both of these were Smith's. An examination of this text is particularly interesting when compared with a text used just a few years later by Smith. In the 1768 version the only departures from the control text for this study are as follows: a total of 143 lines are cut; 124 from III, vii; 17 from IV, i; and 2 from IV, iv; a few individual words are changed; the first comic scene and the second Chorus have their positions reversed; and there is some re-numbering of scenes. Interestingly enough, none of the Choruses are cut, the "breach" speech is not cut at all, and the English lesson scene is retained in its entirety. The word "God" as used by Shakespeare is neither changed nor omitted. This text is amazingly close to Shakespeare's, and as such becomes almost suspect when compared with the Bell's Shakespeare edition issued just five years later in 1773. Edited by the authors of The Dramatic Censor and printed from the prompt-books of the theatres royal, Odell

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42 OSUTC Film No. 2222. From a copy in the Shakespeare Memorial Library, Birmingham.


44 King Henry V. By Shakespeare. As Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. Regulated by Mr. Younger, Prompter of the Theatre. An Introduction, and Notes Critical and Illustrative are added by the Authors of The Dramatic Censor. London: Printed for John Bell, near Exeter-Exchange, in the Strand; and C. Etherington, At York, 1773.
considers Bell's edition of major importance.

This invaluable collection furnishes the first clue to Shakespeare as acted throughout the number of his plays that habitually graced the boards; and from it—I see no reason to doubt the authenticity of the texts—we can learn exactly what portions of those plays attendants at the theatre were privileged to behold.45

Odell lauds Bell's edition of Henry V for being close to the original in order of scenes, and he feels the cutting is judicious. But when compared to the 1768 edition described above, Bell's deviations from the original are indeed prominent. The Prologue is retained but all the other Choruses are cut. The English lesson scene is cut, the "Breach" speech is shortened to practically nothing, a number of phrases are rewritten, the word "God" is consistently changed to "Heaven," and many of the critical notes are presumptive and pretentious. Odell's admission that in the editing, "some of the best poetry is gone,"46 is rather an understatement. If Odell is correct that the plays in Bell's edition, presumably taken from the prompter's copies, "are exactly those that were performed in the theatres, before and during and after the years of the publication,"47 then any consideration of the 1768 edition as an acted text is invalid. The fact that none of the cast lists in Hogan for any of Smith's performances include the character Alice would seem to support Bell's edition as the performance

45 Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving, Vol. II, p. 15.
46 Ibid., p. 43.
47 Ibid., p. 18.
It was during Smith's reign as the English hero-king that the play again became strongly associated with current political and national affairs. In 1760 England's king, George II, died. A general closing of the theatres took place from October 25 until November 18 when the theatres re-opened with *Henry the Fifth* at Covent Garden. The following year on September 22, the coronation of George III and his queen took place at the chapel of St. James. The theatrical possibilities of such an event were not overlooked by the aging manager of Covent Garden, John Rich.

The autumn season of 1761 opened with *The Beggar's Opera*, but the final and characteristic triumph of the veteran manager was his representation of *The Procession from the Abbey at the Coronation*, to celebrate the rejoicings at this time over the crowning of George III.

It was first given, in conjunction with *Henry V.*, on November 13, and proved an immense success, notwithstanding Garrick's miserably shabby attempt at a similar affair at Drury Lane, which was entirely eclipsed by the Covent Garden production.

Rich was so concerned that this elaborate spectacle be successful and the major performers under his jurisdiction participate, that he himself planned to perform in it. However, he was taken ill during the final preparations and died just thirteen days following the opening. Of particular interest to this study is that Rich decided to open

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The Coronation along with a performance of Henry the Fifth, and that every performance of Henry the Fifth at Covent Garden from November 13, 1761, through September 22, 1769, was accompanied by this afterpiece. For the final performance, a real horse was brought onstage for use in the coronation scene.50

The only available information about Smith's performance comes from The Dramatic Censor. Comparing Smith's performance to Thomas Sheridan's, who acted the role of Henry in Dublin, the critic found Smith "... upon the whole, more pleasing, yet [lacking] consequence and variety."51

Thomas Hull

Although his earliest acting was purportedly at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin, Thomas Hull's first recorded stage appearance was at Covent Garden on October 5, 1759. During his years at this theatre he played the title role in Henry the Fifth a total of eight times in 1761, 1762, and 1766. He also performed other roles in the play: Exeter, Burgundy, King of France, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Chorus to Smith's King Henry; and Canterbury to both Wroughton's and J. P. Kemble's King Henry, the latter at the Haymarket in 1793.

From the very little available information about Hull's acting

50Ibid., p. 182.

ability, it appears that the relative success he did enjoy as a performer came as a result of intelligence and industry rather than from any particular talent.

Mr. Hull, very capable of supporting paternal characters, with propriety, and feeling, as he has often evinced to public satisfaction; but never more so than on a late occasion, when he played Leonato, at Drury Lane; this gentleman always convinces a sensible auditor, that he thoroughly understands his author; had nature given him executive requisites equal to his judgment and assiduity, he would have been a capital pillar of the stage; what he is possessed of he exerts with judgment and modesty.\(^{52}\)

If this comment from *The Dramatic Censor* is honestly indicative of Hull's capacity, it may well explain why his work in such roles as Exeter and Canterbury far outnumbered roles demanding heroics and excitement.

Hull managed Covent Garden for Colman from 1775 to 1782, and, with only a few appearances elsewhere, he stayed at this theatre until the end of his career.

**Richard Wroughton**

The last actor to be considered in the historical period covered in this chapter is Richard Wroughton who made his London stage debut on September 24, 1768, at Covent Garden. He remained at this theatre for seventeen years. Wroughton first played the role of King Henry in Liverpool during the summers of 1772 and 1773. His first London appearance in this role was on May 11, 1778, at Covent Garden. One other performance that same month, one the next season, and one in 1782

\(^{52}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 492.}\)
comprise Wroughton's total involvement with the play on the London stage. His final performance marked the last production of Henry the Fifth at Covent Garden during the eighteenth century.

Not unlike Hull, Wroughton's stage success seems to have been largely a result of hard work and reasonable judgment. The one extant sketch of him as King Henry (Figure 5) attests to some of his physical shortcomings described in a biographical note.

His person was bad, he was knockneed, his face was round and ineffectual, and his voice was not good. He had, however, an easy and unembarrassed carriage and deportment, was never offensive, and though he rarely reached greatness, seldom sank into insipidity or dullness. He was always perfect in his parts, indefatigable in industry, and wholly free from affectation.53

Again, like Hull, Wroughton as Shakespeare's Harry of England failed to capture the public's imagination. Not until seven years after Wroughton's last performance as King Henry was an actor by the name of J. P. Kemble at the other patent house able to re-establish a production of Henry the Fifth as both an artistic and a financial success.

Summary

Three factors which contributed in large measure to the Shakespearean revival of the second quarter of the eighteenth century were the Tonson-Walker copyright war of 1734-1735, the Shakespeare Ladies

Club active in the middle and late 1730's, and the Licensing Act of 1737. The true significance of this revival was two-fold: first, most of the altered versions were abandoned in favor of Shakespeare's text; and second, many of the plays which had long been disregarded were revived. Among fifteen plays produced for the first time in more than one hundred years as Shakespeare wrote them was Henry the Fifth. From 1738 to 1789 this play was performed 103 times on the London stage, and the title role was played by six different actors.54

Information on specific staging of Henry the Fifth during this period is minimal because of the lack of any prompt books and the paucity of visual materials and theatrical criticism of the play in performance. However, the coupling of the play with contemporaneous political events at different times during the period suggests that occasionally some rather elaborate scenic spectacle accompanied production. For example, it is difficult to imagine that when followed by Rich's spectacular version of the afterpiece The Coronation, Henry the Fifth as the mainpiece received simple pedestrian treatment.

The bulk of the literary criticism of the play during the period covered in this chapter comes from the editors of Shakespeare's works and from literary periodicals. Among the former, one of the most

54These figures are based on the listings in, Hogan, Shakespeare in the Theatre, Vol. I, pp. 196-201; and Vol. II, pp. 278-289.
significant is that written by Samuel Johnson. One of Johnson's major
criticisms was concerned with language. He took Shakespeare to task
for his frequent confounding of active and passive words and for occasion­
ally keeping his language subservient to custom. He noted that the
playwright gives theatrical phrases--phrases Shakespeare himself used
as an actor--to certain members of royalty in the play. The profanity
in the dialogue between the comic characters and that used by the King
disturbed Johnson. "The King prays like a Christian and swears like a
heathen." His comments even went so far as to note the misspelling of
the French names.

Johnson admonished Shakespeare for promising his audience
Falstaff and then not producing him. His condemnation of the English
lesson scene between Katherine and Alice seems to have set the standard
for most of the critics of the following one hundred-fifty years.

This scene is indeed mean enough, when it is read, but the gris­
maces of two French women, and the odd accent with which they
uttered the English, made it divert upon the stage. It may be ob­
erved, that there is in it not only the French language, but the
French spirit. Alice compliments the princess upon her knowledge
of four words, and tells her that she pronounces like the English
themselves. The princess suspects no difficulty in her instruct­
ress, nor the instructress in herself. Throughout the whole scene
there may be found French servility, and French vanity.

And again, not unlike many critics who followed him, Johnson found the

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55 All of the following references to Johnson's criticism are
Frowde, 1908), pp. 126-133.

56 Ibid., p. 131.  

57 Ibid., p. 129.
wooing scene between Henry and Katherine contradicting the King's character and nature as established by Shakespeare in *Henry IV* and in the first four acts of *Henry the Fifth*.

I know not why Shakespeare now gives the king nearly such a character as he made him formerly ridicule in *Percy*. This military grossness and unskilfulness in all the softer arts, does not suit very well with the gaieties of his youth, with the general knowledge ascribed to him at his accession, or with the contemptuous message sent him by the Dauphin, who represents him as fitter for the ball room than the field, and tells him that he is not to revel into dutchies, or win provinces with a nimble galliard. The truth is, that the poet's matter failed him in the fifth act, and he was glad to fill it up with whatever he could get; and not even Shakespeare can write well without a proper subject. It is a vain endeavor for the most skilful hand to cultivate barreness, or to paint upon vacuity.58

This comment by Johnson seems to indicate a certain lack of awareness on his part. Hal's dealings with women prior to the wooing scene were usually with women of the Boar's Head-Eastcheap variety. A young, dashing gallant of any period, who is able to banter easily with the barmaid-serving-woman type, may indeed find himself socially uncomfortable and his wit and dialogue in precarious balance when attempting an encounter with a princess, particularly a foreign princess, and on her native ground.

Toward the comic characters of both parts of *Henry IV* and *Henry the Fifth* Johnson seemed well disposed. Referring to the final exit of Pistol in Act V, sc. i, he noted that this is the last of the low-comics and concluded his comment with: "I believe every reader regrets their

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58Ibid., pp. 132-133.
departure."

Johnson's summary comments of *Henry the Fifth* include his most specific statement about a major structural element in the play, the Chorus.

This play has many scenes of high dignity, and many of easy merriment. The character of the King is well supported, except in his courtship, where he has neither the vivacity of Hal, nor the grandeur of Henry. The humour of Pistol is very happily continued; his character has perhaps been the model of all the bullies that have yet appeared on the English stage.

The lines given to the chorus have many admirers; but the truth is, that in them a little may be praised, and much must be forgiven; nor can it be easily discovered why the intelligence given by chorus is more necessary in this play than in many others where it is omitted. The great defect of this play is the emptiness and narrowness of the last act, which a very little diligence might have easily avoided.

The *Dramatic Censor* devoted fourteen pages of an issue to description and criticism of *Henry the Fifth* with most of its praise given to Shakespeare's use of the Chorus.61

The poet's idea of that unexpectedly great monarch the fifth Henry, may be collected from his prologue to this play; which, not only for the essential connection, but its sublimity, should always be spoken; it is a noble apology for the gross trespasses upon time and place, which so often occur to shock nice and rigid criticism.62

The Chorus, the writer said, "never should be omitted."63 It is so essential that without it "the piece really makes a very disjointed


and irreconcilable figure."64

A number of elements in the play were not equally praised. Referring to King Henry's determination to march to Calais and his words to Mountjoy, the critic wrote: "We do not approve the national reflections thrown out by the king in this scene; they are uncharacteristic, both as to his understanding and station."65 Again, the critic found Henry's character injured by the pre-arranged quarrel between Fluellen and Williams. "This seems a boyish, unmeaning circumstance, to the king's conduct, to put two men in the path of quarrel; ... Shakespeare has in this sacrificed the dignity of his hero to a desire of enriching Fluellen's character."66 The King's speech on Ceremony was found to be much too long for any actor to support. The same accusation was directed toward Canterbury's long speech to Henry about the King's English claim to France. Shakespeare's use of the low-comic characters was consistently criticized. The writer described Nym and Bardolph as "the scum of the earth."67 The scenes with Mistress Quickly, Pistol, Nym, and Bardoloph were "unintelligible jargon"68 interfering with the serious matters of the play. The argument between Jamy, MacMorris, and Fluellen was described as "... a strange and trifling intrusion upon the serious circumstances of affairs."69 With Falstaff absent, the

64Ibid., p. 361.  
65Ibid., p. 356.  
66Ibid., p. 361.  
67Ibid., p. 352.  
68Ibid., p. 353.  
69Ibid., p. 355.
Censor felt that the other low comics had no place in the work. "We are inclined to wish that all his followers, who could only be sufferable through their connexion with him, had tripped off the stage of life also; but, as the author has chosen to retain them, we must compound for their company, however irksome." Nor did the scene between Katherine and Alice fare any better at the hands of the Censor than it did in Johnson's criticism. "There never was a more trifling and superfluous scene written." And finally, the wooing scene was completely denounced.

All the other characters being gone, a very insipid, awkward scene of courtship ensues, between Henry and Catherine, a princess of France; words are played upon in a most childish manner; we see no reason why Catherine should be the only person in the French court who does not speak English; and that Henry, though the French language was not in his time so fashionable as at present, should be ignorant of it when he claimed France as his natural, lawful inheritance. Had these absurdities in character served any striking purpose there would have been some degree of palliation; but the whole purport of four insignificant, word-catching pages, is to acquaint us with the monarch's desire to make Catherine his queen.

The critical comments from Johnson and from the Censor have some validity in the entire body of dramatic criticism of the period under consideration. They may even exemplify a majority of critical taste for the 1750's and 1770's. But it is virtually impossible to realize a neat little package of critical summary for the drama and theatre for the last three quarters of the century. This period witnessed too many changes--social, political, economic--that affected
the theatre, itself in a state of evolution, to be able to arrive at a simple answer. "The body of critical literature is one which has many valences, so to speak, and turns out to be so various, both in adulation and damnation, that one can find verse and chapter to support practically any thesis he wishes to put forward."73 Professor Stone, referring specifically to the third quarter of the century, details some of the particular difficulties inherent in dealing with the relatively large bulk of the stage criticism of this period.

Some of the criticism is careful and perceptive. Some is formal hack reporting and essentially indifferent, some undoubtedly is paid "puff" emanating from the managers themselves to prime the pump of attendance, some is cruelly and openly the result of animus by rejected authors or friends of "injured" actors, and as violent upon paper as riots were physically in the playhouse.

The sifting and sorting of the various kinds of criticism to winnow out a concept of basic validity is, after the passage of long time, next to impossible. Perhaps no form of eighteenth-century writing shows so well the relativity of aesthetic values arrived at in that age."74

The difficulty of establishing a definitive critical statement can be appreciated even more considering those for whom the theatre and its dramatic fare was a major attraction.

Nicoll points out that the changes which took place in the London theatre audiences from the beginning to the end of the eighteenth century were evolutionary rather than abrupt.


74Ibid., p. cciii.
No decided period of cleavage can be traced between the audiences of the early and those of the late eighteenth century; yet slowly the main features of the typical body of spectators was changing during those years. In spite of the recurring riots, in spite of rowdyism during and after the performance of plays, the playgoers of 1770 were quieter and less uproarious than their predecessors of 1730. Their tastes are reflected in the highly decorous comic operas of the age, in the more than decorous sentimental comedies and even in the moral melodramas which provided something of all worlds from spectacular show to poetic justice.75

Audiences throughout most of this century brought strong political emotions to the theatres, and political events were often successfully exploited. In addition to the Jacobite Rebellion and the coronation of George III during this period, the French Revolution broke out in 1789, and by 1800 the reaction in England was high and strong. Part of the direct response of the London stage to this will be discussed in the next chapter.

Another major feature of the late eighteenth-century audience, and one not completely divorced from the political thrust, was "an excessive sensibility, which allied itself to a prudery unknown before."76 This prudery, at least in part, had a definite political bias. Damning the immorality of the Restoration was an indirect way of abusing the Stuarts and of justifying the deposition of James II, thus reflecting credit on the Hanovers. The action taken by the theatre managers certainly contributed to this evolution. Because as Stone indicates.


76 Ibid., p. 15.
it was the managers who

. . . changed the bill-of-fare, and gradually over the years swung the influence of the stage into that well-defined movement for reform of men, morals, and manners, discernible in art, poetry, novel, legal change, social consciousness, and religious endeavor throughout the century.77

The stage fare of the third quarter of the century, while it would have seemed pallid to a Restoration wit, would have been risque to a Victorian.

The last half of the century was caught in a conflict between two ideals, Augustanism and Romanticism. This conflict produced "... an audience less virile than before, more decorous outwardly and believing in morality and sensibility, full of patriotic sentiment and eager to welcome flamboyant expressions of that patriotism in the dramas put upon the stage."78 As an instrument for manifesting just such patriotic sentiment, few of the plays produced between 1738 and 1789 seem to have been more appropriate and successful than Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth.


The first three quarters of the eighteenth century witnessed a Shakespearean revival in London that permitted the greater and the lesser actors to present a reasonable number of the playwright's works. The real significance of the Shakespearean production during this period lay, however, not so much in its immediate success but rather in the fact that it was preparing a foundation of demand for the future. With the exception of Garrick, who accomplished certain artistic and managerial innovations, most of the major theatrical performers of this period were relatively undistinguished. This is not to say that some were not highly competent actors in a variety of roles. But they were working actors, not dramatic or theatrical innovators. The business mind of John Rich dictated dramatic or scenic aggrandizement; the actor, by and large, did his job. And if a part of his job, as in many cases, consisted in portraying Shakespearean characters, it was done with little, if any, thought to a new manner of acting or staging.

Following Garrick's retirement in 1776 the London stage was virtually without a super-star, a singular figure to extend and enlarge the horizons of Shakespearean production. The industry and
good judgment of Hull and Wroughton, while admirable attributes, were confined within very limited imaginative and artistic abilities. Smith, who by 1785 was in possession of most of the major tragic Shakespearean roles, was similarly limited. John Henderson, a very promising actor who realized his initial major success in 1777, died just eight years later. The field was open, and the theatre-going public of London was ready.

John Philip Kemble

The London stage debut in 1783 at Drury Lane of John Philip Kemble, if not auspicious, was certainly timely. The two years in which he competed with his major rival, Henderson, before the latter's death in 1785 allowed Kemble an advantageous position from which to examine the London theatre scene and time in which to formulate his plans for the future. In 1788 he became manager of Drury Lane, a position he held until 1803 when the financial irresponsibility of Sheridan led him to accept the management of Covent Garden. There he remained the acknowledged great of the English stage until a few years before his retirement. Kemble was, says Odell, "certainly the first great 'producer' of Shakespeare on the English stage."¹ The demands he made upon himself and those with whom he worked, and the attention he gave to both the dramatic and the theatrical aspects of his

profession were previously unknown in the English theatre. His editions of Shakespearean texts served as the bases for both reading and acting editions after his death.

The four great periods of his career, as described by Odell, were: the beginning of his management of Drury Lane in 1788-1789; the opening of the enlarged Drury Lane in 1794; the beginning of his management at Covent Garden in 1803; and his work at the new Covent Garden in 1809.2 This division of Kemble's career is of particular significance to this study, because in each of these periods he produced Henry the Fifth.

Productions of Henry the Fifth by Kemble Prior to 1811

Kemble first produced Henry the Fifth in his second season of management at Drury Lane on October 1, 1789. According to Baker, it was "the big revival of the fall, and like Henry VIII the year before it was another studiously prepared exhibition piece."3 Baker describes the text as "cut to tatters," while acknowledging the kinder words used by Boaden, Kemble's biographer, to describe Kemble's preparation of the text.4 Recognizing Boaden's decided prejudice in favor of

2Ibid.


4Ibid.
Kemble's work, it is still worthwhile to quote the biographer. Kemble's personal concern about textual preparation was an important aspect of his reign as the leading Shakespearean figure for nearly three decades.

According to Boaden, Mrs. Siddons was not in the best of health at the beginning of the 1789 season and decided to spend some time away from the London stage. This meant that the tragedies of female interest would be put aside during her absence. In considering plays for this season, Boaden continues,

... the inexhaustible stores of Shakespeare presented to Mr. Kemble a highly tempting monodram, in the play of King Henry V; and he thought, ... that the conqueror of Agincourt fell more completely within the range of his powers, than the characters of John or Richard III. ... He therefore set himself seriously to prepare the play for representation. Now this, in Mr. Kemble's notion of the business, was, not to order the prompter to write out the parts from some old mutilated prompt copy lingering on his shelves; but himself to consider it attentively in the author's genuine book: then to examine what corrections could be properly admitted into his text; and, finally, what could be cut out in the representation, not as disputing the judgment of the author, but as suiting the time of the representation to the habits of his audience, or a little favouring the powers of his actors, in order that the performance might be as uniformly good as it was practicable to make it. The stage arrangements throughout the play were all distinctly marked by him in his own clear exact penmanship, and when he had done his work, his theatre received, in that perfected copy, a principle of exactness, which was of itself sufficient to keep its stage unrivalled for truth of scenic exhibition.5

The degree to which Kemble did in fact cut Shakespeare's text—be it

"corrections properly admitted" or "cut to tatters"—is significant.

During his tenure at both of the patent houses, Kemble published five different acting editions of his version of Henry the Fifth. Jaggard lists the dates for these as 1789, 1790, 1801, 1806, and 1815. Comparison of the 1789 and 1790 editions indicates they are textually identical. The 1801 and 1806 editions differ slightly from each other, and both differ somewhat from the two earlier editions. In addition to these printed texts, there exists a thirty-nine page partbook in Kemble's own hand. Although this partbook is not identical with the King's lines in any of the printed editions of the play, it is closest to the 1789 version. Using the older symbols "OP" and "PS" which were discontinued by Kemble in 1803 in favour of "IH" and "RH," the partbook also refers to page numbers of a text. The only reasonable assumption is that these page numbers are those of one of the printed editions. And the only edition with page numbers paralleling the partbook references is the 1789 edition. This means that the partbook was used either for performances at Drury Lane or at the Haymarket while Drury Lane was undergoing repair in the early 1790's. And since it is


7This partbook of 814 lines is housed in The Folger Shakespeare Library, T.a.38.

doubtful that Kemble would prepare a partbook for a role he had been doing for two seasons, it seems likely the partbook was prepared by him for his initial production of the play.

In his preparation of the 1789 text of *Henry the Fifth*, Kemble was undoubtedly familiar with Bell's 1773 edition which was taken from the prompter's copies at both of the patent theatres. Odell found Kemble's version of this play, along with other of his adaptations of Shakespeare, "really enough like Bell's edition to pass muster as copies eased of a few incumbrances, and more highly finished throughout their full extent." Kemble did indeed follow Bell's principal omissions which included: all the Choruses; the list of the French kings who broke the Salic law, and the lengthy simile of the honey-bees (I, ii); the King's anger with the traitors (II, ii); the famous emendation "and 'a babbled of green fields" (II, iii); most of the "breach" speech and the Boy's opinion of his low-comic friends (III, i); the entire scene between Alice and Katherine (III, iv); the majority of the Dauphin's scene (III, vi); Henry's argument about the

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9*King Henry V, Or, The Conquest of France. A Tragedy, written by Shakespeare. Published exactly conformable to the Representation, on its Revival at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, October 1, 1789. London: Printed for J. Debrett opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly. 1789.* (All references to the 1789 edition are to this text).

10*King Henry V . . . As performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. Regulated by Mr. Younger, prompter of that Theatre. London: John Bell; York: C. Etherington, 1773.*

11*Odell, Shakespeare From Betterton to Irving, Vol. II, p. 54.*
responsibilities of a king and his subjects (IV, i); and Burgundy's lament for France and much of the wooing scene (V, ii). But here Kemble's "copy" of Bell ends, because in addition to the cuttings listed above, Kemble further omitted: the clerics' discussion about Henry's moral reformation (I, i); the dispute between Fluellen and MacMorris (III, ii); most of Henry's threat to the citizens of Harfleur (III, iii); the French disdain of the English (III, vii); and the entire scene between Pistol and the French soldier (IV, iv). Kemble also transferred lines from the "breach" scene (III, i) to the English camp scene (IV, iii), and the remaining thirty-one lines of III, vii to IV, ii. IV, ii he re-wrote into prose. Where Bell retained all the comic characters, Kemble cut Jamy and MacMorris. He also eliminated a number of the minor speaking roles of both French and English nobles. In all, for his 1789 production Kemble cut 1,460 lines of Shakespeare or 43.28 per cent.12

With only a few minor exceptions, the cuttings and inversions used by Kemble in the 1789 edition are found in his later editions. In all editions the word "God" is changed to "Heaven" in most instances. It is interesting to note that this change continued, to different degrees, through the years to Charles Kean's production in 1859. It appears that this change accompanied the curtailment of the oaths used

12These figures are based on the line count (3,373) in the control text for this study.
by Fluellen, though here again his oaths are not always cut. This lack of absolute consistency seems to refute any single cause for such changes.

Kemble's production of Henry the Fifth opened on October 1, 1789. Boaden, while admitting that the stage's indifference to this play in the past had been partly due to the lack of female interest, was extremely impressed with the production and particularly with Kemble's portrayal of the King.

... I do not think that even his Coriolanus exceeded his "royal Hal." As a coup de Theatre, his starting up from prayer at the sound of the trumpet, in the passage where he states his attempted atonement to Richard the Second, formed one of the most spirited excitements that the stage has ever displayed. His occasional reversions to the "mad wag," the "sweet young prince," had a singular charm, as the condescension of one who could be so terrible. Of the other performers, James Aickin and Baddeley claim a distinguished praise, in which they share, humbly, with Kemble, that is, as Exeter, and Fluellen, being unapproachable, for tenderness and humour.13

The reviews were nearly unanimous in their praise of Kemble's performance. The Times reviewer wrote:

... to the praise of the Manager be it said--never was any piece got up with more attention to decoration, dress--and what is still better--truth of character.

Those who have formerly witnessed Kemble's excellence in the Black Prince will not be disposed to contradict our assertion--that in the fifth Henry--he was "every inch a King"--for much to his credit--whilst all the fiery attributes of the warlike monarch were happily preserved--the milder duties of the man were not

neglected—indeed we have seldom witnessed a more perfect performance.\textsuperscript{14}

Another reviewer, after reveling in the fact that Shakespeare was not restricted in a neo-classic mode of arrangement of time and place, and praising the playwright's ability to capture the complete nature of the hero-king, echoed the \textit{Times} plaudits of both the production and Kemble's acting.

This production having kings and warriors for its dramatis personae, and courts and camps for its scenes, admits, and has received every aid from splendour of dress, and pomp of decorations. But the chief attraction in the performance is Mr. Kemble in Henry. . . . we have scarcely ever seen him make any character so prominent. His great excellence of being personified, as it were into the character he represents, of losing all recollection of his individual existence, was last night particularly conspicuous.\textsuperscript{15}

Still another reviewer devoted space to the accomplishments of other members of the company in their roles. Particular praise was given to Aicken's Exeter and Baddeley's Fluellen with additional mention to some nine other actors. But his first praise went to the manager's performance.

Kemble, in the glorious Harry, shone with uncommon splendour; we mean not in dress, although that was elegant, but in the performance—his soliloquy after parting with the soldiers, his appeal to Heaven upon the eve of battle, and his courtship of Catherine, were masterly.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{The Times} (London), October 2, 1789.

\textsuperscript{15}Unidentified review in the Drury Lane file of the Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.}
The costumes for the production were apparently better than usual, because this same reviewer wrote that "the play is got up with much apparent attention; the English party were well dressed, particularly Messrs. Kemble and R. Palmer, and some of the French could boast new cockades."\(^{17}\)

Two critics who did not give total approbation to the production were specific in their dissent. The Prompter praised Kemble's acting but did not approve of Baddeley as Fluellen.\(^{18}\) And a pseudonymous writer, Theatricus Automaton, devoted a series of articles in The Attic Miscellany to attacking different performers of the period. Of Kemble's performance in Henry the Fifth he wrote:

\begin{quote}
I commend your choice of attitude in the beginning of a turbulent speech; it summons all the muscles to their duty; . . . besides the representation of a windmill occupies the stage more completely than any other figure, . . . as the attitudes has the peculiar effect (particularly in a tall man) of keeping the secondaries at their proper distances; moreover, it prepares the audience for something to be admired, and gives them time to adjust their canes, and dispose of their gloves, prefatory to a clap, which never fails to fill up the punctuation of a long speech uttered by a leading performer.\(^{19}\)
\end{quote}

Downer indicates that a cartoon of Kemble, "in his regal robes acting

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\(^{17}\)Ibid.


like a windmill, flailing his arms, distorting his features, and twisting his body," accompanied this criticism, and that the cartoon was reprinted elsewhere without reference to Kemble. A similar cartoon with a different caption, published in December, 1789, illustrates this critic's opinion (Figure 6). But neither Theatricus Automaton's criticism nor the visual caricatures agree with the engraving of Kemble as Henry (Figure 7) or with the later critics' evaluations of Kemble's acting technique.

According to Baker, the relatively inexpensive production given Henry the Fifth by Kemble during his second season of management of Drury Lane was successful and helped to offset some of his mid-season failures. The play was given a total of eleven performances during this season and was revived for a single performance the following season. The decision to rebuild Drury Lane in 1791 found Kemble and his company performing at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, for three seasons. During his stay at this interim house, Kemble presented Henry the Fifth five times.

With no information to the contrary, it is reasonable to assume that Kemble made use of the stock scenery on hand at Drury Lane. But with the new theatre ready to open in 1794, some preparation had to be made for new scenery. The dimensions of the new building were such

20Ibid.
21Baker, Kemble, p. 166.
that the old scenery would not have been large enough. The old Drury had seated about 2,000; the new building (actually more of an enlargement than a totally new structure) had a capacity of 3,611. To provide the necessary new scenery Kemble engaged the artist William Capon. Boaden describes the zeal with which Capon undertook his task, and describes some of the scenery which he and Kemble inspected in Capon's private painting room.

A chapel of the pointed architecture, which occupied the whole stage, for the performance of the Oratorios, with which the new theatre opened in 1794.

Six chamber wings, of the same order, for general use in our old English plays—very elaborately studied from actual remains.

A view of New Palace Yard, Westminster, as it was in 1793—41 feet wide, with corresponding wings.

The ancient palace of Westminster, as it was about 300 years back; from partial remains, and authentic sources of information—put together with the greatest diligence and accuracy—the point of view the S.W. corner of Old Palace Yard. About 42 feet wide and 34 feet to the top of the scene.

Two very large wings, containing portions of the old palace, which the artist made out from an ancient draught met with in looking over some records of the augmentation office in Westminster. It was but a pen and ink sketch originally, but though innured by time, exhibited what was true.

Six wings representing ancient English streets; combinations of genuine remains, selected on account of their picturesque beauty.

The tower of London, restored to its earlier state, for the play of King Richard III.22

According to Odell, the scenery described in this list was used for all the histories and many of the other plays of Shakespeare. "As far as, the generality of Shakespearian productions is concerned, I rather fear

that they were forced, all and sundry, to make use, during Kemble's regime at Drury Lane, of the fine stock of scenery provided by Capon; there was probably but little individualization."

The enlarged Drury Lane theatre was officially re-opened on April 21, 1794, with Kemble and Siddons in Macbeth, and in the fall of the same year two performances of Henry the Fifth were given. Although the newspaper reviews of the period praised Kemble's King Henry, there was no mention of the scenery employed. Not until his next performances of the play in 1801, the last during his reign at Drury Lane, did some specific criticism appear about his use of inappropriate scenery.

By 1801 Kemble had been managing Drury Lane for thirteen seasons. He had been in the enlarged and rebuilt theatre since 1794. One of his admitted major concerns, expressed not long after he assumed the Drury Lane management, was to achieve historical accuracy in settings and costumes while at the same time maintaining the splendor in representation. He was determined that something more than merely the expense incurred be a concern of management. Admittedly, by the time Kemble retired from the stage the professional theatre of London was more concerned with historical propriety than it had ever been before. But as Baker points out, the results achieved by Kemble were often less than accurate and occasionally ludicrous, and "his posthumous

23Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving, Vol. II, p. 94.
reputation looms larger than his achievement."²⁴ The degree to which Kemble's historical accuracy in staging fell short was rather painfully detailed by a critic writing for The Monthly Mirror of December, 1801. In his article, "Theatric Costume, as Connected with English History," this critic used Kemble's Henry the Fifth to exemplify his thesis.

It is too generally believed, that our theatres, in their scenes, dresses and decorations, are faithful mirrors of those times which are by them exhibited. . . . but . . . so far from carrying probability on their boards, . . . they barely evince either inclination of ability to give a just representation of the manners and customs of our ancestors, though surely so momentous a concern highly merits a serious attention.²⁵

The critic then proceeded to list a number of examples regarding the scenery, a few of which were:

"The audience chamber. K. Henry discovered on his throne."--This painting is a design after the Doric order, with a few auxiliary pointed arch sweeps: the first science unknown in England, until the reigns of Henry VIII or Elizabeth, and the latter a painter's "snatch," from a Westminster Abbey peep. What a combination! As for Henry's throne, if a few steps, a modern arm chair, can make it so, why it is well; then wherefore read we of tapestry, or velvet hangings, forming rich canopies and curtains for such a royal show: why do we prize the illuminated MS. wherein such costly array is so superbly set forth?

Act II.--"Southampton."--For which a wretched daub is presented of modern ships, a light-house, etc. At Southampton, I, a short time back, traversed its limits, where are still to be found nearly entire, its walls, gates, towers, etc., etc. how well a study from those objects would have appeared, if they had been here introduced: but to proceed.

"The French King's Palace."--a fanciful mixture of our ancient pointed arch style of architecture, and the present manner of workmanship. We surmise it is meant for a hall: managers may call it

²⁴Baker, Kemble, pp. 260-269.

²⁵The Monthly Mirror, December, 1801, pp. 408-411.
a council chamber; the king or queen's drawing room: all is as one to them.

"The French camp."—Some half dozen blanket coverings, hung on trees, or tied to poles. This for the warlike state of France?

Act V.—"French Court at Troyes, etc."—An aisle of a church, with Roman and Grecianized trophied armours hung against the walls. In antiquity, with us, no example of displaying warlike habiliments to adorn a princely chamber, is to be met with; we only hear of their being deposited in chests, etc. It is hardly necessary to say, this painting had then but very small pretensions to portray any grand apartment in a palace: it appeared to me more like some country church, hung about with modern heraldic tin and canvassed funeral honours than any thing else. So much for the scenery.26

Kemble's costumes, according to this critic, were equally poor.

Dresses.—To speak of our Henry's garb—Why, the taylor has, it must be confessed, gone a century or so back for some sort of raiment, to equip his majesty; and he has picked up a jerken, cloak, boots, and high-topped gloves of Charles I.'s reign; but the neckband, is of your Oliverian trim; a cap of Elizabeth's time, and an odd sort of a crown stuck round its brims, a ribband, and the George (first assigned, as making a part of the honourable distinction of the order of the garter, by Henry VIII.). What a strange commixture this for the dress of Henry V.

Of the French King's dress, there was no material difference, but in colour, from our monarch's. Thus it fared with all the princes, dukes, lords, knights, 'squires, and common men on either side; all furnish'd out in the same fashion, some more rich, others plainer, according to their several degrees; a sort of habits given to all aeras by managers, who, it may be imagined, would not be willing that characters of remote ages should strut about in cloaths such as we wear at this hour.27

The costumes of the clergy were criticized as being equally inappropriate.

The set decorations and properties apparently ranged from the incorrect to the nonexistent. The critic concluded:

26Ibid. 27Ibid.
Oh ye days of far-gone warfare, of glorious chivalry, how are ye forgot! Where are your myriads of banners, national, armorial, and ancestral! Your groves of lances, spears, halberts, battle-axes, long-bows, swords, and shields! Your tabors, trumpets, and all your circumstances of contending arms!—say, are they lost in the lapse of ages? Managers once more—Why must two such powers as Henry of England, and Charles of France, that in their hour of mortal strife bid the world look on and wait the direful issue, here in this theatric apology, be brought to the wretched condition thus described?  

These preceding quotations comprise only about one half of the total review. The critic detailed a number of other stark inconsistencies. However, unlike a number of early nineteenth-century criticisms, this one does not seem to be nasty or clever simply for the sake of being so. This critic appears to have been genuinely concerned with the lack of any historical accuracy in staging, and he made use of the best example to point out the faults which obtained in many productions of Shakespeare.

Kemble assumed the management of Covent Garden in 1803, and early in his first season there—October 25—presented Henry the Fifth (Figure 8). The critic for The Times, generous in his praise of nearly all the performers, devoted a paragraph to what he thought was a major inconsistency in costume.

The Piece has been got up with considerable expense and taste; but there are several errors in matters of costume that should be corrected. We shall just mention that the heralds of England, who, at that period, wore only the arms of the two nations, as they were quartered by Edward the Third, and borne, if our memory be correct, down to the accession of James the First, were cloathed last night

28Ibid.
in tabards of the present reign, such as they wore immediately previous to the late incorporative union. No notice is taken, in the costume of the French Court, of the orders of that country, though our own order of the garter is represented. We have no wish to split hairs, or find unnecessary fault, but we are compelled to mention these matters, because it is generally understood that the present Manager pays particular attention to this subject.  

It is significant that the *Times* critic devoted this much space to a specific costume criticism, particularly at this time, because the thrust of this production of *Henry the Fifth* was strongly political and nationalist. With the exception of a fourteen-month interval, England had been at war since 1793. Her chief adversary, Napoleon, had risen to power and claimed territory, and in 1803 was preparing to invade England from the northern coast of France. On the morning of the October 25 performance, citizens of London gathered in Hyde Park in a patriotic display before the English sovereign. Interestingly, it was the anniversary of the battle of Agincourt.

The second and final performance of the play by Kemble that same season occurred one month later. The entire receipts from this performance of November 25 were appropriated by the proprietors of Covent Garden for the Patriotic Fund. Immediately following the final curtain, Charles Kemble spoke an "Occasional Address to the Volunteers" to the audience (Appendix B). The *Times* critic included the text of this address in his review, following which he wrote: "The bursts of

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29 *The Times* (London), October 26, 1803.
applause produced by the address closed in a general call for 'God save the King,' which was sung by all the vocal Performers, accompanied by a full band." The scene thus described had its precedent more than half a century earlier when Nell Gwyn, dressed as a female volunteer, delivered just such an address to a theatre audience under very similar circumstances.

Kemble's 1811 Production

Kemble's final production of Henry the Fifth occurred eight years later in 1811. Using the promptbook identified by Shattuck as the one for this production, it is possible to gather more detail about this production than some of the earlier ones.

The text

The text used for the 1811 production is the 1806 Kemble acting edition. The cuts and changes, with only a couple of exceptions, are very similar to those in his 1789 and 1803 editions. The total number of lines cut, by acts, is as follows: Act I, 194; Act II, 156; Act III, 424; Act IV, 386; and Act V, 230, plus the 14 lines of the Epilogue. In all, Kemble cut 1,404 lines or 41.62 per cent of the dialogue. (See Appendix C for a comparison of Kemble's text with the control text).
In addition to the cuts, inversions, and additions in the dialogue, characters' lines occasionally are exchanged. Some of these exchanges appear to be a result of Kemble's personal choice. Others are necessitated by the fact that Kemble eliminated some of the minor characters from his production. Characters cut from the script include York, Salisbury, Warwick, Jamy, MacMorris, Court, Orleans, Britaine, Grandpre, Rambures, and Alice. And while Kemble used male extras as guards and lords, he did not use any female extras.

Most of the profanity or lines that carry a double meaning of a suggestive nature are either cut or changed. The word "God" is changed to "Heaven" in all but a few instances.

Staging and reception

Covent Garden theatre, following the disastrous fire of 1808, had been rebuilt and opened the following year. The enlarged facility, with a horseshoe-shaped auditorium, seated approximately 3,000. The stage had a proscenium opening 42'-6" wide and 36'-9" high. From the front lights to the back shutter grooves the stage was 68'-0" deep, and it was 82'-6" wide from wall to wall. Behind the proscenium there were six sets of wing grooves plus the shutter grooves directly up center. Designed to accommodate the ever-growing theatre audience, Covent Garden was hardly suited to intimate production.

The 1811 promptbook is not nearly as complete as some of the promptbooks for later productions of Henry the Fifth, and there are
no illustrations to supplement the few floor-plan sketches indicating characters' positions. But this play appears to have been staged by Kemble in a manner similar to his other Shakespearean productions. Using the standard wings and shutter arrangement, the scenes were alternated between deep and shallow position.

The promptbook indicates ground plan blocking arrangements for nine of the twenty-one scenes in Kemble's version. Most of these scenes are those involving large numbers of characters onstage simultaneously. Among these scenes are: the English Palace (I, ii); the French Palace (II, iii, and V, ii); the scene before Harfleur (III, i); the French camp (III, ii); the English camp (IV, iv); and three scenes on the battlefield (IV, vi., IV, vii., and IV, viii). All of these ground plans fall into one of three basic arrangements: (1) a straight line of characters on a horizontal stage axis; (2) a straight line of characters on a vertical stage axis, one line stage-right and one line stage-left; and (3) two lines of characters on a diagonal stage axis, running from down-right to up-center and from down-left to up-center. Within these nine scenes very little individual blocking or business is indicated. More individual movement and business is noted in the remaining twelve scenes, or parts thereof, in which only two or three characters are involved. Among these, the scenes of the low-comedy characters have the most specific business indicated. Conversely, the first scene between the two clerics and the wooing sequence of the
final scene have no notations on business or movement.

Entrances and exits are indicated for all scenes. The characters names are listed, and the order of entrance is often specified. Other stage directions include: ringing the music bell; warnings for act drops; time to be taken during certain scene changes; and a single light cue for lowering the lamps during the night scene when the King, disguised as a soldier of the company, talks with his men (IV, i). An advertisement for the production indicated the overture and the act symphonies were composed by Mr. Ware. Music cues are indicated throughout the promptbook, usually as "Flourish of Drums and Trumpets."

Total running time of the performance, less intermissions, was two hours and forty minutes, with the individual acts running as follows:

Act I, twenty-five minutes; Act II, thirty minutes; Act III, thirty-five minutes; Act IV, sixty minutes; and Act V, twenty minutes. It is interesting to compare this with Charles Kean's production almost fifty years later. Cutting about the same number of lines as Kemble, Kean's production ran more than four hours.

Reviews of Kemble's final production of Henry the Fifth were mixed. The critic for The Dramatic Censor devoted nearly one-third of his comments to damning the accompanying farce, Bluebeard, and to the patrons who filled the house only to witness the prancing horses displayed in the afterpiece. He described Kemble as "an efficient

32The Dramatic Censor, April, 1811, pp. 183-184.
representative of the Regal Hero," but dismissed the work of Norris, Bishop, and Truman in the roles of the three traitors as completely devoid of feeling. The critic for *The Satirist* was even less kind in his review of the March 25 performance:

At Covent Garden Theatre, we were present during the representation of certain fragments of a play written by one William Shakespeare, and entitled *King Henry the 5th*. Never was poor author so mercilessly mangled by the hand of a manager. . . . No connection whatever was kept up between the scenes; no chain of story preserved; all was confusion; though, to do the performers justice, they were most meritoriously perfect in the parts which Mr. Kemble had required them to recite.

Again, Kemble's costuming, for all his care, called attention to itself with some obvious inconsistencies. After admiring the brilliant habit worn by Kemble in his first scene, the critic added:

. . . Mr. Kemble is a great stickler for propriety, and we therefore hope he will satisfactorily explain why he and his noble companions thought it proper to wear the same splendid and glittering attires in the bloody field of Agincourt which had ornamented their persons in the British court? It struck us as marvellously ridiculous to hear him, at the very moment when we were admiring the clearsilk hose, the dazzling garments, and the snowy plumes of himself and followers, exclaim to Mountjoy:

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We are but warriors for the working day,
Our gayness and our gilt are all be-smirch'd
With rainy marching in the painful field;
There's not a piece of feather in our host!!!
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particularly as two of the English soldiers actually were clad in armour!—It is fair however to state that these two did not form a majority of the British forces; for we, positively, on one occasion, counted eleven rank and file! The French army,

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33*ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

notwithstanding the earl of Exeter's exclamation of, 'There's five to one of us,' appeared even less numerous; for we never beheld more than nine.\textsuperscript{35}

The critic suggested that the money spent on the accompanying farce should have been spent on the mainpiece. And while willing to give the other performers some measure of credit for their endeavors, he denied it to Kemble. "If he would always be great Mr. K. should not attempt either the hero or the lover, for which his figure is his only qualification: in phlegmatic, moralizing, misanthropic characters he is certainly unrivalled."\textsuperscript{36}

Although this study is not focused on the acting technique of those who performed the role of King Henry, the methods used by these different actors cannot be ignored. To varying degrees, the differences in their productions, particularly those giants of the nineteenth century—Kemble, Phelps, Macready, Kean—reflect the relationship each saw between himself and his art and craft. Some of Kemble's contemporaries had only praise for his portrayal of King Henry; others bluntly stated that he would have done well to avoid this particular role. Boaden could find no fault, and his admiration for Kemble's hero-king seemed limitless. He even made a point of citing another "authority" regarding Kemble's work in this role.

Let me grace even Kemble with praise from the judicious. The late

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., p. 357. \textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 358.
Earl of Guilford esteemed his fifth Henry the most perfect of his performances. He wrote an essay upon it, in my possession, with the utmost elegance, and quite decisive as to its various merits, if anybody, critically, had ever questioned them.\(^{37}\)

But Boaden's critical faculty was biased by the awe in which he held his subject, as well as by the fact that whatever Kemble's ability as an actor, he was singularly prominent in the theatre of his time.

The evaluation of Kemble's acting ability by twentieth-century writers has resulted in some rather divergent opinions, and understandably so because their evaluations must finally be based upon what someone else said or wrote. However, consideration of some facts about the man, his time and his place may assist in realizing a more objective conclusion about the results he achieved.

Kemble's health was never really good. He suffered from asthma, a condition for which he sought relief in the south of France. This condition was partially responsible for his slow vocal delivery. The roles he seemed to prefer and in which he gained his greatest success suggest a rather limited range and scope. Compared to those who followed, notably Edmund Kean, Kemble's style might well be described as "declamatory." In his evaluation of Kemble's acting, Baker seems to be more objective than many. He believes Kemble brought a definite personality to the roles he portrayed.

Whether he played Young Norval or Hamlet, he was still John Kemble, imposing himself on the role instead of being absorbed by it. His great parts suited him; he did not suit himself to them. Today we should call this tedious, and restricted in scope; to the late eighteenth century it was the style of an accomplished artist perfectly in command of his medium.38

Baker's ability to view Kemble's approach to his art and the results achieved may be more significant for purposes of comparison than simply a summary evaluation of acting technique or vocal delivery.

His temperate, even-toned, almost dispassionate characterizations were to the histrionic art what Sir Joshua's noble and generalized portraits were to the pictorial. Indeed, Reynolds's celebrated remarks on the grand style have a curious pertinency to the formalized, stylized acting technique of John Kemble. His rectilinear, carefully paced interpretations exercised the same studied control and avoidance of the erratic as did Sir Joshua's heroic portraits. Both satisfied the eighteenth century's feeling for the clarity and outline and precision of the golden mean; both shunned the idiosyncratic and the personal; both were pitched on a higher, more idealized plane than the trafficings of everyday life. Romantic individualism was not to find its histrionic exponent until the rise of Edmund Kean in 1814, when the formal classicism of the Kemble-Siddons school was sinking into disregard. But for most of his contemporaries Kemble's carefully modulated, restrained technique was the epitome of good taste.39

In summary, Kemble's King Henry might be described as indeed a "Royal Hal," a character of rational nobility, vocally deliberate, definite in pronouncemcnt, emotional reactions always subject to intellectual command. His was a commander of formal demeanor, whether on his throne or leading his army in the field, who selected and measured his movements as well as his thoughts, and whose royal bearing seldom if ever gave way to personal, human display. All the connotations in

38 Baker, Kemble, p. 255. 39 Ibid., p. 251.
the word "classic" seem to apply to the King Henry of John Philip Kemble.

Between 1803 and 1830—eight years before Kemble's final production and nine years before Macready's final production—three other actors produced Henry the Fifth on the London stage. While not of major importance, these three productions form part of the continuity of the stage history of the play in the early nineteenth century.

Robert William Elliston

Seven years after his London stage debut at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, Robert William Elliston produced Henry the Fifth in the summer of 1803 at this same theatre. Working under Colman's management, Elliston, whose official title was stage manager, played most of the leading roles during the season. A writer for The Monthly Mirror, in his description of the new company at the Haymarket, praised Elliston for his selection of actors and predicted a successful and artistic season.\footnote{The Monthly Mirror, June, 1803.}

The Times review of Henry the Fifth on August 20 seems to substantiate this predicted success. Acknowledging the crowded house and the spirited reception of the patrons, the reviewer wrote:

The part of King Henry was performed by Mr. Elliston, with a dignity, spirit, and truth of colouring, which we have rarely seen surpassed. His action was natural, . . . and truly characteristic; his enunciation was clear and distinct, and marked throughout a correct understanding of his author.\footnote{The Times (London), August 22, 1803.
The very general nature of these comments suggests that they may have been part of a paid "puff," extravagant praise given an actor by a critic in return for payment. Puffing was a common practice during the early nineteenth century, and Elliston is known to have used it. However, this review also praised other performers, particularly noting the effectiveness of Palmer's Pistol and Mathew's Fluellen, so the possibility of this review being a puff is strictly speculative.

Elliston's primary purpose for doing the play at this particular time is obvious in a printed announcement of the performance.

The FULL and CLEAR RECEIPT arising from this Night's Performance will be remitted to the Committee appointed to conduct the PATRIOTIC FUND for the Relief and Reward of the DEFENDERS OF THEIR COUNTRY.

It cannot for an instant be doubted that the Public will amply patronize this trifling effort of contributing to a Subscription which so evidently distinguishes the zeal of Englishmen in the Cause of our BELOVED KING and GLORIOUS CONSTITUTION.\footnote{Unidentified newspaper clipping, Theatre Royal, Haymarket File, Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.}

That the purpose was served seems evident, for the theatre was crowded in all parts, no free tickets were admitted, and after the play "the Audience Loudly called for Rule Britannia, which was played with great spirit by the Orchestra; afterwards for God Save the King, which was sung in full Chorus on the Stage, and received with the loudest applause by the whole Audience standing and uncovered."\footnote{The Times, (London), August 22, 1803.}

The play was presented twice during the season, the second
performance occurring on September 5.\textsuperscript{44} Whether the need of the moment caused Elliston's interpretation to be strongly jingoistic, his critics' reactions suggest that his Henry was an exciting one. In spite of his reputation for extravagance—he declared bankruptcy before he retired—the major critics were unanimous in their praise. Leigh Hunt declared he was "the only genius that has approached that great man (Garrick) in universality of imitation," "the second tragedian on the stage," and the "best lover on the stage both in tragedy and comedy."\textsuperscript{45} And Charles Lamb said: "Wherever Elliston walked, sat, or stood still, there was the theatre."\textsuperscript{46}

**William Augustus Conway**

In the fall of 1813 John Kemble, tired and suffering from the gout and asthma which continued to plague him, took leave of his acting

\textsuperscript{44}Genest records only the September 5 performance (\textit{English Stage}, Vol. VII, p. 598). \textit{The Times} (London), in addition to listing both the August 22 and the September 5 performances, also carries an announcement for a benefit performance for Waldron, the prompter, on September 16. But on the same page (\textit{The Times}, September 16) is an announcement to the effect that the Haymarket closed for the season the previous day, quoting Elliston's farewell address. With no additional sources to verify a third performance on September 16, I have chosen to list only two.


duties at Covent Garden. During his absence a young actor, William Conway, assumed some of the roles normally performed by Kemble. Conway, whose real name was Rugg, had begun his theatrical career in the provinces, moving to the Crow Street Theatre in Dublin in 1812. He made his London debut at Covent Garden the following year. It was during the 1813-1814 season that he performed the role of King Henry six times (Figure 9).

The critics' reactions to Conway's characterization were mixed. None of them gave total approbation to his work. Many of them indicated they felt he lacked the flexibility necessary for realizing the variations of the King's personality. The Times critic wrote:

Mr. Conway's physical qualifications for such a part will be pretty readily admitted. Indeed, a fine, manly person, a clear strong voice, and a good sense of the powers of declamation, are generally the chief necessary requisites for a hero. The deficiency of this actor in scenes of a tender and interesting or of a passionate and conflicting nature, in which a great master of the stage, or a long practised performer, display their highest skill, do not operate very materially against his representation of the Conqueror of Agincourt. By a little studious attention to his author's meaning, and to the suggestions of criticism, he may illumine himself where he is dark, and supply many of his defects. He was certainly successful in his speeches; but being, perhaps, desirous of showing himself to advantage as a lover, he was not sufficiently rough and soldier-like in the conversation with the Gallic princess, which is, and is intended to be, so ludicrous, that it is impossible to put a serious face upon it with any chance of success.47

The engraving of Conway as King Henry attests to the physical qualifications mentioned above (Figure 10).

47The Times (London), November 2, 1813.
The critic for The Theatrical Inquisitor responded with similarly mixed reaction.

Mr. Conway has wisely relinquished the parts of Jaffier and Othello, and assumed the port and majesty of the Victor of Agincourt. In scenes of dignity and heroic declamation, and in parts that do not require much tenderness or flexibility of utterance, he is quite at home, nor do we think there is a finer exhibition, taking it in all its parts, than his personation of Henry. We are happy to bear this testimony to his merits, as on former occasions, he justly challenged our severity.48

The Inquisitor, in an article about Conway published a month after his first season at Covent Garden, was considerably less unkind in its praise, saying that it looked forward to Conway "attaining an excellence which has seldom been exceeded."49 Unfortunately, Conway was morbidly sensitive to criticism. Only a few years after his initial venture in the London theatre, he returned to the provinces. A very brief return to the Haymarket in 1821 preceded a trip to America, where he performed in New York. Early in 1828 while onboard a vessel just outside Charleston, South Carolina, he threw himself overboard and was drowned. A promising theatrical career was destroyed by an inability to cope with the conditions of the profession.

Edmund Kean

A major catastrophe in the 276-year stage history examined in


49 Ibid., May, 1814.
this study occurred on March 8, 1830, at Drury Lane. Had the complete
misfortunes of this evening centered around a less prominent figure than
Edmund Kean, the actor's name would probably have been omitted from the
annals of the London stage. But for Kean it was perhaps the greatest
single fiasco of his theatrical career.

Kean had returned from Sheffield, and Henry the Fifth was in
its final rehearsals, scheduled to open on February 22. But according
to Hillebrand, "illness again intervened, and it had to be withdrawn
at the very last moment. When Wallack made the announcement the
audience took it badly, crying, 'Apology! Apology!' and 'Kean's
drunk,' and someone in the gallery threw oranges at the aggrieved
stage manager." The oranges may have been an omen for the production
which finally opened the evening of March 8. It was Kean's first at-
tempt at the role; it was also his last (Figure 11).

Under any other circumstances it would be shortsighted to
fully appraise a production of more than a century ago merely on the
responses of the critics. But without exception the reviews of Kean's
production, whether vicious or kind, were unanimous in their evaluation
of the evening's disaster at Drury Lane. The Times critic began his
review with the following:

Mr. Kean appeared for the first time last evening as Henry

50Harold Newcomb Hillebrand, Edmund Kean (New York: Columbia
the Fifth, in Shakespeare's play of that title. It might have been questionable whether at any time this part would have been suited to Mr. Kean's powers; but the experiment of last night has completely proved that it is one to which he is not now competent. The task of criticising a failure so decided, by an actor who has deservedly gained a very high reputation on other occasions, is an extremely disagreeable one: the manner, however, in which Mr. Kean went through the character, leaves very little to be said. He was evidently suffering from illness; there was not a particle of that energy for which he is often so remarkable, from one end of the performance to the other; and, whether from indisposition or from failure of memory, he did not utter one fourth of what was set down for him. The spectacle was very painful, and the consequences of his incapacity extended themselves to the other actors, who were thrown out, and obliged to curtail their speeches in the attempt to make them join in some shape with the incoherent nonsense into which he perverted the text. . . . The only passage of the character which was at all endurable, was the soliloquy in the camp, at night, after the conversation with Williams; and that only because it was delivered with tolerable accuracy. The rest was worse than a very slovenly rehearsal.51

The Dramatic Magazine was even less kind in the opening paragraph of its review.

One of the most complete and disgraceful failures which ever took place within the walls of a theatre occurred this evening; indeed, Mr. Kean, throughout the whole of the play, did not utter two lines correctly. We are at a loss to account for his motives in thus offering so gross an insult to the public. His conduct admits of no excuse; for at the final rehearsal of Henry the Fifth, he convinced all present how impossible it was for him to be able to perform the character. Mr. Kean was hissed throughout the major part of the first four acts; in the fifth the uproar of disapprobation and loud cries of shame were so great, that the performance was rendered mere dumb-show.52

The critic for The Examiner openly evidenced his own personal anguish at having to report the bitter failure of an actor whom he had

51 The Times (London), March 9, 1830.

52 The Dramatic Magazine, April, 1830, p. 81.
practically revered.

To one who, from the first week of that great actor's appearance in London down to the present season, has kept no terms in admiring his talents; to one who, in the spring of his uncommon career, was so vehemently play-bitten, that upon the announcement of almost every new character, he has walked twelve miles into town for the sole purpose of witnessing his favorite's individual performance, and upon the fall of the curtain has walked home again: to such a devotee, the exhibition of last Monday evening was, of its class, the most painful he ever beheld. We do not enquire into the cause of Mr. Kean's total failure in the part, both as regards conception, recollection, and delivery; still less would we insult him with any remark in the shape of commiseration; but most certainly would we have dissuaded him from going on with the performance after the first scene: an apology should have been made for him: he would then only have heard, form his nook in the Greenroom, the stormy bluster of a disappointed audience, and not have been subjected to the mortification of addressing a knot of unfeeling people, who could pour contempt upon the prostration of that talent, which for years had been exerted for their entertainment. The event was so new and so unexpected, for Mr. Kean to be hissed on the score of professional incapacity, and the tenor of his appeal to the audience in alluding to that "degradation," so sad, that his fate would almost have been a more enviable one had he dropped down dead upon the boards.53

Kean's address to the audience, referred to in this review, was made shortly after the final act had begun. It was given in an attempt to quiet the audience which had become so loud with its hissing and cat-calls that the actors onstage could not be heard.

While the critic for The Examiner devoted nearly half of his review to a criticism of Kean's inability, he did not allow the other performers to escape from their share of the responsibility.

That the entire performance might be brought as accurately

53 The Examiner, No. 1154, March 14, 1830, p. 165.
as possible into keeping with the above disaster, the whole of the dramatic personae exerted themselves, and successfully, to accomplish a failure. . . . Mr. H. Wallack, as the boasting, fiery Dauphin, made no more show of valour "than a wild duck:" . . . Mr. Harley made Pistol the counterpart to a showman's jack-pudding; and Mr. Webster, with his mi-a-owing voice, cocked whiskers, and hair in an uproar, seemed to have exchanged humanity with a wild cat. Oh! it was rare work!  

The critic for The Literary Gazette, although he blamed Kean for want of resolution by allowing himself to be put into such a situation, found the real fault to lie elsewhere.

The managers, we think, are alone to blame on this occasion; for Mr. Kean did make an effort—a great effort—and failed from causes beyond his power now to control; but his incapacity must have been evident to the managers, however he might have assured them to the contrary,—or they would never have revived a play of Shakespeare for such an actor as Kean, with so total a disregard to appropriate decoration, or even decent cleanliness. The Boar's Head, East Cheap, was represented by a cottage in a wood! And the dresses, generally speaking, would have disgraced a barn.

Two days after the performance a letter to the editor appeared in The Times, written by Kean, apologizing to his public and begging their indulgence. He acknowledged the "considerate and honourable feeling" with which the editor had "tempered the severity of critical justice," and he implored his public to believe that his failure in the role was not in any way due to intentional neglect on his part, but rather to ill health. He said that his fault lay only in his

54Ibid.

unrestricted zeal which allowed him to undertake the role before his health was completely re-established. In a note following Kean's apology, the editor said the letter reflected great credit upon the actor and trusted that a few weeks of rest would restore his energies. Unfortunately, the forecast by the critic for The Athenaeum was closer to the truth. Refraining from detailing Kean's failure, he suggested this once great actor was nearing the end. Only three years later, the greatest romantic actor of the English stage collapsed during a performance of Othello, and within two months was dead.

**William Charles Macready**

The productions of Henry the Fifth by William Charles Macready cover a period of twenty-four years, beginning with a single performance in the provinces a year before his London debut and ending with his final performance as manager of Covent Garden in 1839. And while it is the final production that is of major interest to this study, the earlier ones are significant in that they illustrate Macready's early and continuing interest in making this play part of his repertoire.

**Productions of Henry the Fifth by Macready Prior to 1839**

Macready's first venture in the role of King Henry was in 1815.

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56 *The Times* (London), March 10, 1830.

Following an engagement in Dublin, he returned to England, disembarking at Liverpool, and

... hurried on to act in the race week at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where I was again at home and among old friends. Cheville, in Holcroft's comedy of "The Deserted Daughter," and Shakespeare's "King Henry V." were the only new characters I attempted there, but neither elicited any particular demonstration of approval, and indeed deserved none; for having barely mastered the text of each, all effect was left to chance, as I found by subsequent diligent study in making Henry one of my most popular assumptions. 58

Macready's second attempt with the play came on the evening of October 4, 1819, at Covent Garden (Figure 12). Although there is a promptbook for this production, it is rather difficult to analyze, because it was marked for a later three-act version of the play for provincial production. 59 The text is that of the 1815 Kemble acting edition. In addition to Kemble's cuts, Macready made some of his own.

The Choruses, of course, were omitted, but certain Chorus lines were written in and given to other characters. Some scenes were inverted, and others were completely cut.

Critical reaction to Macready's performance was generally quite favorable. The Morning Herald thought his battlefield prayer and St.


59 This promptbook is housed in the Folger Shakespeare Library. Shattuck (The Shakespeare Promptbooks, p. 145) indicates it was used for performances in Bath and Bristol early in 1835. See also: Toynbee, The Diaries of William Charles Macready, I, p. 209.
Crispin's Day speech "unexcelled on the stage," while *The Literary Chronicle*, referring to these same two passages, felt they were spoken with "a force and feeling rarely equalled." The *Times*, in its very short review, was at odds with Macready's interpretation of the wooing scene but described the actor's work as "a very able performance."

Both *The Literary Gazette* and the *Theatrical Inquisitor* echoed the praise of the other critics.

None of the critics detailed his opinion about the production's visual aspects. But a telling comment was expressed by Macready himself. According to him the scenic effects were "represented almost as barely as the poet describes: 'With four or five most vile and ragged foils/Right ill-disposed in brawl ridiculous.'" In spite of the successful reviews, the play was given only one performance.

Macready's next three productions of the play were staged at Drury Lane. On June 2, 1825, he did a single performance for his benefit. In November, 1830, just eight months after Edmund Kean's total

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60 *The Morning Herald*, October 5, 1819.

61 *The Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review*, No. 21, October 9, 1819, p. 335.


63 *The London Literary Gazette, and Journal of the Belles Lettres*, No. 142, October 9, 1819, p. 142.

64 *The Theatrical Inquisitor*, Vol. XV, 1819.

failure in the role at the same theatre, Macready again produced the play (Figure 13). The reactions of both the critics and the public were negative. Leigh Hunt believed that the play itself was not at all effective for the times, with England and France congenial neighbors.

In a word, the play of *Henry V.* was written to please the unformed subjects of a despotic government two hundred years ago, and as it comprises little of the everlasting humanity that fills most of the plays of Shakspeare, it falls flat on the ears of an audience in these times of popular spirit! . . . Mr. Macready though too loud in some parts, made a gallant . . . prince . . . and Mr. Webster, in Captain Fluellen, sustained the reputation he acquired as Sir Hugh Evans:—but it would not do. The piece was as flat as the water in Tower Ditch, and about as noisy to no purpose as the beating to arms there.66

The *Dramatic Magazine*, in a note appended to the listings of the two performances, agreed with Hunt.

This was formerly the most attractive of Shakespeare's historical plays, but such is the mutability of theatrical taste, that it now will not draw a single house. We must confess that we think it is altogether a weak play. There is no plot, and the incidents hang loosely together. The character of Henry is certainly admirably drawn, ever the philosopher, the hero, and the man. This part was played by Macready, who wore such an air of unbending stateliness, that it seemed extraordinary he should have condescended to play the trick of the glove upon Fluellen. The prayer before the battle was delivered with a vehemence and rapidity perfectly startling. The comic characters were poorly sustained. Harley does not understand the humour of Pistol.67

Small houses and bad reviews limited this production to two performances, and it was not until three years later that Macready again


67 *The Dramatic Magazine*, December, 1830, p. 344.
attempted the role. The one performance of November 4, 1833, was afflicted with accidents.

Came to town. Ran directly to rehearsal and very attentively went through Henry V. My dress was beggarly as usual from the theatre, and inappropriate from my own wardrobe. Dined at the Garrick, where I saw Yates, from whom I got an order for Colonel Birch. Went home; lay down in bed and read Henry very attentively. Acted it with more self-possession than I have felt before a London audience for years. Three accidents, however, occurred (on such trifles does an actor's success depend!) that damped the general effect of the play which, I incline to think, I acted well; my truncheon broke in my hand during the great speech to Westmoreland, which for a moment disconcerted me--Mr. Russel was not called to his time and cut out his part—and Miss Phillips bewildered me in the last scene by forgetting her speech to me. I never, in my own mind, acted the part so well. . . .

Macready commends his performance three times in the above diary entry. Perhaps he was indeed better as King Henry than he had been previously, or perhaps the triple mention was the result of some unconscious effort on his part to counteract the poor costume and the accident-filled performance. Certainly this performance did not get the attention of the newspaper critics because there were no reviews for the fare at Drury Lane on this evening.

In December, 1834, while at Elstree, Macready cut his script of Henry the Fifth, preparing the three-act version for performances in Bristol and Bath the following month. Of the Bath performance on January 15, 1835, he wrote in his diary: "Acted Henry V. more good-humoredly than I have ever done, and with very considerable spirit,

and much self-possession." His entry for the following day read, in part: "The receipt of last night was so good, that it has very much raised my hopes as to the success of the season."70

In the fall of 1837 Macready began a two-year term as manager of Covent Garden. In this first season he again turned to the play with which he had had only limited success. According to Trewin, the season was going badly, and the manager was having financial problems. His Henry the Fifth unfortunately offered little solution because it was "a production that had no gleam of the famous revival to come."71

Macready's diary entry for November 14 foreshadowed critical response.

Thought over, and did what I could to imprint the character of King Henry V on my mind... Went to the theatre where I rehearsed Henry V... Read King Henry V. Acted the part as well as I could; not well, for I was not prepared; and I will do this no more... 72

While none of the reviews were particularly impressed with the production, the critic for John Bull was specific in his points of attack. Having seen both performances—November 14 and 23—he described the production as "crude and incomplete," insisting that the performers did not capture the "distinctive differences between French


70Tbid.


and English, so clearly marked by the author." As the King, Macready "appeared to be three separate characters."

He was dignified, according to the conventional stage rule, in the early scenes; by turns bustling and didactic, rather than frank, impulsive and warlike, when in the tented field; and assumed bluffness, rather than spoke "plain soldier" in the courtship with Katharine.73

The critic was even less impressed with the costumes and the lack of historical accuracy. "The battle of Agincourt was fought by gentlemen in silken hose and velvet doublets . . . and not a single Bowman was visible in the army."74

**John Bull**'s criticism of Macready's performance may or may not have validity. But the adverse criticism of the costuming appears to be sound. In his examination of William Archer's lists of the Shakespearean plays produced by Macready at Covent Garden during the manager's two seasons there, Odell suggests that they fell into two distinct categories: stock plays given a few performances, making use of the scenic items on hand; and certain other plays given very special production with great attention to all detail.75 And although Odell believes that details received attention in all of Macready's Covent

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74 Ibid.

Garden productions, the quotations cited from John Bull seem to deny this. Macready was trying to keep his production costs down during his first season at the theatre. This, coupled with the fact that he was to lavish attention on a production of Henry the Fifth the following season, indicates that he was willing, however grudgingly, to use what he had on hand in the fall and winter of 1837-1838.

Macready's 1839 Production

Macready's plans for his most elaborate production of Henry the Fifth can be traced back to an entry in his diary for December 27, 1838.

Went to Covent Garden theatre; on my way looked through the often-searched Shakspeare for some play. Thought of King Henry V, with the choruses to be spoken by Vandenhoff, Serle, when I suggested Henry, observed that the choruses would admit of illustration, a hint which I instantly caught at, and determined upon doing it.76

Three days later he wrote: "After dinner continued the attentive perusal of King Henry V. Talked with Letitia over King Henry, explaining to her how I would produce it. Resolved to defer it to Easter, and make it the last Shakspearian revival of my management."77

On January 16 Macready called upon the publisher Knight, inquiring about the "Pictorial Shakespeare" edition. The publisher promised to assist Macready in any way he could in terms of the scenery

77Ibid.
for the impending production. Meetings with members of the company and with the artist, Clarkson Stanfield, during April settled the direction the production was to take, and by May 16 Henry the Fifth was in rehearsal.

The text

For his text Macready avoided using any of the standard acting editions long in use. Instead he turned to a copy of the play in an edition of the collected works of Shakespeare, probably the Reed-Steevens edition. His choice included one of the most notable textual restorations of the play in the century, the role of Chorus. This role had not been included in a production since 1779 when Hull played the role in a performance featuring Wroughton as the King. Macready also restored some of the lines cut by Kemble from the following scenes: the low comics at the Breach (III, ii); the second scene in the French Palace (III, v); the second scene in the French camp (IV, ii); and the following scene in the English camp (IV, iii). Where Kemble had cut only two scenes in their entirety—the English-lesson (III, iv) and Pistol's encounter with the French soldier (IV, iv)—Macready

78Pollock, Macready's Reminiscences, p. 449.

79Ibid., p. 455. Rehearsals may have begun sooner than this date, but this is the earliest one recorded by Macready.

completely cut four additional scenes: the opening dialogue between Canterbury and Ely (I, i); the first low-comics' scene (II, i); the first scene in the French camp (III, vii); and the second scene on the battlefield (IV, vi). His major textual inversion was the transfer of the second low-comics' scene (II, iii) to his own Act I. To the end of this he attached the Boy's speech about his masters (III, ii). The number of lines cut in each of the remaining scenes are very close to those of Kemble. A small but important exception was his retaining of Theobald's famous emendation in Mistress Quickly's speech in II, iii, "and 'a babbled of green fields." (See Appendix D for a comparison of Macready's text with the control text.)

In spite of the major differences between specific lines cut by Kemble and by Macready, it is interesting to note that the total number of lines cut by both is very close. Kemble, for his 1811 production, cut 1,404 lines or 41.62 per cent; Macready cut 1,471 lines or 43.61 per cent. An examination of Macready's promptbook reveals that his combination of cuttings and restorations achieved a better balanced and clearer script for the stage than did Kemble. The playing time of the script recorded by the prompter was two hours and fifty minutes, again very close to Kemble's. Where Kemble's excisions eliminated twelve characters, Macready's cut only six--Jamy, Court, Bourbon, Britaine, Rambures, and Alice. Whereas Kemble changed Shakespeare's "God" to "Heaven" in all but a few cases, Macready made this change in
only about forty per cent of the instances. Macready added one line of
his own composition in IV, v. Like Kemble, he divided some of the long-
er speeches among several characters in an attempt to clarify ideas and
consequently to keep the audience's interest at a higher level.

Critical reaction to Macready's textual cutting and arrange-
ment was minimal. The Athenaeum found some of the earlier scenes
"rather tedious . . . through the omission of some of the comic dia-
logue."81 The Spectator was more specific about this part of Macready's
omissions.

Some speeches may require to be retrenched, but the poetry as
well as the humour was advisedly introduced by Shakespeare to re-
lieve the tedium of political discussion and state business that
form much of the business of the play; between every grave scene
is introduced some comic dialogue or incident; the omission of
which in the earlier part, made the performance drag heavily.
Portions of this being unsuited to the present day, are properly
omitted; but to cut out the whole of that capital scene (the first
of the second act) between Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol, transposing
another, and almost suppressing a third, is going too far.82

Nor was this critic's reaction any more favorable to some of the other
deletions.

So with the poetry: the first scene between the two bishops,
containing the eloquent description of Henry—which is necessary
to the understanding of his character—is omitted; and other fine
passages, such for instance as the apt comparison of a well ordered
state to the economy of bees, and the affecting episode of the
deaths of York and Suffolk, are struck out. . . . These objections
may appear hypo-critical; but when the restoration of the "text"


82The Spectator, June 15, 1839, pp. 558-559. Quoted in:
Cutler, pp. 79-80.
of Shakespeare is made a principal feature, we are naturally more exacting.\textsuperscript{83}

But with the exception of the brief note in The Athenaeum's review, The Spectator alone protested Macready's textual excisions because the other critics, by their lack of comment, seemed to feel that Macready's pictorial illustration more than compensated for any textual changes.

Staging and reception

Rehearsals for \textit{Henry the Fifth} were exhausting. Macready demanded even more of himself than of the other members of the cast. His diary notes for the week preceding the opening reveal some of the apprehension he suffered and his reaction to it.

\begin{quote}
June 5th.---Went to Covent Garden theatre, where I had a long rehearsal of four acts of \textit{King Henry V}. Tried on the armour of Henry and dined in it. . . . Lay down and slept for about an hour, which was a great relief to me. . . .

June 7th.---Rehearsed the play of \textit{King Henry V}, trying to make the most of the opportunity in all ways; but I was tired--indeed exhausted. Amused with Mr. Healey's excessive apprehension about receiving an accidental blow or two in Pistol, and his anger at Mr. Baker's laughter when he did receive one--he is a great ass!

June 8th.---Tried on my armour, which I wore through the afternoon, and was obliged at last to put off for its weight. Lay down to rest. . . .

June 9th.---Put on my armour for \textit{King Henry V} and moved and sat in it until half-past three o'clock. . . . Endeavoured to master some difficulties in the acting . . . rehearsing in my armour.\textsuperscript{84}
\end{quote}

Macready was particularly concerned about his suit of armour.

\textsuperscript{83}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{84}Toynbee, \textit{Diaries}, Vol. II, pp. 5-6.
and he wore it as often as he could, while writing letters, during staff conferences, even entertaining friends. That he ever mastered it is doubtful. According to John Coleman, Samuel Phelps said that all of Macready's devotion to hours spent in his costume was of no avail, "for at night he tossed and tumbled about literally like a hog in armour."\(^{85}\) And Trewin echoes Phelps's comments: "'As clumsy as Mac in armour' became an esoteric green-room joke."\(^{86}\)

One of the more taxing experiences of working under Macready's direction was the permissiveness he allowed his friends in the theatre during rehearsals. A prime example of this occurred during the rehearsals for *Henry the Fifth*. According to Archer:

The rehearsals were long and arduous, and the actors were seriously annoyed by the perpetual presence on the stage of a whole cohort of the manager's friends—Bulwer, Dickens, Forster, Maclise, Fox, and others. Forster's overbearing manner made him especially obnoxious, and so utterly upset the nerves of Mrs. Humby, who was to have played Dame Quickly, that the words of her part constantly escaped her. She was, says James Anderson, so incredibly ignorant that her comrades advised her to put up with Forster's interferences on the ground that he was the author of the play! Even this consideration, however, could not reconcile her to his habit of shouting, whenever she made a slip, "Put her through it again, Mac.; put her through it again;" so that the matter ended in her relinquishing the part.\(^{87}\)

Obviously, patience was a particular prerequisite for an actor who


\(^{86}\)Trewin, *Mr. Macready*, p. 159.

\(^{87}\)Archer, *Macready*, pp. 121-122.
wanted to work under Macready.

For this final production of his management, Macready chose people for his production staff who were well established in their fields. Diary entries contain frequent references to conferences with Stanfield and Marshall about the scenery, Bradley about the armour, Head about the costumes, Cooke about the music, and Wilmott and Serle, the prompter and acting manager, respectively. An unidentified newspaper correspondent who watched one of the later rehearsals testified to the artistic excellence of Macready's staff. Acknowledging the manager's determination to realize complete success in a production involving the work of "actually above seven hundred" people, he wrote:

We know that we speak with compass when we state that he has bestowed some months upon the production of Shakespeare's Henry the Fifth; that he has not rested upon his own resources but has called to his aid a celebrated antiquarian and heraldic scholar; that he has not relied upon what may be termed theatrical-historical knowledge, one or two professors of which commit in their gettings up the most amusing absurdities. . . . The costume has been modelled from specimens of the time, not frittered away into prettinesses, and expediences, as we have hitherto, and in this very theatre seen, to suit long faces or high shoulders, or the hundred and one defects that actors think it a paramount point to conceal. The armour will form a treat to those who rejoice in the sight of the harness in which our forefathers were clad for the field.88

Cutler believes the antiquarian referred to was Colonel Charles Hamilton Smith, an old friend of Macready, who in later years assisted

88 From an unidentified newspaper clipping on a microfilm copy of Covent Garden playbills. Quoted in: Cutler, pp. 52-53.
Charles Kean in his production research.\textsuperscript{89}

The playbill for the production makes a point of recognizing the work of some of these artists (Figure 14). The music was partly composed by Cooke who also selected passages from the works of Purcell, Handel, and Weber. Charles Marshall designed the scenery, both the two-dimensional painted perspective and the three-dimensional set decor and properties. Certainly the unique scenic aspect of the production was the use of the diorama to illustrate parts of the text. Departing from his stance against "puffing," Macready had the following printed in the playbill.

In announcing this last Shakespearean Revival it may be advisable, if not necessary, to depart so far from the usual practice of this Management, to offer a few words in explanation, or apology for what may seem an innovation.

The Play of King Henry 5\textsuperscript{th} is a DRAMATIC HISTORY, and the poet, to preserve the continuity of the action, and connect what would otherwise be detached scenes, has adopted, from the Greek Drama, the expedient of a CHORUS to narrate and describe intervening incidents and events.

To impress more strongly on the auditor, and render more palpable those portions of the story which have not the advantage of action, and still are requisite to the drama's completeness, the narrative and descriptive poetry spoken by the Chorus is accompanied with Pictorial Illustrations from the pencil of Mr. Stanford.\textsuperscript{90}

According to Wickman in his study of panoramic scenery, this is the first evidence of the use of a transitional panorama (diorama) in a full-length play of established merit. Acknowledging the lack

\footnote{\textsuperscript{89}Cutler, "Macready's Production of Henry V," p. 53.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{90}Playbill for the 1839 production of Henry the Fifth, in the personal collection of the author.}
of evidence needed to determine the exact mechanical operation of this
device in this production, Wickman believes that it operated "downstage,
immediately behind the drop curtain. This had to be so because in each
case a full scene was revealed behind it. Since there was a break be-
tween each act, it would have been possible to change the dioramic
cylinders for each new display." Briefly, the diorama was a device
using translucent fabric stretched upon frames (positioned) or upon
two rollers (transitional) and painted upon both sides with an oil-base
paint wash. Using reflected light from above and front and refracted
light from behind, it could produce the effect of a scene changing in
time and/or locale. An additional scenic device—borders, wings, etc.—
was used to mask the edges of the frame and fabric from the audience's
view. For this production, clouds were used to mask the edges of the
diorama.

A comparison of the stage directions in the prompt book with
some of the descriptive comments in the newspaper reviews helps to
reconstruct imaginatively some of the effects achieved by Macready and
Stanfield using the diorama. On the first page of the prompt-
book is written: "Music: as curtain rises, and the allegorical sub-
ject is displayed. Clouds begin to open. Chorus speaks." In the

91Richard Carl Wickman, "An Evaluation of the Employment of
Panoramic Scenery in the Nineteenth-Century Theatre" (unpublished Ph.D.
dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1961), pp. 209-210. This
excellent study examines both the panorama and the diorama and de-
scribes and illustrates in detail the distinguishing features of each.
middle of line 12, following "So great an object," Chorus advances from his position. He continues to speak through line 23, "The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder," at which point the stage direction indicates: "Scene begins to draw up." In the middle of line 32, following "Into an hourglass," Chorus is directed to "go back to pedestal." Following the last word of Chorus's speech, the directions read: "Music: begin to draw off pedestal. Scene draws off and discovers—Scene 1st. A room of state in the Palace. Officers, Lords, etc. discovered; as the Trumpets sound, they take their place to receive the King who enters with his suite R.D.l." (Right Down First Entrance).

The Times reviewer described the effect of the above as follows:

The most novel and ingenious idea is the accompanying the chorus (spoken by Vandenhoff in the character of Time) by a succession of painted illustrations by Stanfield. At first the curtain is removed, and discovers another curtain appropriate to the piece, adorned with the arms of England and France, and with a border formed of the escocheons of the principal characters of the piece. When this is withdrawn, Time is discovered upon a circular orifice occupied by clouds, which dissolve away, and present an allegorical scene representing "the warlike Harry," with famine, sword, and fire at his heels, "leashed in like hounds." This scene vanishing, the play begins.

Dioramas were used for the remaining four Choruses. At the beginning of Act II, as the curtain was raised, the music faded, and

92 All references to promptbook directions are from a microfilm copy of Macready's 1839 promptbook for Henry the Fifth, OSUTC Film No. P. 1600. The original is in the Folger Shakespeare Library.

93 The Times (London), June 11, 1839.
the voice of Chorus as Time rang out. The clouds began to open after line 3, "Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought," and on cue the music began and the diorama presented a vision of the three conspirators--Scroop, Gray, and Cambridge--receiving bribes of gold from the French. On cue the clouds closed, Chorus concluded his lines, and the diorama withdrew to discover the first scene of Act II. All of this scenic splendour was but prologue to the marvels preceding Act III.

The third act was ushered in by a moving diorama, by far the most splendid piece of scenery presented on the occasion. The English fleet is seen leaving Southampton; its course is traced across the sea, and the audience are gradually brought to the siege of Harfleur. By an ingenious arrangement the business of the act begins before the diorama has quite passed, and the picture, as it were, melts away into the actual siege by the characters. The grouping, confusion, and truth of this scene is excellently managed.94

The critic for The Oddfellow was no less impressed. Describing the diorama for Act III as "the most splendid piece of machinery we ever saw in a theatre," he continued:

If, out of the many excellencies which were so obvious, any particular one can be extracted for more commendation... it is surely this portion of the piece. The melting away of the pictorial into the real siege was truly wonderful; and the transition was managed with such consummate skill, that it was utterly impossible for anyone to detect the precise moment at which either the one ended, or the other commenced.95

94Ibid.

95The Oddfellow, June 15, 1839. Quoted in: Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving, Vol. II, p. 221.
An interesting note is that both of these critics described the effect as one scene "melting" into another.

Macready not only illustrated the speeches of the Chorus; in this case he prepared the audience for these speeches by visually establishing the mood. Consider the prompt notes for the beginning of the Act III transition, which read:

Curtain up, and then opens and moves on. Music,—as the drop rises,—It continues, as the scene opens, presenting the embarkation of the King, and the sailing of the Fleet; it gradually dies away, as night appears to come on, and the single ship is left on the scene. The Chorus then speaks.\textsuperscript{96}

The diorama did not move as the Chorus spoke his first lines, but held, allowing the harbor scene night effect to establish the mood. The Act IV diorama disclosed the two armies, French and English, in their camps, and their disparate attitudes: the former playing at dice and carousing; the latter orderly military and quietly apprehensive. For Act V a moving diorama illustrated three different scenes: the return of King Henry to London—Blackheath; the welcome of the citizens of London; and the triumphal entry into London of the King.

The great success of these dioramic illustrations lay not only in the transitional effect they produced, but in the many individual effects. Stanfield’s artistry must have been unique indeed because the critics singled out a number of them for praise. The critic for The Athenaeum wrote: "The landscapes are beautiful; ... the sunset at 

\textsuperscript{96}OSUTG Film No. P. 1600, opp. p. 366.
sea glows with light, and the distance is aerial; there is a moonlight effect, too, which is as little 'theatrical' as possible." The Spectator critic wrote that the triumph of Stanfield's art was shown in,

... the landscape and marine views—the sunset at sea luminous and glowing, the waves liquid and transparent, and the eye travels the surface to the airy distance as in nature; the land scenes are fresh and atmospheric, and the bright moonlight reflected in the river is the nearest approach to reality the stage has ever given: in a word, these scenes are an exhibition in themselves.  

The critic for John Bull, ever toning his praise with qualification—a trait which wearied Odell, gave his highest commendation to yet another of Stanfield's scenes: "The artist's chef-d'oeuvre, to our eye, is the field of Agincourt, with the camp fires by Moonlight. Such a sky we never saw on canvass before—'tis the firmament indeed."  

The artistry of Stanfield was complemented by that of Marshall, whose painted perspective was highly praised. John Bull, describing the interior scenes, wrote that they "are given in strict accordance with the authorities for the period, and take the imagination back at once

to the time.\textsuperscript{100} Scharf's sketch for I, i, the throne room in the English Palace, exemplifies this (Figure 15). The Spectator found this scene "a gorgeous picture of regal pomp; the stone niches and statues in the upper part of the walls massing the glitter below. The long canopies, are very characteristic."\textsuperscript{101} Marshall's ability at combining painted perspective and three-dimensional scenery is evidenced in Scharf's sketch for III, i, the Harfleur scene (Figure 16). The nearly perfect blending of the scenic elements was acknowledged by The Athenaeum critic who wrote:

\ldots the scene painter and property man have done so much to realize the shifting place and various costume of the drama; 
\ldots the sumptuous richness of regal state receives a heightening touch of reality from the gothic chambers of stone, with their velvet hangings and canopies, while the glittering splendour of the warlike scenes is enlivened by the stirring action going on; in a word, all the accessories having use and character, a general fitness and harmony pervade the entire show.\textsuperscript{102}

The oftentimes caustic criticism of both John Bull and The Spectator gave way to praise for the "accurate" and "superb" costumes for the production.\textsuperscript{103}

If Macready acquiesced to the irritating peculiarities of some

\textsuperscript{100}ibid.


\textsuperscript{102}The Athenaeum, No. 607, June 15, 1839, pp. 453-454.

\textsuperscript{103}John Bull, June 17, 1839; and, The Spectator, June 15, 1839. Quoted in: Cutler, "Macready's Production of Henry V," p. 82.
of his friends during rehearsals, he was nevertheless a rigid task-master toward his actors as well as toward himself. More than any manager who preceded him he devoted time in rehearsals to working out details of blocking and business, giving his staging a sense of ensemble. A few examples of the dozens of notations throughout the promptbook will serve to illustrate his concern for detail. In I, i, at the beginning of Canterbury's persuasive speech to the King and nobles, Macready's notes specified that everyone turn and direct his attention to the Archbishop. Throughout this speech crowd reaction and focus were detailed. As the audience awaited the entrance of the French ambassadors, the English Lords were directed to surround the throne for purposes of focus and emphasis. When the "tun of treasure" --tennis balls--was manifest by Exeter holding up one of the balls, Macready indicated "low murmurs and movement through the court." The busy preparation for the embarkation at Southampton in II, ii, was given focus by having this interior scene played as in a "Hall, looking out on the Harbor." Here Macready's notations read: "Preparations for the expedition seen without, soldiers, etc. passing with arms and baggage--Cannons, persons passing out with luggage, Knights with banners--passing behind." The King's entrance into the scene was given focus by having Bedford, Exeter, and Westmoreland cross to the left, and guards place themselves on either side of the doorway. Henry's line, "Why how now, gentlemen," was motivated by the fact that:
"Cambridge lets his paper fall." When the three traitors plead for mercy, Macready's directions read: "They kneel. All gaze on them, all on the stage shrink away, and leave the conspirators alone." For the exit of nearly one hundred people at the end of III, iii, Macready directed them to form a passage for the King and his nobles as they passed into the gates of Harfleur. He had them march two abreast, and carefully noted the exact order of exit. And so it is with the manager's notes throughout the promptbook, notes showing an awareness of and an ability to handle all the parts of the whole. Small wonder that nearly all the reviews made a point of citing his directorial skill. "The general effect of the performance is creditable to the talent of the individuals engaged, and the drilling of the entire corps has been excellent."104 "Even the personators of the soldiery as well as their chiefs and leaders have been drilled into likely movements and action."105

Nothing in this Henry the Fifth seems to us to have been officiously or gratuitously interposed. The general effect is made out by each separate detail. . . . Everything contributes to its life, its vigour, its picturesqueness. The minutest matter employed has its proper task to perform, nor is the least important person engaged without his distinct and allotted place in the general design.106


"What order, system, regularity... Macready is... The Napoleon of theatrical spectacles." 107

The performances given by Macready and his cast members received, with only a few exceptions, praise second only to that given the overall production. Both The Satirist and The Spectator believed that the actor Meadows misconceived the role of Fluellen. The former found Meadows' personation "that of a cringing, whining idiot," while the latter accused the actor of making his character "ridiculous." 108

The Athenaeum, more kindly disposed toward Meadows' work, thought Harley's performance as Pistol unacceptable. "Harley makes Pistol explode like a mere popgun, and his swagger seems affected, not habitual." 109 This same critic, while in accord with most of Macready's characterization, described his speech to the soldiers at the Breach as delivered with "too hurried and passionate vehemence," even though it suited the obvious impatience of the troops. 110 Saxe Wyndham quotes N. P. Willis as being favorably impressed with the production with only the following exception: "There was no chance for Macready's acting... but he... walked through his part with


108 Quoted in: Cutler, "Macready's Production of Henry V," p. 84.


110 Ibid.
propriety, failing only in the love scene with Katherine at the close, which he made, I thought, unnecessarily coarse and rude.\\footnote{111}

With these few exceptions, the individual performances received approbation from all of the critics. Among those actors other than Macready most often singled out for praise was J. Vandenhoff whose rendering of the Chorus was certainly one of the distinguishing features of the performance. According to Vandenhoff's son, Macready himself "declared his delivery of the magnificent language to be 'the perfection of musical elocution.'\\footnote{112}

Macready's performance as King Henry was greeted by nearly all critics with praise ranging from approbation to acclamation (Figure 17). His own feelings prior to curtain time and his evaluation of his acting on this his final opening night as Covent Garden manager are summarized in a portion of his diary entry for June 10.

Had a very fatiguing rehearsal of the play, with which I was much annoyed. Lay down on the bed for about three-quarters of an hour, and rose unfreshed and very nervous. Strove to reason myself into a state of self-possession and collectedness, but felt that I had


bestowed so much time and thought on others' characters and on the ensemble of the play that I was not in perfect command of what I had to do for my individual part. Began the play . . . in a very nervous state, but endeavouring to keep my mind clear. Acted sensibly at first, and very spiritedly at last; was very greatly received and when called on at last, the whole house stood up and cheered me in a most fervent manner.\textsuperscript{113}

The \textit{Times} gave perhaps the most conservative praise to Macready's portrayal, describing it as "well played," and the lines "impressively uttered."\textsuperscript{114} The \textit{Literary Gazette} thought Henry V ... one of Macready's best characters. . . . his stirring address upon St. Crispin's Day . . . and his kingly and winning courtship are scenes not to be forgot by admirers of dramatic excellence."\textsuperscript{115} The \textit{Satirist} described his as having "... more fiery vigour on this occasion, more variety of expression in the humorous, warlike, and pathetic, than we have ever before seen him exhibit."\textsuperscript{116} The \textit{Spectator} was particularly impressed with Macready's ability to realize the the appearance of spontaneous emotion and action. "His personation so forcibly brings out the gallantry, spirit, and dignity of the

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\textsuperscript{113} Toynbee, \textit{Diaries}, Vol. II, pp. 6-7.
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{The Times} (London), June 11, 1839.
\textsuperscript{115} \textit{The Literary Gazette}. Quoted in: Cutler, "Macready's Production of Henry V," p. 85.
character, as to leave little to wish for.\textsuperscript{117} The critic for \textit{Figaro in London} was so overwhelmed by the entire production that his column was chiefly a series of superlatives. He described the total effect as "... the most perfect and magnificent entertainment ever exhibited," and wrote that "... with the dramatic heroes who slumber in the dust shall Macready's name be blended and hereafter shed a dazzling halo around the stage's sun—the never dying Shakespeare."\textsuperscript{118} A less exotic but equally enthusiastic critic for \textit{The Examiner} concluded the longest of all the newspaper reviews with a quotation from one of its competitors:

We never saw a personation of greater reality, or one that so sensibly and variously moved an audience with its own emotions.

We close this imperfect notice with entire acquiescence in the opinion of the \textit{Morning Chronicle} that this performance of \textit{Henry the Fifth} "was a representation worthy of being reserved for some great national fete, and that the nation has but rarely the occasions which deserve so splendid celebration."\textsuperscript{119}

According to Juliet Pollock, who knew Macready personally and who saw many of his performances in a variety of roles, a large degree of the success his production of \textit{Henry the Fifth} enjoyed was because he excelled in soldier-like characters. Her detailed description of some of the effects achieved by Macready in his portrayal of

\textsuperscript{117}\textit{The Spectator}. Quoted in: Cutler, "Macready's Production of \textit{Henry V}," p. 85.

\textsuperscript{118}\textit{Figaro in London}, June 17, 1839, p. 180.

\textsuperscript{119}\textit{The Examiner}, No. 1637, June 16, 1839, pp. 375-376.
King Henry explains the motivation for the critics' praise.

In his opening scene his indignant protest against the insult of the Dauphin, with its combination of menace and irony, was not only so effectively spoken as to carry all hearers along with it, not only was moving by its passion and its scorn but also marked the individual character of the young King. There was frankness in his anger, there was heat in his sarcasms; his biting replies were not the expression of a malignant disposition, they were the outcome of a noble nature and of a just indignation. . . .

In his detection of the conspiracy against him of his friend Scroop, he sounded that note of anguish which in him was irresistible; and afterwards, before the girded Harfleur, he rushed upon the scene with the rapidity of hot desire, . . . he gave the well-known, too-often-spoken declamation . . . not as a carefully-weighed piece of elocution, but with swift utterance and hurried accents—hurried but not slurred. Not a single letter was missed or neglected, each had its due value; and in the expression of the whole there was glowing fire, determined energy of will, and a magnificent lust of conquest.

The charming scene where the King disguised visits the camp, . . . was played with true humour, and with the tenderness which Macready never missed. His soliloquy of 'Oh, hard condition, twin-born of greatness,' seemed to be thought out for the first time while he spoke it; and all his heart, and all the deep music of his tones, were in the lines.

His wooing scene with Katharine of France was singularly agreeable. There was something of the rough camp-life in the bearing of the man which consorted well with the dialogue; but Macready knew how to blend with it a princely courtesy, and to convey to its free accents a pleading tone.

Perhaps, as a whole, Macready's representation of Henry V. will remain exclusively his own. If the character did not exhibit his powers in their fullest range, he filled the part completely, and missed not one of its attributes.120

Following the ovation given Macready by the opening-night audience on June 10, he gave out the play for repetition four nights a week until the close of the season. Despite the enthusiastic

response, he held to his policy of constant change, and would not let
the play run without interruption. "It would have filled the house
nightly," said Anderson; 'but the old policy prevailed: it was acted
only four nights a week, up to the close of the season, which was as
good as telling the public the production was only half a success.'\[121\]
But there is reason to believe that more than his strict policy of
alternating plays caused Macready to limit the run to four perfor-
mances a week. Macready was tired and exhausted. Constant refer-
ences in his diary testify to this. Part of the entry for June 11
reads:

I slept very little, woke early unrefreshed, and unequal to
a day of labour. . . . Was quite beaten to the ground by fatigue,
I may say exhaustion of mind and body . . . I came to my lodgings
scarcely able to crawl. I have never felt a heavier weight than
this play has been. Thank God that it is over, and so well
over.\[122\]

The theatre was filled to an overflow capacity for every per-
formance. On the evening of July 16 Macready gave his final perfor-
mance as King Henry, one which he himself felt to be his best. The
final curtain fell amidst the loudest applause, and after changing
his costume he went before the curtain to be greeted by the entire
house standing, cheering, and waving handkerchiefs and hats. The
stage was covered with flowers and bouquets of laurel. At the

\[121\]Archer, Macready, pp. 121-122.

completion of his farewell address the cheering was renewed, and this
great actor left the stage through an aisle of honor formed by the act-
ors and the audience members.

A Shakespearean producer of today preparing a production of
Henry the Fifth for the stage would probably look with disdain upon
Macready's complex and detailed scenic embellishments. The current
tendency toward scenic simplification in the staging of Shakespeare
usually dismisses such antiquarian illustration as extraneous clutter.

The Times critic of 1839 anticipated just such a reaction and question-
ed whether, in Macready's production of Henry the Fifth, the end justi-
fied the means.

However great the attempt to represent closely an army on a
battlefield, still the obviousness of the attempt can only
render its fruitlessness more apparent; so much must, after
all, be left to the imagination, that with all the improve-
ments in machinery and scene painting, we still feel the force
of the poet's lines who saw the difficulty of enclosing "two
mighty monarchies" "within the circles of these walls," and who
thought that he much disgraced—

"With four or five most vile and ragged foils,
"Right ill-disposed in brawl ridiculous
"The name of Agincourt."

The ragged foils have now given place to bright swords and
glittering armour, but the discrepancy between the stage and
reality still remains; the poet's apology is still necessary
in spirit, if not in words, and we may doubt (when close
approximation is impossible) whether giving more to the senses,
and leaving less to the imagination, be an advance in art. 123

123 The Times (London), June 11, 1839.
The critic for *The Examiner* devoted fully two-thirds of his review to answering just such an argument, contending that if Shakes-

peare had access to extensive illustrative resources in this time, he would surely have employed same.

Gladly would he have shared the honour with the Stanfield of his day—if his day could have boasted a Stanfield—to convey by such means more sensibly those earnest truths and exquisite images of beauty which he thought needful to connect with his subject. For in the presence of such a subject what was he? What the theatre? The actors? The audience? He would have sought, to do ample justice to that transcendent theme, a king-
dom for a stage, princes to act, and monarch to behold the swelling scene! Unable to command them what would he have next commanded? All that the theatre could offer.¹²⁴

Some seven years later Thomas Marshall used the same quotation selected by the critic for *The Times* to reinforce *The Examiner's de-

fense of Macready.

In all that belonged to the mise en scene, Mr. Macready never forgot that his function was to illustrate. No splendid or striking effects induced him to depart from this duty. . . . When he was gorgeous, it was because the imagination of Shakespeare had been gorgeous first, and shown what he would have done with the rich and ample theatrical appliances of our times. In "Henry V.," not choice, but necessity, made the author on a most "un-

worthy scaffold to bring forth so great an object." Macready could not give him "a kingdom for a stage;" but he did precisely that for which the poet longed. He refused needlessly to

"Disgrace,
With four or five most vile and ragged foils,
Right ill-disposed in brawl ridiculous,
The name of Agincourt."

As far as possible—a possibility multiplied a thousand-fold.

since Shakespeare's days (1604)—he resolved to "piece out" the inevitable "imperfections" of the scene, not only by the "thoughts" of the audience, but by the power of artistry. In the heraldic emblazonments, the panoramic voyage, the pictorial interpretation of the prologue, the battle crash, the banded cathedral pomp, and all the unrivalled embellishments of that great national and historical drama—Macready was the faithful executor of the will of Shakspeare—enabled, by the wealth of modern theatrical art, to pay the bard's legacy to the British public.125

Thus, the attack and defense by Macready's contemporaries. Thus the critics. But a final comment, one from the "inside," may tell us more than all the preceding quotations about these twenty-one performances that took place between June 10 and July 16, 1839. One actor is talking to another about a common problem, that of actors having to do roles they don't particularly want to do.

I don't think Anderson swallowed Octavius Caesar with avidity, and I am sure Helen Faucit didn't gush at Portia (Brutus Portia), nor was Mrs. Warner particularly entete with the Queen of France, a part of twenty lines, in 'Henry V.' In fact we all growled, but we all submitted; Vandenhoff was chief growler in the Chorus, Warde followed suit in Williams, Elton as Exeter, Anderson as Gower (a part of thirty lines), and I growled as loudly as anyone as the Constable of France. But our discontent was the public gain, for it certainly was a most magnificent production. We've none of us been able to touch it, or even come within a hundred miles of it, since.126

The listener to this bit of conversation was John Coleman, who produced Henry the Fifth in 1876. The speaker was an actor-director


who had devoted eighteen years to the best possible Shakespearean production and who, during six of those eighteen years, had given some fifty performances of Henry the Fifth. His name: Samuel Phelps.

Summary

The period considered in this chapter was, in many ways, a difficult one for the theatre and drama of London. The artistic and managerial brilliance which had radiated from the throne of Garrick during his reign was but a rapidly diminishing glow when, in 1783, John Kemble made his first London stage appearance. True, competent actors still performed at the two patent houses, but no heir apparent to the English Roscius had appeared, and the theatre-going public found itself in an uncomfortable state of transition.

As Kemble's star began to grow brighter, admittedly in some degree due to the reflection from his co-star Siddons, two more aspects of the London theatre began to assert a pressure that was to take a certain artistic toll. London became more and more subjected to the rising tide of democracy. The demands of the lower and the middle classes for entertainment increased, and theatre managers responded by increasing the seating capacities of their houses. Watson describes it thus:

At the turn of the century the theatres succumbed to the rabble as a weakened constitution might to a virulent disease. The infection was immediate and complete. The theatres seemed to invite the masses as never before, and the masses had soon made the theatres almost exclusively their own; for the aristocracy
and the intellectuals gradually withdrew as the populace advanced. One of the most constant grievances of the managers throughout the first half of the century was that only their pits and galleries were filled, for only on rare occasions could the aristocracy be induced to attend.\footnote{Ernest Bradlee Watson, \textit{Sheridan to Robertson: A Study of the Nineteenth-Century London Stage} (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1963), pp. 6-7.}

This new audience was pre-disposed to dramatic fare considerably below the artistic level of Shakespeare. Excitement, escape, scenic splendour, and spectacle were desired and often demanded. And in a theatre seating thirty-six hundred spectators, it was infinitely easier for a shopkeeper or a coachman to respond to six prancing horses decorated with plumes and glitter than to any reasonable subtleties in the change of expression upon Hamlet's face. Niceties of acting were lost long before they reached the galleries. The actors of the legitimate drama were thus faced with a triple threat: audiences who demanded spectacle; managers who needed audiences, and theatres that swallowed histrionic subtleties.

Newspapers and periodicals of the early years of the century often evidenced the dissatisfaction of those who recognized these hardships under which the legitimate drama suffered.\footnote{For a representative sampling of some of these opinions, see: \textit{The Theatrical Inquisitor}, and \textit{Monthly Mirror}, November, 1813; January, 1814; March, 1814.} In editorials, articles, and letters, writers attributed the degeneracy of the English stage to a variety of causes. Some thought it was a result of
the really good authors refusing to write for the stage because they received so little remuneration and that the managers and stars had too strong a control. Some insisted the cause lay in the depraved taste of the public and that the vicious nature of the critics frightened off aspiring writing talent. Still others felt that the rage for music excluded anything other than operas and burlettas from realizing success. There were those who complained that there was no ensemble among the actors because they were too busy fighting with the managers and only willing to do large roles. Some articles pointed the finger of blame toward the monopoly itself. The nature of the patents, they claimed, was the source of the degeneracy; the government had set up the monopoly and then failed to regulate it. The only solution lay in establishing a third theatre.

In the face of all this adversity one wonders if Shakespearean production at the turn of the century could have risen to the height that it did had a lesser figure than John Kemble been its leading proponent. From the time he assumed the management of Drury Lane in 1788 until his retirement from the management of Covent Garden in 1815 he committed himself to a schedule of Shakespearean production which might have spelled doom for another. Granted, as both manager and star performer he was in the best of any possible position to pursue such a schedule. Nonetheless, his record stands as evidence of a strong will in the face of large opposition. In
his study of Covent Garden between 1803 and 1808, Dewart notes that no other playwright approached Shakespeare in number of performances.

In number of plays, twenty-two, Shakespeare far outdistances his nearest rival, Thomas Dibdin, who had twelve produced. In number of performances, Shakespeare's total 249 to Dibdin's 141.

This is no inconsiderable feat when one recalls that the period 1803-1808 was rich in prolific authors who turned their pens glibly to capitalizing on any contemporary event that had titilated the town. Between them, Colman Jr., Thomas Dibdin, Morton, and Reynolds wrote eight of the fourteen most popular plays of the period, and between them they turned out literally hundreds of pieces during their collective careers.129

From his first performance in the role of King Henry at Drury Lane in 1789 to his last at Covent Garden in 1811, Kemble produced the play a total of twenty-eight times. As in the case of many of his other Shakespearean productions, Kemble prepared his own version of the text. He followed Bell's edition in most of the major cuts as well as making some of his own. He did not use the Chorus in any of his productions.

Kemble's style of acting belongs to that school of performance described as "classical." Unlike the "romantic" actors who followed him—Edmund Kean and, to some extent, Macready—Kemble's acting was never based upon nor characterized by spontaneous emotion. A dignity and a formality of carriage, movement, and vocal delivery pervaded all of his portrayals. Today's audiences would undoubtedly find his acting cold, artificial, elocutionary, and

certainly removed from any personal emotional involvement. His approach
to character was an intellectual approach. He sought a complete under-
standing of the dialogue and devoted many hours to textual study.

His years of management, even though marred by the infamous
O. P. Riots at Covent Garden in 1809, stand as the foundation for
the great actor-manager tradition which flourished in the nineteenth
century. In addition to his artistic ability and his professional
commitment, he possessed a literary awareness and a business sense
which permitted him to move within social and business circles out-
side of his immediate profession. No small degree of the personal
and professional recognition which later actors found could be theirs
can be traced to the ability and efforts of John Kemble.

During Kemble's reign at the two patent houses, Henry the Fifth
was used, as it had been in the middle of the eighteenth century, as
a political vehicle. In 1803, during the height of the military con-
frontation with France, the performance was followed by the
"Occasional Address to the Volunteers" delivered by Charles Kemble
for the benefit of the Patriotic Fund. This same season Elliston's
performances at the Haymarket were directed with similar political
thrust.

The career of William Conway was furthered by six performances
of this play in 1813 while Kemble was taking a much-needed rest in the
provinces. A single, ill-fated performance by Edmund Kean was the only
production of the play on the London stage interrupting the twenty-
year period—1819 to 1839—in which William Charles Macready performed
the role of King Henry. Macready's final production in 1839 was by
far his most elaborate, and in matters of text and scenic illustration
it served as a model for Charles Kean's version twenty years later.

Macready has been described as the last of the giants, the
actor-manager who for two decades held the commanding position in
the London theatre. His insistence upon attention to detail did
not overshadow his major innovations in the staging of Shakespeare,

\[
. . . \text{a genuinely picturesque and scholarly setting; thorough}
\text{rehearsals for a unified effect; rigid measures to improve the}
\text{social conditions in the theatre; the restoration of Shake-
\text{speare's own texts; and above all, a resolute determination to}
\text{make the legitimate drama worthy of its mission to a great}
\text{nation}.}\]

Samuel Phelps, who devoted the majority of his professional life to
the highest artistic standards in Shakespearean production, was one
of Macready's greatest admirers. And even as he acknowledged the
greatness of Betterton, Booth and Quin; the genius of Garrick; the
gifts of Siddons; the scholarship and dignity of Kemble, Young and
Elliston, and the intense excitement of Kean and Cooke, he continued:

\[
. . . \text{I doubt whether at any time the works of our great masters}
\text{have ever received in their entirety such admirable rendition and}
\]

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130 Alan S. Downer, "The Private Papers of George Spelvin. III.

such perfect illustration in every detail as they obtained during the matchless management of William Charles Macready.132

George Henry Lewes believed that Edmund Kean reigned with undisputed superiority in the highest reaches of his art.133 And yet he found Kean inferior to Macready in range and flexibility. Macready seems to have realized an amalgam of the style of Kemble and Kean, of the classical and the romantic schools. Like Kemble, he was able to conceive of a role in its entirety, and not simply manifest brilliant points along the way. Like Kean, he was able to approach the emotions of the character sympathetically rather than purely intellectually. Lewes described it thus:

... I mean that he felt himself to be the person, and having identified himself with the character, sought by means of the symbols of his art to express what that character felt; he did not stand outside the character and try to express its emotions by the symbols which had been employed for other characters by other actors.134

But Macready did not depend upon inspiration alone or upon some mystic inner experience to get this emotional truth. He made his motivation happen. Lewes, recognizing that the following story about Macready may be exaggerated or perhaps not even true, still insists upon the validity with which it illustrates the point under


134Ibid., p. 43.
consideration. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock has a scene in Act III where he must enter in a state of great grief and anger. Obviously concerned with the problem of going from the calm of the greenroom to the truth of the emotion on the stage,

Macready, it is said, used to spend some minutes behind the scenes, lashing himself into an imaginative rage by cursing *sotto voce*, and shaking violently a ladder fixed against the wall. To bystanders the effect must have been ludicrous. But to the audience the actor presented himself as one really agitated. He had worked himself up to the proper pitch of excitement which would enable him to express the rage of Shylock.135

The hallmark of Macready's style has been described as the method he used for transitions. Always concerned with detail and with making the audience as familiar as possible with the small points of the character, he would make use of abrupt transitions from a more elevated style of delivery to a colloquial or conversational one. His purpose here was not to be inconsistent, but rather to communicate as much of the character's humanity as possible to the audience. His concern for this sense of truth and his apparent ability to get it across to his audience; his awareness of the total character and not just the moments of brilliance, and his directorial and managerial discipline manifest in the smallest details of rehearsals, scenic representation, and responsibility to his audience show him to have been the precursor of the modern director. And in none of his productions was this directorial ability more evident than in *Henry*

Downer has pointed out that the acting style of a period is a reflection of that period's common temper. This is certainly true in terms of Macready's acting style. His style, exhibiting as it did that combination of elements from both the classical and the romantic schools of acting, embodied the transition beginning to take place between the Romantic and the Victorian periods, a transition composed of "the thoughtful and the emotional, of the head and the heart—which is, of course, quite the temper of the age in which he lived."  

CHAPTER V

THE AGE OF PHELPS AND KEAN: 1839-1859

Theatrical management during the first half of the nineteenth century was a precarious business venture, and failure was the rule rather than the exception. The years 1800 to 1840 witnessed a period of financial calamity never before known in English theatre history.

... in 1832, the year of the Reform Bill, the financial state of the drama was at its very worst: even the minors had to reduce their already lowered prices; and at the great theatres the average yearly receipts from 1815 to 1832 were only £47,000 or £38,000 less than for the five years preceding 1815.¹

Causes of Failure in Theatrical Management

The failure of the theatres to maintain solvency was ascribed to a variety of causes. Many laid the blame upon the monopoly: the size of the patent houses; the geographical centralization of the monopoly theatres; the very nature of the monopoly itself which forced the use of the large houses while suppressing the minors; and the competition the minors offered the majors. Others cited the indifference of the crown and the aristocracy, the late dinner hour of the fashionable, and the opposition of the clergy. Some felt that the new interest in reading and the improvements in the comforts of home kept

people from the theatres, while others cited the hard times among the middle and lower classes as the major contributing factor. A lack of vitality in the drama itself was yet another reason put forth.

In addition to these external pressures which beset management, Watson has listed others which he believes to have been more directly influential: enormous expenses incurred with large companies, stars, and production costs; the lack of any governmental assistance; and losses through law suits from litigation over the monopoly rights.  

Attempts to remedy this deplorable state of the theatres were made on different levels. From 1832 until 1835 the two major houses were united under the management of Bunn, who attempted to alleviate the situation by reducing prices. The number of spectators did increase, but unfortunately the total box office receipts did not. In his continuing quest for establishing a national theatre, Macready tried a second term at management, this time at Drury Lane. From 1841 until 1843 he held fast against the economic odds, but at the end of his second season he succumbed as he had four years earlier at Covent Garden. The London stage had come upon hard times.

Then in August, 1843, just a few months after Macready terminated his management at Drury Lane, the theatre monopoly was rescinded by an act of Parliament. To many this repeal was not only the

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2Ibid., p. 137. See Chapter Six, "Theatrical Management, Causes of Failure," for an excellent detailed examination of the problems confronting management during this period.
long-belated triumph of justice but the herald of an assured theatrical utopia. Unfortunately, an act of Parliament could not dispel the long-established habit of those theatre patrons for whom attending the theatre meant nothing less than the two major houses. Nor did the anticipated boom in new theatre construction take place.

At the time the monopoly was abolished there were already many more theatres in London than the scanty interest in any form of drama warranted. In the fifteen years previous to the fall of the monopoly, sixteen theatres had been built. Seven of these had already disappeared before 1843. . . . Only three of the fifteen houses built between 1829 and 1840 played an important part in subsequent stage history; and of the twenty-one existing in 1843 not more than half could be considered in any sense prosperous. . . . What was to be expected, however, and what actually occurred, was the resurrection of no small number of these houses that previously had failed completely, or had been the resort of low audiences and wretched art, to a condition of prosperity and respect.\(^3\)

It was in two such theatres, Sadler's Wells and The Princess's, that Samuel Phelps and Charles Kean, respectively, produced the mid-century productions of Henry the Fifth.

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Samuel Phelps

The decision of Samuel Phelps to assume the management of Sadler's Wells theatre in 1844 marked a turning point in the history of the London stage. Phelps had toured the northern provinces performing a number of roles before his London stage debut at the Haymarket in 1837. In September of that same year he joined Macready's

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 53.
company at Covent Garden and was with Macready during his season of management at both patent houses. When Macready terminated his management of Drury Lane in 1843 he asked Phelps to accompany him on an American tour. Phelps refused and instead took over the management of Sadler's Wells.

Why Phelps decided to try his luck at a minor house which had perhaps the most unenviable reputation in London is anyone's guess. Not only was Sadler's Wells far removed from Westminster, the fashionable theatre section of London, but it had a history of presenting some of the more exotic and spectacular displays—aquatic shows, racing ponies, tight-rope walkers, and performing dogs. Audiences at this theatre were notorious for their rowdy character. Perhaps Phelps's vision was focused on the theatre building itself because it possessed several advantages to offset its shortcomings.

The auditorium was semi-circular shaped and comparatively shallow, 43'-0" from the footlights to the rear wall of the house. Yet it accommodated approximately 2,000 people, providing good sight lines and acoustics for all of the spectators. The stage was 33'-0" wide at the proscenium opening, 50'-0" wide from wall to wall, and about 62'-0" deep from the proscenium to the rear wall. A deep
forestage of about 12'-0" widened to 36'-0" at the footlights.4

Typical of nineteenth-century English stages, Sadler's Wells had a raked floor, trapped areas, and a maximum of seven sets of grooves for wings plus a set for shutters. In addition the stage contained a series of "slots," openings in the stage floor which could be exposed by sliding back portions of the flooring. These slots held devices for raising long, narrow pieces of stage scenery from below the floor to the stage level. Upstage of these slots was a "bridge cut" from which could be raised a platform or "bridge" for large set pieces or groups of figures. Three-dimensional pieces set or rolled into place by stage hands, roller-drops operated from the fly gallery, and fixed and transitional dioramas completed the basic scenic arrangements of the theatre.

Although gas was introduced into the London theatres as early as 1817, its use for stage lighting was very limited for many years because of the cost and the safety problems. For his 1839 production of Henry the Fifth Macready probably used limelight on his dioramas. Frederick Fenton, Phelps's primary scene designer from 1844 to 1856, 4

4There are no extant architectural plans for Sadler's Wells Theatre. I have taken these dimensions from: John Charles Morrow, "The Staging of Pantomime at Sadler's Wells Theatre, 1828-1860" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1963), pp. 41-53. Professor Morrow's study incorporates the use of primary source materials that other studies of Sadler's Wells do not (e.g., Allen, "Samuel Phelps and His Management of Sadler's Wells Theatre"). These dimensions represent his findings.
described some of the problems as well as some of the techniques of stage lighting at Sadler's Wells.

In those days lighting was a serious difficulty. Very few theatres were enabled to have gas. When Phelps and Greenwood took the management into their hands, the lighting of Sadler's Wells was merely upright side-lights, about six lamps to each entrance, which were placed on angular frames, and revolved to darken the stage: no lights above. When set pieces were used, a tray of oil lamps was placed behind them, with coloured glasses for moonlight. For the foot-lights (or floats) there was a large pipe, with two vases, one at each one, with a supply of oil to charge the argand burners on the pipes: it was lowered out between the acts, to be trimmed as necessity required . . . when the Phelps and Greenwood management was assured, I obtained permission for the gas to be supplied as a permanent lighting for the theatre, and it was used for the first time in A Midsommer Night's Dreame in 1853. The odor of oil and sawdust in all our theatres finally vanished. 5

A Midsommer Night's Dreame opened on October 8, 1853; the 1853 production of Henry the Fifth opened on November 21. Therefore it is quite probable that while the 1852-1853 season performances of Henry the Fifth were lighted with oil, the performances the following season used gas.

Another advantage enjoyed by Phelps in his new management was the availability of good experienced actors and actresses. The desperate state of the legitimate drama in the West End found many of them eager to work in a situation that at least promised to make an honest attempt at reform. Among those who joined Phelps in his

enterprise were the distinguished tragic actress, Mrs. Warner, as co-
manager and performer, her husband as treasurer, and T. L. Greenwood
as acting manager.

In an address issued to the public, Phelps stated his purpose
in assuming the management of the theatre.

Mrs. Warner and Mr. Phelps have embarked in the management and per-
formance of Sadler's Wells Theatre in the hope of eventually ren-
dering it what a theatre ought to be—a place for justly repre-
senting the works of our great dramatic poets. . . . Each separate
division of our immense metropolis, with its 2,000,000 inhab-
itants, may have its own well-conducted theatre within a reason-
able distance of the homes of its patrons.

For the North of London, they offer an entertainment selected
from the first stock drama in the world, re-inforced by such
novelties as can be procured by diligence and liberality.6

The voices of doom were raised more than once predicting the
failure awaiting Phelps and his company before the first season was
completed. But these early critics were unable to anticipate the
triple-threat posed by Phelps as manager, director, and actor. At
the end of his first season, London was aware that something new and
exciting was happening in the legitimate drama. By the end of his
second season his productions were being acknowledged as some of the
best in the city. And following eight seasons of continued growth
and production excellence he began to prepare his first production
of Henry the Fifth.

6George C. D. Odell, Shakespeare From Betterton to Irving (2
The text

Rather than simply using one of the older acting editions of the play, Phelps chose his text from a Steevens-Malone edition of the collected works of Shakespeare. Following Macready's lead, he retained the Choruses, although he cut more lines from them than Macready had. Phelps's cuttings approximated Macready's in number of lines deleted in seventeen of the scenes. Three of these seventeen—the English lesson (III, iv), the French camp (III, vii), Pistol and the French soldier (IV, iv)—they both cut completely. Phelps retained three scenes that Macready had eliminated: the opening scene between the two clerics (I, i); the first scene between the low comics (II, i); and the last scene of the English on the battlefield (IV, vi). He also cut considerably fewer lines from the first English camp scene (III, vi), and the scene in which the English learn they have won the battle of Agincourt (IV, vii). But he cut more lines than Macready from the comics at the Breach (III, ii).

Phelps's promptbook for his production appears to have been marked by three different hands, quite possibly for the three different seasons in which he staged the play--1852, 1853, and 1858. Occasionally the textual cuttings as well as some of the stage directions are

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7This promptbook is housed in the Folger Shakespeare Library (Folger: Henry V, 9). For this study a microfilm copy was used: OSUTC Film #P. 1675. All references to this promptbook--textual and otherwise--which follow are to this copy.
difficult to establish because certain sections marked as being cut have the word "in" written beside them in the margin. However, this discrepancy does not involve more than about one hundred lines. And if all the sections marked as cut are included, Phelps's dialogue excisions are as follow: Act I, 196 lines; Act II, 111; Act III, 422; Act IV, 276; Act V, 206; and the Epilogue, 14. In all, he cut a total of 1,225 lines, or 36.31 per cent. The performance of his version of the play ran two hours and forty minutes.

Another major change made by Phelps was the transposition of lines and of scenes. In making II, i, his I, iii, he moved the second Chorus ahead one scene so that it appeared just before the Southampton scene (II, ii), his I, iii. The Boy's speech at the end of III, ii, he transferred to the end of the second low comics' scene (II, iii), his II, ii. One of his largest changes occurred in Act III. Like Kemble and Macready, Phelps made the first three scenes of this act his III, i. In doing so, however, he made the storming of the Breach (III, i) entirely an action scene, transferring three of the lines to III, ii, and the majority of the rest to IV, iii. Finally, the prompter's renumbering of the last four scenes in Act IV loses sequence, so that no scene iv or scene vi is indicated (See Appendix B, for a detailed comparison with the control text).

Phelps's transpositions of these scenes seem to have been directed toward making the play more suitable for the
nineteenth-century stage. His transfer of the first low-comics scene (II, i) to the end of Act I served three purposes: first, having cut 150 lines from I, ii, it gave Acts I and II approximately equal length; second, it permitted Act I to end on a lighter note, following the serious business in the English Palace scene (I, ii); and finally, it permitted the use of the entire entr'acte for setting up the scenery for the Council Chamber at Southampton (II, ii). The transfer of the Boy's speech from Act III to Act II served two purposes: removed from the Breach sequence, it permitted the action to move more rapidly, something Phelps obviously desired when he made the Breach scene (III, i) wholly action by transferring the King's speech to IV, iii; also, it set up the cowardice displayed by Nym, Pistol, and Bardolph when they appeared at the Breach. Precedents existed for the transpositions of the first low-comics' scene and for the Boy's speech. But Phelps seems to have been the first to make the transposition in III, i.

In his cuttings Phelps eliminated nine characters: MacMorris, Jamy, Alice, Court, Orleans, Bourbon, Britaine, Grandpre, and Rambures. Like Kemble and Macready, he changed the word "God" to "Heaven," but he was more inconsistent than they because the change was effected only seventy-five per cent of the time. Certain characters' lines were exchanged, and one speech—Fluellen's first, in III, ii—was re-written.

The playbill listings for the production which opened on
October 25, 1852, advertised the performance as having "new scenery, dresses, and decorations" (Figure 18). The scenery was designed by Frederick Fenton, who supervised the design and painting of nearly all the scenery at Sadler's Wells from 1839 to 1856. Unfortunately, while some of Fenton's designs for other plays still exist, there are none for Henry the Fifth. However, by examining the promptbook and comparing it with the reviews of the production, it is possible to reconstruct certain aspects of the scenic arrangement.

A similar problem exists in terms of the costumes for the production as designed by Miss Bailey. There does not seem to be any extant information, written or illustrative, concerning her work. However some reviews of the performances referred to the historical authenticity of the costumes. She was undoubtedly strongly influenced by and perhaps based her designs upon the work of James R. Planché who provided the thrust for the antiquarian movement in the nineteenth century. As mentioned earlier, his book, History of English Costume, originally published in 1834, had a later edition in 1847. This work became the major source for costuming Shakespeare's history plays throughout the century.

Staging and reception

A majority of the scenes in Phelps's production were staged as "flat scenes," using the traditional wing and shutter (or drop) arrangement, alternating between shallow and deep positions. Rather
than detailing all of these, an overall picture of their operation can be understood by examining any given act in which they were used, along with the scenic variations within the act. Then, descriptions of certain scenes using combinations of both two-dimensional and three-dimensional set pieces will help to complete an understanding of Phelps's staging.  

Following the overture—either composed or selected by Mr. W. H. Montgomery—which began at 7:00, the stage curtain rose to reveal the Chorus to Act I. A notation in the promptbook describes the staging of this as follows:

A Pair of Circular Screens representing a Frame with Armorial bearings of England (R. Flat) and France (L. Flat). Pedestals R. & LC. Curtains with the Lion and Fleur de Luce emblazoned thereon to open C. worked on rods R & L--a Large Cloth to back--A Small Platform on Wheels for Time. Scythe--Hourglass on a Small Altar on Platform. Time discovered leaning thereon.

An interpretation and expansion of these notes provides an interesting description of what took place.

The stage curtain rose revealing an act curtain operating on traverse rods with the symbols of England and France on either half.

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8 For this reconstruction I am indebted to the study by Daniel Jude Watermeier, "A Reconstruction of Samuel Phelps's King Henry the Fifth at the Theatre Royal, Sadler's Wells" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Maryland, 1965), pp. 63-105. I have checked all of Watermeier's quotations and his interpretations of the promptbook against the promptbook itself. With only a few exceptions I concur with his findings.

9 Phelps's promptbook, Folger, Henry V, 9, p. M2.
The traverse parted revealing a pair of profile flats ("Circular Screens") with the armorial bearings of England and France painted upon them. Profiled only at the top and off-stage side, these flats, when slid together in their grooves, formed a circular opening in the middle. To the right and left of these flats were two columns ("Pedestals"). Some distance upstage-center of the circular opening in the flats was a small platform mounted on wheels. Standing upon this platform, leaning on a small altar and holding his scythe and his hour-glass, was the actor Marston playing Chorus as Father Time. On a given signal, this platform was moved several feet downstage until it was framed by the circular opening in the screens. Upstage of all this hung a drop ("Large cloth to the back"), perhaps painted with some historical scene or perhaps simply a neutral gray.

Immediately following Chorus's speech, the traverse curtain closed, the drop rose, the profile flats were slid off, and the circular platform rolled up-stage. Music covered the sounds of the change. The remaining four Choruses were staged in this same manner.

The traverse curtain re-opened just a few seconds after it was closed at the end of the Chorus to discover the first scene of Act I, an ante-chamber in the King's Palace. A promptbook notation indicates that this scene was terminated in the first groove position but provides no description of the scene. Since it consists entirely of a dialogue between the two clerics and demands no practical
openings, a drop probably was used for the backing of the scene. The two characters entered left and exited right. Immediately upon their exit, the prompter blew his whistle signalling the change. The drop for I, i, rose, the wings and borders changed, and II, ii, was revealed. The sounds of the scene shift were covered by a flourish of trumpets.

The second scene, the King's throne room, was terminated in the fourth groove position. King Henry was discovered on this throne surrounded by his nobles. The throne was set on a platform of three levels upstage-center. Immediately to his left and right on the first level were the King's sword and shield bearers. With the exceptions of the entrances and exits of the heralds, messengers, and the French ambassadors with their attendant train, the stage picture remained rather static. All entrances and exits were made right or left in the wing spaces. As the King and his lords exited following the last lines, the whistle blew and the scene for I, ii, closed in.

Phelps's I, iii (II, i) took place in Eastcheap with the characters Nym, Pistol, Bardolph, Mistress Quickly and the Boy. Although not specifically indicated, this scene was probably terminated at the second groove position. The notation "DF" (for "door-flat") suggests that a shutter rather than a drop was used for the back scene along with side-wings. Promptbook notations throughout this scene specify the business of drawing and sheathing the swords for the three men. At the end of the scene they exited L2E, and the act
drop closed in ending Act I. Here, as between all the acts, there was an intermission accompanied by entr'acte music. In this act, as in the following four, there are notations in the promptbook for sound cues, warnings, call lists, stage crosses, character reactions, and entrances and exits.

Phelps's most unique staging took place in III, i. As indicated earlier, he merged the first three scenes of Act III into one continuous scene. In so doing, he removed King Henry's entire speech from III, i, transferring the first three lines of it to III, ii, cutting twenty lines, and transferring the remaining fourteen to IV, iii. In his III, i, Phelps used more scenic devices than in any other scene in his production.

At the point where the third Chorus speaks the line, "With linstock now the devilish cannon touches," the promptbook notation reads: "Shouts. Large Drum. Distant Shouts & Music." When the traverse curtain opened on III, i, it revealed an "extreme set," probably terminated at the fifth groove position. This was the setting for the fortified walls of Harfleur. These walls appear to have been three-dimensional set pieces, for they supported the Governor and the citizens of Harfleur who appeared on the walls toward the end of the scene. These walls also contained practical gates fortified by "breastwork" set pieces.

The action of the beginning of III, i, is described in the
promptbook as follows:

Reports—Loud Shouts—Drums—Cannons. 4 Large Shields with Archers behind also 4 men with Scaling ladders. The whole of the English troops—Soldiers—Officers—Westmoreland—Bedford—Exeter—Salisbury—Warwick—Williams—Bates—Gower—Erpingham—X in a body down platform L3E and off R3E. The Shouts partially subside. Enter King on platform (The army XR as in a retreat with Flags looking off LUE)—The King rallies them, and they again rush to attack—Loud Shouts—Cannon—Drums—Trumpets. The Platform and Panorama move. The men fighting on platform from L off R3E until closed in. The troops get off and are seen fighting thro' opening in Panorama LUE.10

An interpretation of this rather cryptic prompter's notation is necessary in order to determine exactly what happened and in what sequence.

As the traverse opened, the siege of the city walls was revealed. Many of the soldiers were on a low platform which ran horizontally across the stage at the third groove position. Some notations in the promptbook referred to this platform as a "bridge platform," and this suggests two possible interpretations. First, it could have been a device rising out of the "bridge cut" in the stage floor. Second, it could have been simply a low platform on rollers, a ramp-like affair modelled after a medieval war machine. Two additional notations make the second possibility seem more likely. One describes King Henry as "ascending bridge leading the whole of the army." The other describes this bridge as working to the side of the stage opposite the prompter (stage right). A bridge in a "bridge cut" did not move on a horizontal stage axis, but rather vertically

10Ibid., facing p. 177.
from below to above the stage.

Following the initial retreat of the English from the city walls, the King entered and rallied his men. Here a panorama began to work across the stage from left to right below the platform, and eventually masked the soldiers from view. This covering did not take place immediately, because some of the soldiers could be seen through an opening in the panorama. As this opening continued to move to the right the platform behind it moved to the right also. Thus the soldiers were seen fighting through the opening until it moved completely off stage right, and the audience's attention was gradually shifted from the action of the real soldiers to that of the figures painted on the panorama.

Overlapping the last of this siege was the entrance of Nym, Pistol, Bardolph, and the Boy who entered R3E. On Pistol's line, "But thither would I hie," the panorama had passed, revealing the actual siege once again with the King ascending the bridge, leading his army, and speaking his first three lines from III, i, over the shouting and music. Fluellen then entered from the right. The comics

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11"Panorama" is the term used in the promptbook. Wickman's study of panoramic scenery cited in the preceding chapter indicates that technically this was a diorama. Phillabaum ("Panoramic Scenery at Sadler's Wells," The Ohio State University Theatre Collection Bulletin, No. 6 (Spring, 1959), pp. 20-25) presents a strong case for Phelps's use of dioramas constructed on flat frames. Watermeier (p. 84) cites Phillabaum's evidence to support his thesis that this particular diorama in Henry the Fifth was so constructed, and that it moved across the stage in grooves. I concur with Watermeier.
tried to escape off right, but Fluellen drove them off L2E. At this point a second panorama began to move across the stage in the same direction as the first. As it moved, Gower entered from the left and directed Fluellen to attend to the mines. As a parley sounded, the two men exited stage right. Simultaneously, the panorama completed its movement right and revealed the walls of Harfleur.

Drums and trumpets announced the entrance of King Henry and his men from the first three groove positions stage right. The Governor of Harfleur and four citizens appeared on the walls. On the King's demand, "Open your gates," the prompter's notes read: "Rattling of heavy chains. French Lords open large city gates, then to front of breastwork—Enter the Governor with keys on cushions and 4 citizens; they kneel up center." After Henry accepted the surrender the English troops begun their march into the city to the music of The British Grenadiers. The order of processions reads: "2 Heralds --2 Banners. Buff coats with figures in 5 deep. Troops OP fall in 3 deep. Knights ditto." Coinciding with this notation is a warning

12The staging here is particularly confusing. The printed stage directions read: "The Governor and some citizens on the walls;" The prompter has crossed out "some" and written in "four." Then, written in the margin is: "L.U.E. thro opening in flat." This "opening" is shown on the rough sketch of the floor plan as being up-stage right of the gates to the city. One of the words written in near the "opening" on the floor plan is impossible to decipher. After lengthy examination my interpretation is that the Governor and the four citizens appeared on the walls; then, following their acquiescence to the King's demands, they left the walls, momentarily disappeared from sight, and then entered through the gates which had been opened.
for "Figures worked up slote at back." This is one of the more interesting and unique aspects of Phelps's production. In order to get the effect of large numbers of men in the English army, Phelps used a group of profile or cut-out, two-dimensional figures operated in a slote. By keeping them upstage and partially masking them with the real soldiers (actors), the effect of the number of English troops was greatly increased. When the procession was cleared through the city gates, the stage was closed in to the second groove position for the next scene.

Phelps's concern for illustrating the text of his play, and his ability to compensate for the relatively limited resources he had to work with were evidenced in still another scene.

His staff of auxiliaries, even in his greatest works, rarely exceeded two score, but he contrived to multiply his resources by a process as ingenious as it was amusing. In "Henry V.," in the march-past before Agincourt, the troops defiled behind a "set piece" which rose breast high. Madame Tussaud modelled eighty wax heads—these were fitted on "dummy" figures of wicker work, clad in the costume and armour of the period. Every man of the gallant forty carried two of these figures, one on either side, attached to a sort of frame-work, which was lashed to his waist; hence it seemed as if they were marching three abreast.

As they tramped past, banners streaming, drums beating, trumpets braying, the stage seemed crowded with soldiers, and the illusion was so perfect that the audience never once discovered the artifice.13

According to the promptbook, Phelps used "figure troops" or "profile figures" in three scenes: III, i; IV, iii; and IV, vii. Those in

III, i, were the cut-out figures operated in a slot, according to the notations. The wax figures referred to above appear to have been used both in IV, iii, and in IV, vii, for rough ground-plan sketches in the promptbook indicate five rows of five figures deep for each of these scenes.

The panorama (diorama) appears to have been used for an equally effective but quite different purpose in the scene of the English camp on the eve of Agincourt (IV, i). In the last scene of Act III a notation reads: "Lower lights gradually." This direction appears a number of lines before the end of the scene, thus establishing the mood for Chorus's opening lines, "Now entertain conjecture of a time / When creeping murmur and the poring dark / Fills the wide vessel of the universe." By the time Chorus finished his lines, the lights were three-quarters down, and the accompanying notation was: "Distant flourish played with mutes on instruments. Landscape with English encampment. Moon to work behind cloudings, and the rosy hue of morning to work gradually on. Lights behind to illuminate." At line 66 there is a "Warn for Working clouds;" at line 69, "Signal for working clouds and moon;" at line 89, when the soldiers Bates and Williams comment on the morning beginning to appear in the sky, the notation reads: "Raise lights;" and at the very beginning of the next scene the direction is "Lights Up." The prompter's notations on the moonlight and cloud effect suggest the use of a diorama very much
like Macready and Stanfield employed for their effects.

Other notations for lights and music and their specific timing with the mood suggested by the dialogue provide an excellent example of the concern for detail for which Phelps was famous. Similar concern is evidenced in the dozens of music cues throughout the promptbook, cues indicating not only music starting or stopping but also increasing and decreasing in volume, the level at given points, and whether instruments were to be muted or not. Properties too received their share of attention. They were not only to be historically accurate but also in the appropriate condition of use and wear. A note at the beginning of IV, iii, reads: "All the Banners and Armour in this scene should be dull and ragged."

The reviews of the 1852 production were unanimous in their acknowledgement of the scenic effectiveness achieved by Phelps and his designers. The critic for The Athenaeum applauded Phelps for not using a diorama to illustrate the Choruses, arguing that "... such pictorial assistance has been wisely dispensed with, as contravening the very purpose of the Chorus and the text of the descriptions--which appeals to the fancy expressly on the ground of no appeal being made to the eye." Yet his praise seems a little left-handed because just a few lines later, after decrying the play's lack of dramatic interest and need for illustration, he wrote: "Much attention, accordingly, has been here paid by the painter to the siege of Harfleur and the
battlefield of Agincourt:—and the picturesque effects produced are highly meritorious." The Times critic found the effect of the diorama in the siege of Harfleur "admirably real and well contrived." F. C. Tomlins, reviewing the production for The Morning Advertiser, was particularly impressed with the obviously extensive and detailed research that resulted in the historical accuracy.

The costumes have been attended to with as much care as expense; the architecture has been carefully considered; and the illustrations have all the gorgeousness that belongs to the middle ages. The scenery and machinery are excellent, and highly ingenious. The besieging of Harfleur, in the third act, was admirably and picturesquely managed, and brought down a perfect storm of approbation. And the like may be said of the field and battle of Agincourt, which gave scope for some admirable moonlight and daylight effects. The interiors were equally effective, and the whole reflects the highest credit on the taste, research, and talent of all concerned.

The critics' reactions to the acting were somewhat less laudatory. According to one,

... the acting of the play was very unequal. ... Mr. Phelps intoned the battle speeches with spirit and energy; and Mr. G. Bennett was "prodigious" in Pistol. The best sustained character in the piece was Mr. Lewis Ball's Fluellen; and great commendation is deserved by Mrs. Marston, who as Dame Quickly rose to an equality with the late Mrs. Glover. ... But the action of the play is not dramatic,—and the weight of the dialogue and
orations is painfully oppressive. The comic scenes are the only amusing portions. 17

Another critic devoted nearly three-quarters of his review to reminiscences about the brilliance of Macready's productions of the play.

Then, finally, as though brought back from his dream world, he wrote:

We have been led far back from Mr. Phelps, but it has been by his aid; and we return to thank him for a performance which, however inferior, is akin to that which it has suggested. The performers around him, almost without exception, speak the exquisite speeches which the poet has scattered with his most wanton profusion, in a style of excellence which shows that "a learned spirit of human dealing" has been active in their training; for whether Mr. Marston, as Chorus, gave force to the descriptive passages which supplied the place of pictures, or Mr. Robinson spoke the Dauphin's speeches with the crisp accent befitting graceful youth, the suggestive spirit of the performance was preserved. 18

Tomlins felt that the play itself afforded little scope for acting, particularly the first two acts. Not until the battle scenes commenced did the mixture of the homely and the heroic come to life, and this,

... was deeply felt and admirably given by all concerned, and most prominently and markedly by Mr. Phelps, who was eloquent without spouting, and who, when his heroic nature bursts into words, takes care to relapse into his hatred and disgust at such display as soon as he can, by descending to the colloquial and simple as rapidly as possible. This was admirably marked in his scene with Williams, and again to perfection in his wooing of Katharine. This last was as excellent a piece of high comedy as

17 Athenaeum, October 30, 1852, p. 1185.

18 The Examiner, No. 2335, October 30, 1852, p. 694.
we have seen, and proves how great an artist Mr. Phelps is. 19

The Times' critic gave particular praise to Phelps's King Henry, noting Phelps's believability as a soldier and the contrasting "quiet pleasantry" he displayed in the wooing scene. This critic also acknowledged the manager's directorial skill: "The zeal with which Mr. Phelps has thrown himself into the part of Henry V. is scarcely less praiseworthy than the pains which he has bestowed on the production of a good ensemble." 20

The production ran for thirty-nine performances during the 1852-1853 season. The following season it was repeated for eight performances. Five years later, during the 1858-1859 season, the play was given another eight performances. A playbill for this production indicated: "New Scenery by Mr. Charles S. James, and New Dresses and Decorations ..." 21 While the reviews do not indicate that Phelps made any major changes scenically, they all make a point of commenting on the scenery. Even The Athenæum, although somewhat distressed with the interpolation of the King's speech from III, i to IV, iii, was enthusiastic in its reception.


20 The Times (London), November 2, 1852, p. 5.

21 O.S.U.T.C Film #1462#. From material in the Finsbury Public Library.
... the integrity of the play was well preserved, and its efficiency secured by means of careful acting and some very good new scenery. The appointments are correct and ample,—and such attention paid throughout to details, that we may regard the reproduction of the play as equivalent to a new revival.\textsuperscript{22}

The \textit{Morning Post} was even more lavish in its praise of the "great scenic splendour," and "remarkably good acting."

Mr. Phelps not only gave a scholar-like reading of the principal character, but \textit{truly embodied} it. He substantiated the Shakespearian conception; showing us a living flesh and blood reality, whose every look, word, and gesture were animated by poetry's Promethean fire.

High comedy, too, of the best kind, was exhibited by him where the English King endeavours to make his amorous words understood by Katharine, his French bride.

In short, we class the Henry V. of Mr. Phelps amongst the very best things which the modern European stage has produced.\textsuperscript{23}

This same critic attested to Phelps's directorial ability, describing the \textit{mise en scene} as "most magnificent" and "the arrangement of the stage business . . . not only extremely picturesque, but also full of life-like animation and appropriateness of purpose."\textsuperscript{24} The review in \textit{The Daily News} echoed the praise of the Post.

It is unnecessary to say how well the hero's part was sustained by Mr. Phelps, who somehow or other has a patent for performing the character of a great-souled, aspiring, energetic man, and stands unrivalled as the actor of heroes—the most genuine impersonator of nobility of mind. . . . Nor were the lighter portions of the

\textsuperscript{22}The \textit{Athenaeum}, No. 1618, October 30, 1858, p. 560.


\textsuperscript{24}\textit{Tbid.}
dialogue less worthily delivered.²⁵

Phelps's Henry the Fifth was one of his most imaginative productions at Sadler's Wells, executed with the same guiding principles that made this theatre the home of consistently fine productions of Shakespeare for eighteen years. Henry Morley, who witnessed thirteen years of Phelps's production and management, described it thus:

A main cause of the success of Mr. Phelps in his Shakespearean revival is, that he shows in his author above all things the poet. Shakespeare's plays are always poems, as performed at Sadler's Wells. The scenery is always beautiful, but it is not allowed to draw attention from the poet, with whose whole conception it is made to blend in the most perfect harmony. The actors are content also to be subordinated to the play, learn doubtless at rehearsals how to subdue excesses of expression that by giving undue force to one part would destroy the balance of the whole, and blend their work in such a way as to produce everywhere the right emphasis. If Mr. Phelps takes upon himself the character which needs the most elaborate development, however carefully and perfectly he may produce his own impression of the part, he never by his acting drags it out of its place in the drama. He takes heed that every part, even the meanest, shall have in the acting as much prominence as Shakespeare gave it in his plan, and it is for this reason that with actors, many of whom are anything but stars, the result most to be desired is really obtained. Shakespeare appears in his integrity, and his plays are found to affect audiences less as dramas in a common sense than as great poems.²⁶

Morley wrote this as part of his review of Phelps's Timon of Athens in 1856. But it could just as well have been descriptive of Henry the Fifth. For if any one word best described this mid-century production


of the play, it was the word ensemble.

Charles Kean

When Charles Kean assumed the management of the Princess's Theatre in 1850, he was a veteran of twenty-three years of acting. Following the failure of his London debut in 1827, he toured extensively in the provinces, on the continent, and in America, with intermittent returns to Drury Lane and the Haymarket. During this time he gained confidence in himself and experience in a variety of roles so that his first season at the Princess's was both a critical and a financial success.

Kean's purpose in his management was perhaps best stated in a letter he wrote to the Keeper of the Privy Purse at the beginning of his seventh season.

I have a much higher object in view than the mere profit which generally propels the managerial mind, for I cannot act in a commercial spirit—I seek reputation—I look for fame—I trust to establish a name, not as the mere reflection of a parent's genius, but as emanating from myself, as having achieved something by perseverance, zeal, and energy, towards the elevation of an art of which I am proud—and which I believe can, ought, and will be made a most valuable agent in national instruction. My opinion relates to the future, for the mark at which I aim, is, perhaps, at present, rather above the standard of the million, . . . The stage seems to be over-looked with comparative indifference, as an instrument of good. . . . with an earnest desire to improve the minds of the people, lectures are even sometimes delivered by members of the Aristocracy, on utilitarian subjects;--I cannot, for the life of me, understand why a similar interest in the Drama—the true Drama—is not exhibited from the same influential quarters; and, that in an age presumed to be enlightened and educational, that old—and I may say—vulgar prejudices, are not cast aside, and the Theatre acknowledged--not simply as a vehicle for
amusement—but, as the Temple of the combined arts. —The Stage might be rendered a most important machine, both in a political and social point of view: —no one, I presume, will deny how necessary it is to guide into a wholesome channel, the minds of the middle classes, who are especially operated upon by theatrical exhibitions. If instruction can be blended with amusement, it surely must be advantageous and advisable, in due time, to use such influences for the benefit of the masses.27

Kean's honesty and frankness is significant and rather refreshing. He was indeed seeking recognition and fame, but he firmly believed that the theatre should serve a definite purpose, that it should be intellectually uplifting as well as emotionally exciting, that it should "... inspire sentiments which may serve the purposes of truth and morality."28 "Instruction" and "morality" were words he used in describing his work, and this did indeed lead to a certain Victorian didacticism in his approach. But he also realized that a great tale poorly told could not accomplish his purpose. The attentions of his audiences had to be commanded, and he resolved to do so by providing the finest possible productions.

By giving Shakespeare spectacular treatment he could draw the public to Shakespeare and by making the spectacle historically accurate he could instruct the public. The more intellectual and aristocratic public, who had to a great extent abandoned
Shakespeare on the stage, might also be drawn back to the theatre by making the spectacle both educative and artistic. On the whole, he believed that Shakespeare given the most exacting and splendid production possible could command the public.\(^{29}\)

These were the guiding principles for his nine years of management.

Unlike Sadler's Wells, the Princess's Theatre was in an excellent location for attracting the fashionable London public. Its Oxford Street address put it close to the center of both the business and the artistic life of London. In 1857 Kean renovated the interior of the house making it even more attractive.\(^{30}\) Although no architectural plans exist for the building, Threlkeld indicates that from promptbooks of productions staged there we can assume the stage utilized the conventional rigging and shifting devices of the other London theatres of the period.\(^{31}\) Although described as a small theatre, we know the stage of the Princess's was spacious enough to accommodate large numbers of people. In his review of Kean's production of *The Winter's Tale* in 1856, the critic for *The Times* listed two hundred dancers plus the cast;\(^{32}\) in one scene Cole claimed that at

\(^{29}\)Wilson, "Charles Kean," p. 82.

\(^{30}\) *The Times* (London), October 6, 1857.


\(^{32}\) *The Times* (London), April 29, 1856.
least three-hundred people were onstage. And in his description of Richard II the following season Cole wrote: "There could not have been less than from five to six hundred persons on those contracted boards, all moving in trained regularity or organized disorder, according to the varying incidents." Henry the Fifth was Charles Kean's last revival at the Princess's. In keeping with his policy, he had printed for sale in the theatre his version of the play as produced. This included the text, explanatory notes on stage directions, stage directions, cast, production heads, and historical notes to each act. It is this version that was used for the final promptbook. In the preface to this version, Kean described his reason for choosing this play for his last revival.

In the selection of my last Shakespearean revival at the Princess's Theatre, I have been actuated by a desire to present some of the finest poetry of our great dramatic master, interwoven with a subject illustrating a most memorable era in English history. No play appears to be better adapted for this two-fold purpose than that which treats of Shakespeare's favorite hero, and England's favorite king--Henry the Fifth.

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35Shakespeare's Play of King Henry The Fifth, arranged for representation at the Princess's Theatre, with Historical and Explanatory Notes, by Charles Kean, F.S.A., as first performed on Monday, March 28th, 1859. Sixth edition (London: John K. Chapman and Co., 1859), p. v. This final promptbook is housed in the Folger Shakespeare Library (Folger: Henry V, 6). All references to text, stage directions, historical notes, etc., which follow are to a microfilm
This preface, also printed as the third side of the three-fold play-
bill for the production, included Kean's comments on the period in
which the play takes place, his use of Chorus, his insertion of the
historical episode between Acts IV and V, notes about the music for
the production, and some remarks on the conclusion of his management.

The text

Odell believed that Kean's text sinned, if at all, "merely by
omissions." Indeed, the major sin, particularly in regard to the
running time of the performance—four hours and five minutes, was
omission. Kean cut 1,460 lines or 43.28 per cent of the dialogue.
Although he did not eliminate as many characters as some of his pre-
decessors, he followed their lead in cutting Jamy, MacMorris, Court,
Britaine, Beaumont, and Alice. The word "God" he changed to "Heaven"
in all but two instances. Certain characters' lines, mostly French,
were exchanged, and he also changed numerous words and phrases through-
out the play, particularly when they held a double entendre of a
suggestive nature. Scenes and parts of scenes were interpolated. His
attempt to present dialect in print is completely inconsistent. For
the Welsh dialect of Fluellen he changed initiating "b's" to "p's."

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such as "pridge" for "bridge" and "prother" for "brother." Shakespeare's "world" became "'orld." Yet the word "aunchient," which suggested the dialect, he changed to "ancient." An even more marked inconsistency occurs in Katherine's lines. Apparently striving for her French pronunciation and dialect, Kean changed "your majesty" to "votre majeste," and "de most" to "la plus." Yet he changed Shakespeare's "sould" and "sall" to "should" and "shall."

Kean retained all of the Choruses and made major cuts only in the one preceding Act V. The epilogue he completed eliminated. Four scenes he cut completely: the two clerics (I, i); the first scene in Eastcheap (II, i); the English lesson (III, iv); and the scene between Pistol and the French soldier (IV, iv). Much of the business about the inheritance, the Scots, and the simile of the honeybees he cut from I, ii. His first act contains I, ii, and II, iii. The Boy's speech from III, ii, is transferred to the end of II, iii. His second act begins with the Southampton scene (II, ii) and includes only one other, the first scene in the French Palace (II, iv). Some of his major changes occur in the third act. The Chorus to this act and the remainder of the lines not cut from III, i, and III, ii, are not numbered as scenes but comprise the siege of Harfleur. III, ii, is completely cut with the exception of the Boy's final speech which is transferred. III, v, then becomes Kean's III, i, and III, vi, his III, ii. The few lines not cut from III, vii, are moved ahead and
inserted into Chorus IV where they are used with the tableaus of the French and the English camps at the appropriate places in Chorus's lines. Kean's fourth act has six scenes rather than the usual eight, with IV, i, and IV, vii, having the major excisions. Following the Chorus to Act V, Kean inserted his historical episode featuring Henry's triumphal return to London. His Act V corresponds to the control text with major cuts in Burgundy's speech and in the wooing scene. Line cuttings by acts are as follow: I, 255; II, 222; III, 428; IV, 331, and V, 210. (See Appendix F for a comparison of Kean's version with the control text).

**Staging and reception**

The play opened on March 28, 1859. Kean's three-fold playbill announcing this last revival contains the cast list, a list of the scenes, and his comments on the play as his final effort (Figures 19 and 20). The production was unanimously acclaimed by the critics as Kean's greatest success, surpassing all of his previous efforts. The promptbook is a final or souvenir promptbook clean and corrected. It is not as detailed in certain ways as some of the earlier ones. For example, although entrances and exits are indicated, the order of entrance and exit is not. Nor are there any indications about which grooves are used for the different scenes. The promptbook does contain notes for light and sound cues, movement, business, call lists, property lists, and floor plans for the blocking in some scenes. In
addition, water color sketches for the scenes are interleaved with the text. The notes and sketches along with the many other extant designs for the production—scenery, costumes, properties—provide a rather complete picture of what the production looked like. They also help to establish some of Kean’s peculiar contributions to the staging of the play.

Unlike any of his predecessors, Kean used a woman to portray the Chorus. Mrs. Kean as Clio, the muse of history, spoke Chorus’s lines. Stage directions indicate the following sequence: flote, wings, and first batten lights dimmed; music introduced; curtain raised, and Chorus discovered. At the end of her speech the directions read: "Curtains descend. When ready behind, curtains ascend and discover Scene 1. Lights full up." The sketch for Chorus I and Chorus V indicates Clio standing on a circular platform at the top of five steps. Rising from the circumference of the platform are eight pillars, all joined together at the top by an ornate circular cornice. For Acts II, III and IV the Chorus appears on the stage floor level, framed by a partially-opened tab curtain. This curtain seems to have been flown in and out for Acts I and V, and used as a tab for the other three acts.

In addition to his use of music with all of the Choruses and the three-dimensional circular platform with two of them, Kean added tableaus to Choruses II and IV. At the beginning of line 31 in the
second Chorus the directions read: "Back scene opens & discovers tableau, representing the 3 conspirators receiving bribe from emissaries of France." Following the last line of the Chorus, the directions are: "Music. Curtains descend; when ready behind put lights up & curtains ascend." A similar effect in the Chorus to Act IV is even more elaborate. Clio is describing the English and French camps on the eve of the battle of Agincourt. At the end of line 22, following her description of the over-confident French gambling at dice for the English lives, the directions read: "Put lights down in front of vision. Scene opens and discovers the interior of a French tent, with the Dauphin, the Cons., Orleans, and others playing at dice." At this point Kean went back to III, vii—most of which he cut—and had the French nobles in the tableaux speak the few lines chiding the English. Following line 156 of this scene, the directions read: "Scene closes in. As it does, raise lights in front of Vision." Chorus then continued with her speech, describing the "poor condemned English." After some six lines the "scene reopens discovering the English camp with group of Soldiers praying. After a pause the scene closes." Chorus then finished her speech and the curtains descended.

Although there are no directions indicating exactly how these tableaux were accomplished with the Chorus also on the stage, the designer's water color sketches suggest how they must have appeared (Figure 21). Whether the cloud-like effect masking the edge of these
tableaus was realized with a glory-type of scenic device or simply by some controlled lighting is impossible to determine. But the effectiveness of Kean's use of these tableaus with the Chorus's lines was attested to by nearly all the critics. The Athenaeum found them "... perhaps the most picturesque and pleasing portions of the spectacle," and praised their merit in "... making the action of the play more intelligible by supplying an historic background, and suggesting the causes of the action in front of the picture."\(^{37}\) And Mrs. Kean as Chorus was the recipient of extensive and unanimous praise. The Times described her delivery of the lines as "exquisitely beautiful."\(^{38}\) The Illustrated London News found it "... magnificently and beautifully regulated--an elocutionary bouquet."\(^{39}\) The critic for The Saturday Review wrote: "Her gesticulations were so apt, her descriptions were so glowing, her face was so finely lit up with enthusiasm and intelligence, the sonorous words rolled so beautifully from her tongue, that we could not refuse her our sympathies, in spite of her reckless adulation."\(^{40}\) John Coleman thought Kean's casting of her in the role an "inspiration," and praised her "majestic

\(^{37}\)The Athenaeum, No. 1640, April 2, 1859, p. 460.

\(^{38}\)The Times (London), March 29, 1859.

\(^{39}\)The Illustrated London News, No. 967, Vol. XXXIV, April 2, 1859.

\(^{40}\)The Saturday Review, No. 179, Vol. 7, April 2, 1859, pp. 401-402.
presence and sonorous declamation."^-

Kean's antiquarianism, his pre-occupation with the historically accurate illustration of Shakespeare's text, is particularly noticeable in three other aspects of his production. In each of these the degree of excellence achieved came as a result of in-depth research coupled with the artistry of the production staff at the Princess's. Kean's scenic artists, Grieve and Telbin, were leaders in their profession, and they were assisted in their work by Gordon, Lloyds, Dayes, and other highly skilled craftsmen. The decorations and appointments were by E. W. Bradwell, the Hoggins' were in charge of costumes, and Hodsdon handled all of the machinery. In addition to these able individuals, Kean had a musical director, a choreographer, and a wigmaker. Nothing that appeared on the stage was left to chance or to the supervision of any but those whom Kean believed to be the very best in their professions.

The siege of Harfleur appears to have been one of the scenic high points in Kean's production. Notes in the promptbook are minimal. Their totality, in sequence, reads: "Cannon shot off L. H. Music forte. Curtains close Chorus in; rise and discover the siege of Harfleur. Walls manned by French. English repulsed from an attack on breach. English Army down right moving toward French Army up left.

Trumpets, cannons, etc. English army charges upon the breach, headed by the King. Alarums." A more complete picture can be realized by piecing together our knowledge of Kean's research, designs for the scenery and the machinery, and the critics' reactions.

Kean based the staging of this scene upon extracts from the account of an anonymous chronicler who witnessed the event. These extracts, which he included in his book of the play, present a detailed description of each step in the siege which one critic felt that Kean "... literally realised on the stage."

There is the fitting and fixing the engines and guns under the walls of the town, and against its gates and towers—the blowing forth of stones by the force of ignited powders—the impetuosity and fury of the terrible attack—the scarcely less terrible repulse—the smoke, the confusion, the death, and all the horrors and darkness of the strife, in the midst of which the dauntless King urges on his followers to the breach, until the ruin of the French bulwark is accomplished.\(^2\)

The critic for The Athenaeum was equally impressed.

\(\ldots\) the famous Siege of Harfleur, \(\ldots\) is treated as an episode, and presents a combination of stage-accessories previously unattempted by any stage-manager. The attack and repulse on the breach—the firing of the ordnance—the rush and the melee—the smoke and the smother—the re-entering of the breach over the bodies of the slain—made a moving picture, crowded with incident and action. \(\ldots\) It is, in sooth, a stirring spectacle, full of the terror and noise of battle.\(^3\)

The critics seem to have tried to outdo each other in their praise.

Another one wrote:

\(\ldots\)
Mr. Kean puts upon his stage the finest historical spectacle ever witnessed—the sort of thing that would not be believed to exist were not the fame of the manager for achieving impossibilities already established. His siege of Harfleur is the first genuine battle ever seen on the theatrical boards—a noisy, blazing, crowding, smoking reality, that appeals to all the senses at once. 44

The designer's sketches for some of the war machinery used in this scene and for the scene itself suggest some of the cause for this critical enthusiasm (Figures 22 and 23).

Kean's devotion to historical authenticity provided the thrust for another theatrical illustration. Between Acts IV and V he introduced an "Historical Episode," depicting King Henry's triumphal re-entry into England following his victory at Agincourt. Here again he turned to the accounts of the anonymous chronicler. Kean had staged a similar episode in his production of Richard II, showing Richard's defeat at the hands of Bolingbroke. According to the accounts, the episode in Henry the Fifth was even more elaborate. The scene depicted was Old London Bridge from the Surrey side of the river.

The street scene is actually given as described by the chronicler—the masque, with its angels and prophets, and singing-boys, and dancing girls, spirits of kings and martyrs, and its showers of gold and silver: all here is grouped in animated and successive sections, filling the mind with a moving panorama of the glittering pageants of the olden time. 45

Again, the designer's sketch for this episode suggests the grand scale of the scene (Figure 24).

44The Saturday Review, April 2, 1859, pp. 401-402.
45The Illustrated London News, April 2, 1859.
Kean's antiquarianism led him to seek verisimilitude in all of his productions. Threlkeld, noting Kean's use of scenery to provide environment, has cited examples from a number of the manager's prompt-books which indicate "enclosed scenes." Among these are The Wife's Secret (1850) and The Corsican Brothers (1852). There was, then, a precedent for his use of similarly designed scenes (or box sets) for his last revival. The artist's sketches and the promptbook notations accompanying two interior scenes in Henry the Fifth suggest the use of box sets. These scenes are the Painted Chamber in King Henry's Palace (I, i) and the Council Chamber in Southampton (II, i) (Figure 25 and 26). Both are located within the sequence of the scenes to permit time for the necessary changes.

Assuming that the Choruses were not played in great depth—even those utilizing the circular platform—the opening scene in the Painted Chamber could be largely pre-set. The stage directions at the end of Chorus I support this assumption by allowing time for final changes: "Curtains descend. When ready behind, Curtains ascend and discover Scene 1. Lights full up." The scene which follows the one in the Painted Chamber is described simply as "Eastcheap." The

46 Threlkeld, "Charles Kean," pp. 98-118. As Threlkeld indicates, the history of the box set remains open to some question concerning dates and use. Both Southern and McDowell date the introduction of the box set about 1841 (See: John H. McDowell, "Historical Development of the Box Set," Theatre Annual, 1945, pp. 65-83).
sketch for it suggests the use of a drop, and entrances and exits are indicated as R. H. and L. H. with no reference to doors or other practical trim. Consequently there would be no problem in the scene shift from I, i, to I, ii.

The other scene of possible enclosed design is the Council Chamber at Southampton (II, i). Prior to Chorus II which precedes this scene there is an act break. This would allow all the time needed to strike the set for I, i, and to set up the Council Chamber. Again, following Chorus II, the stage directions indicate: "When ready behind, put lights up and curtains ascend." The scene which follows the Council Chamber takes place in the French King's Palace (II, ii). And while it too might have used a box set, the sketch suggests the use of a drop. This would almost have to have been the case if II, i, was a box set because two sets of such design and rigging back to back would have required a longer period of time for scene shifting than seems desirable. The only other interior set in the play is the last scene, the Cathedral at Troyes (V, ii). Both the sketch for this scene and the promptbook notations suggest the use of a drop hung upstage. Further downstage there appears a section of wrought-iron grillwork in which are two practical doors, left and right.

Whether two of the four interior scenes were box sets or whether they were conventionally rigged—wing and drop—they must have been completely effective as part of Kean's total stage
illustration. The critics unanimously acclaimed the work of Grieve and Telbin. *The Athenaeum* praised them for exhibiting "... all the skill and resources of scenic painting." The *Times* found it "... quite impossible to reduce the impressions received into a verbal description that will in the slightest degree do justice to a production that is, in scenic art, what a cathedral is in architecture," and felt that it "... combines perhaps a greater amount of scenic magnificence than any of the great historical plays which have rendered Mr. Kean's managerial career so illustrious."48

The historical accuracy and detail of execution manifest in the scenery, decor and properties is also evident in the costumes for the production (Figure 27). Under the supervision of Mrs. and Miss Hoggins, literally dozens of costumes were designed and built for this revival. The attention lavished upon them, ranging from the design of the sleeves in the court dress of the nobles to the footgear of the common soldiers, contributed significantly to the total visual impact of the production.

Kean's concern for verisimilitude was not confined to the scenic aspects of the production. His quest for truth and believability in staging led him to seek new methods in directorial technique that proved to be as exciting as his scenic illustrations. Through

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48*The Times* (London), March 29, 1859.
his innovations he was able to realize a sense of ensemble, particularly in scenes composed of large numbers of people. His belief in long and detailed rehearsals was attested to by actors who worked with him both in his provincial tours and later at the Princess's. John Coleman, recounting his first meeting with the Keans when they were appearing in Belfast, noted that the company was composed of experienced and accomplished actors, and that the Keans did not really need to rehearse their scenes. Nevertheless, Kean's schedule was strictly adhered to.

Our rehearsals commenced daily at ten, and lasted until four, and sometimes even later. By the time we got home to dinner, and had arranged our "properties," etc., it was almost time to get back again to commence the performance. It was a labour of love, however, to do whatever we could to help the Keans, not only because it was our duty, but because they made our duty delightful, by their grace and charm of manner.49

Ellen Terry's description of rehearsals for *A Winter's Tale* at the Princess's in 1856 suggests an even more rigorous discipline.

If a company has to rehearse four hours a day now, it is considered a great hardship, and players must lunch and dine like other folk. But this was not Kean's way! Rehearsals lasted all day, Sundays included, and when there was no play running at night, until four or five the next morning.50


50Ellen Terry's *Memoirs*. With a Preface, Notes and Additional Biographical Chapters by Edith Craig and Christopher St. John (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932), p. 14. Miss Terry's memories of rehearsals lasting "until four or five in the morning" perhaps deserve qualification in two respects. First, they are memories of a mature person recalling her very early years in what was undoubtedly a very
Miss Terry's possible exaggeration is nonetheless indicative of Kean's intensive rehearsals.

Kean's directorial skill was particularly evident in scenes using large numbers of supernumeraries. His great ability in picturization and his awareness of the need for motivated movement and business combined to make his crowd scenes objects of constant critical acclaim. Three such scenes in *Henry the Fifth*—the Breach, the Crispin's Day speech, and the Historical Episode on London Bridge—provided him with the possibilities he used so well. Cole's reaction to these was typical:

The assault on Harfleur, which opens the third act; the desperate resistance of the French garrison; the close conflict on the ramparts; the practice of the rude artillery of the day, with the advance of other besieging engines; and the final entry of the victorious assailants through the breach,—formed altogether the most marvellous realization of war, in its deadliest phase, that imitative art has ever attempted. The marvel is increased by the smallness of the space within which such numbers of men and so much complicated machinery are marshalled, together with the organization of the entire scene. Every supernumerary acted with the intelligence of a trained artist, and every movement appeared as natural as if dictated to each separate individual by the impulse of the moment.51

The call list in the promptbook indicates that Kean used 212 people in this scene.

exciting situation. And second, she described Charles Kean as having a voice of "a wonderful quality—soft and low, yet distinct and clear as a bell" (p. 13). This runs somewhat counter to comments by others who knew and worked with Kean.

Cole was even more impressed with Kean's treatment of the remainder of Act III and of Act IV.

... our wonder is called forth by the skill with which the English army is manoeuvred [sic] and brought into battle, and by the extent of the masses employed. The march from their own ground of encampment to the attack on the French host—the firm tread and demeanour of men resolved to conquer or die; roused from momentary despondency, and almost maddened by the inspiring address of their king and leader, so gallantly delivered by Mr. Kean;—the general excitement and stirring reality, so unlike stage deception, and so closely embodying truth;—all these animated delusions bewilder the faculties of sight and hearing, and enforce on the spectators a conviction that they are looking on the very men who fought and won that glorious field. We are carried back to the actual time and place, until we feel as if really participating in, and present at the events thus surprisingly reproduced in the theatric microcosm, ...52

A comparison of Lloyd's sketch for the Crispin's Day speech (IV, iii) with a photograph of a smaller section of the same scene shows definite similarities in blocking and in some individuality of business (Figures 28 and 29). With the validity of this sketch thus established, it seems reasonable to assume that the sketches for the siege of Harfleur and for the Historical Episode depict with some accuracy Kean's actual staging of these scenes. The detail of these sketches as well as the excitement they suggest thus gives credibility to the ecstatic praise of the critics.

A particular technique employed by Kean in the use of his supernumeraries, and perhaps one of the manager's most effective staging devices, was pointed out by the critic for The Times.

52 Ibid., p. 345.
"Mr. Charles Kean shows his singular skill in using a theatrical multitude, . . . by concealing its limits so as to convey the notion of indefinite number." 53 Another critic, fascinated with the manner in which Kean employed his extras, called attention to this same device, and lauded Kean for using ", . . . all proper specimens of humanity, without so much as a dummy living or dead, among them."

Your supernumerary is not generally speaking, the most intelligent or the most imaginative of mankind. . . . His arms have a natural tendency to adhere to his sides, . . . his face is but slippery as a retainer of expression. Yet into many scores of individuals corresponding to this type does Mr. Kean, Prometheus-like, infuse a vivifying spark, so that they actually beam with intelligence—actually depict emotions. Such a group as Mr. Kean gathers round him to hear the "crispin speech" . . . is a prodigious work of pictorial art, with the peculiarity that the painter has to use colours that will not be mixed and toned down at pleasure, but have a stupid will of their own, unfavourable to blending. There they were, those lusty Englishmen, rapt in attention, swelling with enthusiasm; ready to shed tears of devotion, and yet we know perfectly well that they all understood little and cared less about what they heard and saw, and that the mind they exhibited belonged exclusively to Mr. Charles Kean, . . . More marvellous still is the mob assembled on London Bridge to witness the return of King Henry in the "Episode," for here, besides the general interest, there are innumerable private woes and joys to be delineated. 54

This last reference to the "mob" in the Historical Episode and the "innumerable private woes and joys" has an interesting parallel in Kean's Richard II produced some years earlier. A comparison of the two explains how Kean managed to realize the individuality within the

53 The Times (London), March 29, 1859.

54 The Saturday Review, April 2, 1859, p. 401.
large mass of people and illustrates still another aspect of his
directorial approach. Edward Righton, an actor in Kean's company,
wrote the following in a letter to Clement Scott.

"Charles Kean's crowd in 'Richard the Second was unique, both
in the rehearsal and performance. I remember thinking my fortune
made when one night, after playing a small part, in which I had to
be kicked about the stage, I was sent for by Ellis, our stage
manager, who handed me a 'part' in the new piece, saying that
that was my reward for acting the 'kickee' so naturally as to
actually make Charles Kean smile. What did I care that those
kicks made me almost cry with pain? I was on the high road to
fame, for was I not chosen above all the other young ones for a
part in the new piece; and was not my name in the bill?

"I was called to rehearsal next day; and proud I was, the hero
of a capital comedy scene, in which I was assisted by three other
young artists as ambitious as myself. We were all made to promise
secrecy as to the issue of our characters; and I could not but
pity my dressing-room mates at being left so far behind me. One
day there was a general rehearsal, to which everybody was called.
'Begin!' shouted Ellis. Clang! clang! clang! chimed a peal of
huge bells. Tootle! tootle! tootle! struck up the orchestra.
'Hooray! yah!' yelled the crowd. 'Why don't you go out?' bawled
Ellis. 'They won't hear me,' I ventured to expostulate. 'What
the devil is that to you, Sir?' demanded Ellis. 'Go on! and!'
to others--'you too, Sir! and you!' 'What, all at once?' I
said. 'Yes, and speak up; and move about as you have been taught!' Then I realised that all my mates whom I had lorded it over had
been secretly rehearsing just as I had, and that my scene, for
which I had often so eagerly searched my Shakespeare, was but part
of the noise and confusion of a mob.

"But what a mob!--made up of historic characters and all sorts
and conditions of people, who contributed to the general effect;
the constant movements and chatter of us green ones; with our
well-rehearsed little scenes, which were found to dovetail per-
fectly; the itinerant acrobats and dancers; the entrance of
Charles Kean as Richard, on horseback, with bowed head; and Kate
Terry as a boy starting out of the crowd into the procession, and
flinging a handful of earth at Richard's head, exclaiming
'Behold King Richard who has done so much good for the kingdom of
England!' The groaning and hooting of the people, not only on the
ground, but in balconies and at the windows, which changed to
shouts of joy and exclamations of delight at sight of Bolingbroke
on a noble prancing steed; the attempt of the people to crowd in upon him to press his hand, to hug his feet, and even to kiss the tail of his horse (which was actually done by an enthusiastic young lady); the showers of flowers which fell at his feet and all around him; and then, when the procession was nearing an end the crowding in of the mob upon Bolingbroke, and the soldiers keeping them back against immense odds and midst the screaming of women and their cries for help, while men shouted and children were almost trampled on; the clanging of the huge bells, and the sound of the disappearing band, on which scene of confusion and general riot the curtain fell. Even at this distance of time one feels proud to have been associated with such a 'mob.'

Any doubt remaining about the effectiveness of Kean's technique in staging his crowd scenes should be dispelled. And his ability as a director, in general, was perhaps best described by a Times reviewer in Kean's third year of management.

The audiences who go to witness a Shakespearean play with historical accompaniments at the Princess's take with them a feeling not only of confidence, but of curiosity. They believe that old traditions, old exits and entrances, old methods of grouping will not be followed, but that every opportunity will be taken of representing a favorite subject from a novel point of view, and in this belief they have never been disappointed.

Charles Kean's real genius lay in his ability as a director and producer. As an actor he was something less than great. His London stage debut was a failure, and for many years his performances, perhaps inevitably, were measured against those of his father. The recognition he finally achieved as an actor came as a result of his


56 The Times (London), February 15, 1853.
intelligence, developed skills, and dogged perseverance. Comments of his contemporaries provide insight into some of the challenges Kean faced as an actor.

According to John Coleman who worked with him, Kean had some physical problems to deal with.

. . . his face was merely redeemed from being positively ugly by the splendour of his eyes. His head was large, and covered with a thatch of very coarse straight black hair, which he wore very long. His brow was majestic and imposing. His mouth and chin were firm and well cut; but his nose was of so irregular an order that I really do not know how to describe it.

Although his figure scarcely approached the middle height, it was so muscular, so symmetrical, and so admirably balanced, that one had no occasion to wonder at his being captain of his crew at Eton. His neck was like a pillar of ivory, his chest was broad and expansive, his waist slender; while his legs were more elegant than sturdy, with perhaps a slight suspicion of the parallelogram inherited from his father.

He moved with ease, grace, and distinction, and despite his plebian features and his long hair, at all times and in all places impressed one with the idea that he was a gentleman. . . . he had a kind of frog-in-the-gutter voice, and usually spoke as if he had a cold in the head; besides which, he had two or three vocal eccentricities, which he could never surmount or even control. For instance, he could not pronounce the consonants "m" and "n."57

In terms of his ability at characterization, Kean appears to have been limited. The very excellence he achieved in melodrama proved a handicap in tragedy. George Henry Lewes attributed this to the inflexible nature of Kean's talent and its inevitable result, the inability to express emotional subtleties. And while recognizing the antagonism which existed between Lewes and Kean (Kean ultimately

forbade Lewes to enter the Princess's), the critic believed him to be without equal in certain roles and praised his staging techniques.

Lewes' criticisms are detailed and worthy of examination.

The fluency of Shakespeare's movements, the subtle interpenetrations of thought and emotion, the tangled web of motives, the mingling of the heroic with the familiar, the presence of constant verisimilitude under exceptional and exaggerated conditions, all demand great flexibility of conception and expression in the actor, great sympathy of imagination, nicety of observation, and variety of mimetic power. In these Charles Kean is wholly deficient. He has the power of coarse painting, of impressive representation when the image to be presented is a simple one; but he has no subtlety, no nicety of observation, no variety of expression. He is peculiarly rigid—this is his force and his weakness: "he moveth altogether if he move at all." His face is utterly without physiognomical play; one stolid expression, immovable as an ancient mask, is worn throughout a scene which demands fluctuating variety.58

To Lewes, this lack of a presence of poetry in Kean's acting obviated any sense of emotional truth. There was anger but no terror; there was pathos but no tears. "The fact is that he never imaginatively identifies himself with a passion."59

Kean's portrayal of King Henry, although not unanimously acclaimed by the critics, certainly did not detract from the production's success. As though he anticipated Lewes' criticism, Cole made a point of praising Kean's variety in the role.

The reflections on sovereign power, and its hard conditions,


59Ibid., p. 28.
suggested to Henry by his midnight walk through the camp on the eve of Agincourt, were delivered by Mr. Kean with deeply impressive feeling. This soliloquy, and his supplication to the "God of Battles," are contrasted in a masterly manner with the fiery, un­studied energy of his harangue before he leads his army to the charge. The thorough comprehension of the different points in Shakespeare's delineation of his own especial hero, were also marked with great care by Mr. Kean in the frankness of his manner when conversing with Fluellen; in his dialogue with the soldiers, Williams and Bates; and in the military freedom and gallantry of his courtship in the last scene.  

The critic for The Illustrated London News appeared to be no less impressed. "The part of King Henry V was exquisitely acted by Mr. Kean. His elocution in the war orations, and his familiar delivery in the less heroic scenes, were governed by the most correct taste and judgment. That there was no lack of fire and energy we need not add." The Times described Kean's performance as "masterly," and The Athenaeum found it a "... well-studied and distinctly pronounced portrait of the youthful and energetic monarch."  

As Chorus, Mrs. Kean received praise from all the reviewers, and other members of the cast were occasionally singled out for their work. One critic devoted some space to Kate Terry's performance as the Boy, and insisted that this "... little bit of acting, in regard

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61 The Illustrated London News, April 2, 1859.
62 The Times (London), March 29, 1859.
63 The Athenaeum, April 2, 1859.
to its completeness, was the gem of the performance."^64

According to Cole, the production cost more than 3000£. The supernumeraries alone received 160£, and their response to Kean's direction earned them double pay on opening night.^65 Because the play ran for more than four hours, no other piece accompanied it during the first sixty performances.\(^66\) The return on Kean's investment was apparently better than expected.

During the last nights the houses were crowded to excess. The aggregate receipts went far beyond those of its most successful Shakespearean predecessors. The run of the play did not terminate because its popularity was on the wane, but from a desire on Mr. Kean's part to gratify his patrons with variety, as the concluding weeks of his management approached.^67

The last of eighty-four performances was given on July 9, 1859.^68

From the time Charles Kean assumed the management of the Princess's Theatre, he committed himself to producing Shakespeare's plays in the most exciting manner. In his formal farewell on August

^64Ibid.


^67Ibid., pp. 353-354.

^68This is the figure given by Cole (Life and Times, Vol. II, pp. 353-354). Threlkeld ("Management of Charles Kean," p. 264) lists 101 performances. Wilson ("Charles Kean," p. 95) corrects Threlkeld's error and agrees with Cole. I count 90 performances listed in The Times, but with the possibility of performances advertised but not played, I have chosen to accept Cole's figures.
29, 1859, he again alluded to his principles of management.

I have always entertained the conviction that, in illustrating the great plays of the greatest poet who ever wrote for the advantage of men, historical accuracy might be so blended with pictorial effect that instruction and amusement would go hand in hand, and that the more completely such a system was carried out so much more valuable and impressive would be the lesson conveyed. . . .

Responding to those whom he felt had unjustly criticized him for overpowering Shakespeare's text with visual adornment, he said: "My admiration of Shakespeare would never have allowed me to do that which I could possibly conceive would be detrimental to his mighty genius, nor can I suppose that this great master would have been more highly esteemed had I been less correct in the accessories by which I surrounded him." And in this same speech he specifically cited examples from Henry the Fifth.

I do not think you would have been more impressed with the address of King Henry V to his army at Agincourt, had it been delivered to a scanty few, incorrectly attired and totally undisciplined, instead of a well trained mass of men representing the picture of a real host, clothed and accoutred in the exact costume and weapons of the time. . . . the siege of Harfleur, . . . was no ideal battle, no imaginary fight; it was a correct representation of what actually had taken place—the engines of war, the guns, banners, fire-balls, the attack and defence, the barricades at the breach, the conflagration within the town, the assault, and capitulation, were all taken from the account left to us by a priest who accompanied the army, was an eye-witness, and whose Latin MS. is now in the British Museum.


70Ibid., p. 33.

71Ibid., pp. 33-35.
At the end of nine years of management Kean knew he had been successful in purpose and in result. The actor whose London debut had spelled total failure was now the acknowledged leader of the English stage. In 1827 the critics had unanimously condemned him. In 1859 one critic truly spoke for all when he wrote: "Henry V. may fairly be regarded as Mr. Kean's grandest revival, and those who do not see it have yet to learn of what uses the stage is capable when governed by a manager of genius." Kean had reached the critics. But perhaps equally important to him, he had also reached his public. Not long after

Henry the Fifth opened, he received the following letter.

My Dear Sir: How shall I describe the enjoyment of last evening? The intellectual treat—the identification of the performers with the real personages—the vivid reality of the scenes! Surely such a performance, so grand—so true in every detail was never put upon the stage! It can never be forgotten by those who have had the privilege of witnessing it. I could not help saying as we left: "If ever it should be necessary to rouse an assembly of Englishmen and to stir their blood as with a trumpet, let them be addressed by Mr. and Mrs. Kean! They have the key of the human heart and can summon at command any emotion they please in their audience."

I never felt this so strongly as last evening, and with our warmest thanks and best compliments to Mrs. Kean and Miss Chapman, I am, My Dear Sir,

Ever yours sincerely and obliged, (signed) W. White Cooper.

A combination of persistence and directorial genius had brought Charles Kean to a height in his profession that would remain

72The Saturday Review, April 2, 1859, p. 402.

73Unpublished letter in the Charles Kean File, Folger Shakespeare Library, Mss. Y.c. 611 (1-2).
unchallenged until the advent of Henry Irving.

Summary

The period from 1844 through 1859 might well be described as the first renaissance of Shakespearean staging in the English theatre. The records testify to the fact that for the first time in some two hundred-fifty years people went to the theatre, not just to be seen, not just to see a star performer, not just for escape, but to hear and see a play. They went to be intellectually stimulated and audibly and visually excited. The theatre-going public of London learned that there was no acceptable substitute for great drama well done. They learned this partly because they had finally become ready to learn. But more importantly, they learned because the age provided two great teachers—Samuel Phelps and Charles Kean.

The first half of the nineteenth century had seen the London theatre become burdened with nearly every conceivable hardship. The political, economic, social, and artistic institutions of London life had fallen into a state of confusion and hardship. Foreign wars had practically depleted the treasury. Money was tight and costs were exorbitant. The social democratization which had begun shortly after the turn of the century, rather than truly extending class mobility, resulted in disunity. Freedom of choice became freedom of demand, particularly in theatrical entertainment. And while managers scrambled and schemed to outdo each other with still more prancing houreses
and acrobatic tumblers; the interest in and the effect of the legitimate drama dwindled. The battles between the two major houses and the continuous sniping from the minors only aggravated the condition. When Parliament finally removed the patent monopoly in 1843, the anticipated millenium was nowhere in sight. The dignity of Kemble, the fire of Kean, and the purpose of Macready were memories, and the legitimate drama had grown cold.

When Samuel Phelps assumed the management of Sadler's Wells in 1844 he must have appeared mad to some; certainly he was accused of sheer folly by many. The thought that the plays of Shakespeare and the best works of the other English dramatists could draw interested much less attentive crowds to an area like Islington was considered absurd. Sadler's Wells was notorious for its rough clientele, and was far removed from the center of activity. All London dismissed Phelps's idea as impossible. And all London was wrong.

The theatre itself was a good physical plant because it accommodated a large audience and yet permitted good visibility and audibility. Phelps was able to hire many good actors who were out of work as a result of the poor state of the theatre. To an excellent building and a strong company he added his power of leadership and his artistic ability. Using five guiding principles he established a theatrical phenomenon unequalled in the annals of the British stage. First, he selected only the best of the legitimate drama. Second, he
trained his actors through thorough rehearsals. Third, he demanded settings that were carefully designed and executed, not elaborate for their own sake, but designed to support the text. Fourth, he strictly adhered to a repertory system and never permitted a long run. And finally, he kept admission prices low enough so that the inhabitants of Islington could regularly attend the performances.74

Phelps's production of *Henry the Fifth* exemplified his directorial and managerial principles. He chose the text from a reading edition of the play rather than simply using an older acting edition. He rehearsed his actors at length and in detail. He mounted the production using scenery and costumes which supported the text and which did not call undue attention to themselves. He applied his ingenuity to the problem of having a few actors suggest many soldiers by making use of wax figures and two-dimensional cut-outs. And he refused to allow the success of the production to interfere with his principle of strict repertory. The production was included in the repertory of the following season in 1853 and again in 1858 and was the first play from Sadler's Wells commanded for performance at Windsor Castle.75

Phelps's *Henry the Fifth* particularly exemplified Coleman's reaction to the performances at Sadler's Wells.


75Ibid., p. 95.
The distinguishing characteristics of the Sadler's Wells productions were clearness and intellectual vigour—the plain, straightforward meaning of the text was put before you without any supercilious veneer of subtlety, the decoration was sufficient but not superfluous; above all, there was nothing amphigamous about the acting.76

Although Sadler's Wells eventually attracted a portion of London's upper-class theatre goers, it never became as fashionable a house as The Princess's. But in line with its director's purpose, it re-established the theatrical validity of the legitimate drama, and as Odell observed, "... probably did more to popularize Shakespeare in the course of eighteen years (1844-1862) than did any other theatre in the whole domain of English theatrical history."77

Samuel Phelps's counterpart in this mid-century renaissance was Charles Kean. Committed to many of the same principles as Phelps, Kean's work at the Princess's from 1850 to 1859 provided the best in Shakespearean production for the middle and upper classes. His theatre, located in a fashionable section of Oxford Street, was an obvious asset. Unlike Phelps he also presented many popular contemporary works, including a number of French farces, but always with an eye to the highest standards.

Kean was convinced that Shakespearean production could be simultaneously instructive and delightful, but that in order to be so


it must be able to command respect. Using spectacle as bait, he lured his audiences into the Princess's. They were not disappointed, and their recognition of his ability brought them back to his theatre again and again. His theatrical illustrations of Shakespeare's texts realized a degree of staging perfection previously unknown on the English stage. But the scenic display was only part of the total result.

Kean endeavored always to have a company of uniform excellence, and to exhibit its members in parts best suited to their abilities. He drilled this company so that everyone, down to the merest mechanic and supernumerary, should produce the effect required of him in the most harmonious and telling manner. His own self-control and diligence he imparted to all with whom he worked. There was in his theatre no more of that violent point-making and distortion of the dramatist's intent which had so marred the work even of Macready. Kean's mastery in all these respects admits of no question. Even his enemies praised it.78

The versatility Kean lacked as an actor he made up for in directorial skill and artistic imagination. These along with his antiquarian obsession resulted in unparalleled historical revivals. The last of these, Henry the Fifth, he opened a few months before retiring from the Princess's management. Described by many critics as his greatest achievement, this production incorporated his principles to the smallest detail. The text was carefully cut and arranged, with lengthy explanatory notes. Settings and costumes were designed and executed with all of the historical accuracy at Kean's command.

78 Watson, Sheridan To Robertson, p. 225.
His obsession with verisimilitude can be seen in the designs for The Painted Chamber in the English Palace and in the Council Chamber at Southampton. The staging of the siege of Harfleur, and the Historical Episode preceding Act V he based upon eyewitness accounts from ancient chronicles. The ultimate believability he achieved in his crowd scenes was a result of painstaking rehearsals with small groups of supernumeraries. Every effort was made to realize a literal illustration of the text. Unlike Phelps, Kean believed in the long-run, which he had established early in his managerial career, and Henry the Fifth played for eighty-four consecutive performances.

Since the managements of Phelps and Kean coincided for a period of nine years, comparison of their work and their effect on the English theatre is inevitable. Odell recognized the significance of this when he wrote the following:

In their own day partisans ranged on one side or the other; the adherents of Sadler's Wells spoke much of purity of text, poetic effect, scenic delights guided by perfect taste and accomplished at a minimum of expense; by inference, they threw in a suggestion against the Princess's as a gaudy temple of spectacular display, with something too little of Shakespeare and altogether too much of smothering scenery. Doubtless there was something in all this, as there was also something in the answer of the Princess's that the West End is not so serious as Pentonville and that, if people will not go to hear Shakespeare alone, it is better to induce them to hear him through their eyes, with all the allurement of beautiful pictures. . . .79

There were certainly differences in the Shakespearean productions of

these two theatres. But these differences lose significance in terms of the purpose common to both managers. Each man devoted his ability to the finest productions of some of the best drama of Shakespeare. Each chose to include *Henry the Fifth* in his production schedule. And each found the play to provide exciting and stimulating dramatic fare for his public as well as receipts for his box office.

To a Shakespearean theatre-goer of today the work of Samuel Phelps might seem rather ragged. His efforts at ensemble would certainly appear elementary when compared with those of The Old Vic, and the acting would undoubtedly sound declamatory. Charles Kean's literal illustrations of Shakespeare's text with detailed total historical accuracy would certainly present a cluttered stage picture when compared with the scenic sparseness of the thrust stages at Stratford, Ontario, or the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis. But to London audiences of the 1850's these two men made Shakespearean production interesting and exciting, and both of them, in their own ways, stand as the ultimate figures of the actor-manager tradition.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to trace the production history of *Henry the Fifth* on the London stage from its beginning in the 1580's through its grandest revival in the nineteenth-century actor-manager tradition, the 1859 production of Charles Kean. The nature of such a study has entailed, to varying degrees, examination of play texts, physical theatres, scenic illustrations, acting and directorial techniques, and critical reaction. In turn, these have necessitated consideration of the more external influences upon the theatre itself, the political, economic, and social factors obtaining in the different periods of productions.

Knowledge of the play's stage history during the early period must be based, to a large extent, upon speculation and assumption. Bits of information from diaries and letters and occasional entries in court and public records often defy synthesis. Textual scholars disagree as to the specific textual source or sources Shakespeare used for his play, which of these possible source-plays were produced by what companies, and in what order they appeared. At least two plays dealing with King Henry—*The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* and *Harey the V*—are recorded prior to Shakespeare's. There is equal
disagreement as to the production precedence of either the quarto or
the folio text. If the folio version were being produced prior to its
first printing, and if the Choruses were part of it originally, the
majority of internal and external evidence points to a premiere some-
time during the summer of 1599. Between this date and 1738 the only
recorded production of the play is for a single performance at court
in 1605.

A royal suggestion to a court favorite inspired the next ver-
sion of a play dealing with England's hero-king. Acting upon King
Charles' advice, Roger Boyle completed his rhymed-verse Henry the
Fifth in 1663, and it was produced the following year. Boyle's play
adhered strictly to the age's love of decorum and its fascination with
the honnête homme, and he used the persons and events of history
solely to develop his major interest in the conflict between love
and honor. His neo-classic structural and thematic circumscriptions
and his pioneering in rhymed verse made Boyle and his play the hit of
London, and Pepys records that the play was highly successful during
the four years of its stage life.

The early eighteenth-century London theatre audience was
entertained by a farce entitled The Half-Pay Officers, attributed to
Charles Molloy, which opened in 1720 and had two brief revivals in
the following decade. The relationship of this play to Henry the
Fifth is really only tangential. The playwright lifted the characters
of Fluellen and Pistol from Shakespeare's play, changed their names, and liberally mixed them with characters and situations from works of D'Avenant and Shirley. What success the production did enjoy appears to have been the result of Peg Fryer's portrayal of the Widow Rich. At eighty-five, it was her first performance since the Restoration.

Aaron Hill's *Henry the Fifth* was certainly no closer to Shakespeare's play than was Boyle's Restoration version. Filled with pathos, sentimentalism, and melodramatic effect, Hill's version stands as a prime example of what happened to Shakespeare's work at the hands of eighteenth-century adapters. Language, theme, and character give way to an evil villain, a noble hero, and a wronged maiden. Two aspects of the play and the production are significant. First, it is the first version with a tendency toward strengthening the patriotic fervor in the story. And second, the staging appears to have included some of Hill's innovations in scenery. References to "slanted scenes" suggest the possible use of angular asymmetrical perspective for some of the scenes. The fact that Hill's designer was an Italian and that De Voto was using this technique in London as early as 1719 provides some basis for further speculation. The play, which opened in 1723, failed on the stage, despite a cast which included two of the finest actors of the period, Oldfield and Wilks. Brief and unsuccessful revivals occurred over the next twenty-three years.
The Shakespearean revival which began in the late 1730's appears to have been the result of the Tonson-Walker copyright war, the efforts of The Shakespeare Ladies Club, and The Licensing Act of 1737. The first provided numerous editions of Shakespeare's plays at very reasonable prices. The second worked to increase the number of Shakespearean productions and made attendance fashionable. The third sharply lowered the market for new playwrights and consequently forced more revivals of older works. During this revival fifteen of Shakespeare's plays were produced for the first time in more than one hundred years substantially as he wrote them. Among these was Henry the Fifth.

The first recorded production of Shakespeare's play took place at Covent Garden in 1738 under the management of John Rich and featuring Dennis Delane as King Henry. Two years later in this same production Theophilus Cibber established his famous portrayal of the character Ancient Pistol. Sacheverel Hale followed Delane in the title role in 1744, and it was during his reign as King Henry that the play was first used as a political vehicle. The London stage had become very responsive to the national issues of the day. When the last Jacobite Rebellion broke out in 1745, the theatre responded with plays of anti-Stuart and anti-Papal sentiment. Productions of Henry the Fifth strained to further these attitudes, and the glorious victory of Henry at Agincourt was likened to that of the Crown over the
pretender, Prince Charles. Patriotic songs—*To Arms, Britons Strike Home, God Save The King*—were introduced into productions of the play. The London newspapers urged and applauded such jingoistic efforts, and at the height of the Rebellion the actress Peg Woffington appeared dressed as a Female Volunteer to speak a suggestive but nonetheless patriotic epilogue.

The Jacobite Rebellion also occasioned a one-act play adapted from portions of Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth*. *The Conspiracy Discovered, or, French Policy Defeated* dramatized the trial of three lords who participated in the Rebellion, drawing the parallel to the traitors Scroop, Grey and Cambridge in Shakespeare's work. Records indicate that this one-act, by an unknown author, received only four performances in August, 1746.

Between 1747 and 1782 four actors played King Henry in all but three of the eighty-three performances of the play on the London stage. The three exceptions were revivals by Delane. Spranger Barry, in two of his four seasons with Garrick at Drury Lane, played King Henry five times in the 1747 and 1748 seasons. It was in these performances that Garrick played the role of the Chorus. In 1750 Barry went to Covent Garden where he became Garrick's major competitor, and in eight seasons at this house he produced *Henry the Fifth* seven times. The text Barry used is unknown, but the cast lists indicate that the low-comics were included. The English-lesson scene was cut.
William Smith who followed Barry in the role of King Henry compiled the largest number of performances of the play in the eighteenth century. Between 1755 and 1779 he performed the role fifty-seven times. It was during Smith's reign at Covent Garden that the play again became strongly associated with national politics. The theatrical possibilities of the coronation of George III were used by John Rich for his final triumph at Covent Garden. *The Procession from the Abbey at the Coronation* given in conjunction with *Henry the Fifth* opened the 1761 season. This spectacular afterpiece was so successful that it accompanied every performance of Shakespeare's play through September 22, 1769.

Thomas Hull and Richard Wroughton performed the role of King Henry, alternating with each other and with Smith between 1761 and 1782. Hull also played other roles in productions of the play featuring Smith, Wroughton, and Kemble. Neither Hull nor Wroughton seem to have been particularly distinguished in the profession, and the success they did achieve came as a result of hard work and good judgment.

John Philip Kemble's productions of *Henry the Fifth* spanned a period of twenty-two years. His first performance in the title role came in 1789, one year after he had assumed the management of Drury Lane. From 1791 to 1794, while Drury Lane was being repaired and refurbished, Kemble and his company presented the play five times at
the Haymarket before returning to Drury Lane for additional performances through 1801. In 1803 he moved to Covent Garden, including the play in the bill of his first season there. This production was given a strong nationalistic thrust as a result of the threatened Napoleonic invasion. His final production, and perhaps his finest, occurred in 1811.

For his productions of this play, as for many of his other Shakespearean presentations, Kemble prepared his own acting editions of the text. For the most part he followed the excisions in Bell's edition of 1773, which eliminated all of the Choruses and the Epilogue, all of III, iv, and large segments of other scenes. Like Bell, he changed the word "God" to "Heaven" in all but a few instances. This particular change obtained throughout most of the nineteenth century. Unlike Bell, Kemble cut Jamy and MacMorris completely as well as many of the minor speaking roles, both English and French.

Kemble's major concern and efforts in staging the play appear to have been with textual preparation and with the delivery of the lines. While he professed interest in historically accurate costumes, reactions from a number of the critics indicates that his efforts fell far short of his intentions. When Drury Lane reopened in 1794, he engaged the artist William Capon to design and paint his scenery. But their combined efforts were still criticized by the reviewers who complained of the inappropriate use of architectural style. Similar
critical reaction greeted much of Kemble's scenery and many of his costumes at Covent Garden.

In terms of his acting style, Kemble might be described as the last great classicist. He seldom lost his formal demeanor, and his delivery of Shakespearean dialogue tended toward declamation. Always the scholar and the gentleman onstage, he refused to become imaginatively involved with the emotions of the characters he portrayed. As a manager he insisted upon autonomous control of his theatres, a trait that ultimately brought about the O. P. Riots in 1809. The huge size of the patent houses, the new democratization of the London masses and their demand for spectacle and scenic splendor, and ever-rising costs of production brought increased hardship to theatrical management and militated against the production of great drama and histrionic subtlety. Yet with few exceptions, Kemble retained his dignity and eloquence of performance, and in many respects established the foundation of the great actor-manager tradition that developed in the nineteenth century.

Between 1803 and 1830—eight years before Kemble's final production and nine years before Macready's final production—three other actors produced *Henry the Fifth* on the London stage. Robert Elliston gave two performances at the Haymarket in 1803. Like those of Kemble in the same year, they had a definite political and anti-French thrust, and the total receipts of the first performance went to The Patriotic
Fund. In 1813 and 1814, while Kemble was relaxing in the provinces from attacks of asthma and gout, William Conway produced the play six times. The mixed reviews aggravated Conway's emotional depression; consequently these were his first and last attempts at the role on the London stage. Edmund Kean's single performance in the role at Drury Lane in 1830 proved a total failure, and both his spoken and printed apologies could not disguise the fact that this once brilliant actor was near the end of his career.

William Charles Macready, whose first venture in the role of King Henry was in the provinces in 1815, continued to produce the play through his last year of management of Covent Garden in 1839. For his final revival he avoided the standard acting editions of the play and instead prepared his own from a reading edition. In so doing he was responsible for one of the most notable textual restorations of the century, the role of Chorus. Using dioramas, Macready's scenic artist, Clarkson Stanfield, illustrated the lines of Chorus. While Macready completely cut four scenes that Kemble had not, he restored many lines that Kemble had eliminated. He also restored Theobald's famous emendation in Mistress Quickly's speech in II, iii, "and 'a babbled of green fields."

The weeks of planning and the long and arduous rehearsals for Macready's production resulted in a performance that was greeted with praise from most of the critics. His innovations in scenic
illustration, his directorial control, and his own acting style and ability fused to make his *Henry the Fifth* the most complete and exciting production of the play to date. He demanded as much of himself as he did from any member of his cast, experimenting with techniques that might make his own performance more believable. His style embodied the transition taking place between the classic and the romantic schools of acting, in which both the intellectual and the emotional imaginations contributed to characterizations.

Macready's attempts at management both at Drury Lane and Covent Garden failed. Many causes contributed to his and the other failures in management during the first half of the nineteenth century. Among those most often cited were: the size of the patent houses; the nature of the monopoly itself; the competition of the minor houses; the indifference of the crown and the aristocracy; and a lack of vitality in the drama itself. By the time the Napoleonic Wars had ceased, England's national treasury was nearly drained, and production costs were exorbitant. The lifting of the theatre monopoly in 1843 came too late to be of any practical value, and the London theatres were at their lowest financial and artistic level. At this most inopportune time, and in a theatre notorious for catering to a lower-class and rough clientele, Samuel Phelps undertook the unenviable job of managing Sadler's Wells. What appeared to most to be not only an impossible task but a foolhardy one as well resulted in a theatrical
phenomenon unique in the history of the English stage. Between 1844 and 1862 Phelps produced thirty-four of Shakespeare's works plus some of the best plays of other English dramatists. Working exclusively in a repertory system, in a theatre that comfortably seated about 2,000 spectators, he managed to establish Sadler's Wells as the home of legitimate drama in London. He accomplished this by luring good actors who were out of work to his company, by respecting the dramatists' texts and intentions, by thorough and detailed rehearsals, and by mounting his productions not spectacularly but with care that each scenic device directly support the text of the play.

Between 1852 and 1858 Phelps produced Henry the Fifth fifty-five times in three seasons. Like Macready, Phelps avoided the old acting editions of the play and prepared his own. His cuttings approximated Macready's in most of the scenes, but he retained three scenes that his predecessor had eliminated.

Scenically Phelps followed many of Kemble's and Macready's techniques, using standard wing and drop or shutter arrangements for many of his scenes. However, he also made use of three-dimensional pieces for the Choruses and for the siege of Harfleur. He also used dioramas, not to illustrate the Choruses, but rather to aid the effect of the battle scenes. With a much smaller company than Macready's Phelps relied on his imagination to create the effect of large armies in conflict. For the march past Agincourt Madame Tussaud modelled
eighty wax heads on dummy figures. Two of these were fitted to each actor-soldier. As the soldiers filed by, the effect was that of an army three times its actual numbers. Phelps also used profile figures that worked from slots in the stage floor for additional effect of numbers. The introduction of gas lighting at Sadler's Wells in 1853 allowed his second and third productions of Henry the Fifth to have considerably more controlled lighting effects.

Phelps never deviated from his policy of strict repertory. Consequently his Henry the Fifth did not run as long as it might have. Nevertheless, it was one of his most successful productions, and with his other work was influential in popularizing Shakespearean production during and after his years of management.

Charles Kean's nine years of management at the Princess's Theatre followed a long apprenticeship in touring the provinces, the continent, and America. At his small but excellent theatre in a fashionable section of London, Kean was determined that great drama well done could be instructional as well as exciting. Following nine successful seasons he chose Henry the Fifth for his final Shakespearean revival. In his detailed arrangement of the text he included considerable historical supportive evidence. Like Macready and Phelps, Kean retained the Choruses. Four scenes he cut completely, and many of the others had large segments removed or transferred to other scenes.
Kean's staging of the play was the most detailed and the most complete that had appeared on the London stage. He surrounded himself with the finest designers and craftsmen he could hire, and he insisted that all elements of the production be directed toward a total ensemble effect. His crowd scenes were planned to the smallest detail, and individual segments received special rehearsals. The Historical Episode he introduced prior to Act V was reminiscent of a similar effect he had created in his production of Richard II. His antiquarianism demanded that everything which appeared onstage be historically accurate, and he devoted considerable time to studying extracts from ancient chronicles for just this purpose. A major innovation in his production seems to have been the use of box sets for two of the interior scenes.

Although not a great tragic actor, Kean was competent in a number of roles. His directorial genius was attested to by the critics, the public, and members of his company. The production was unanimously acclaimed as a brilliant success, and some critics thought it his greatest theatrical achievement. Unlike Phelps, Kean believed in and, in fact, established the long run. Henry the Fifth had a total of eighty-four performances and ran uninterrupted and unaccompanied for the first sixty performances.

Two major conclusions may be drawn from this study. The first is concerned with the variety of types of audiences for whom the play provided exciting theatrical appeal. The second relates specifically
to the individual approaches to the play taken by those leaders in the actor-manager tradition of the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, specifically Kemble, Macready, Phelps, and Kean. Neither of these conclusions is exclusive of the other, and both have their bases in the play itself.

All of the versions of Henry the Fifth written or produced before 1600 had direct referents in the numerous English chronicle plays which realized great popularity during the middle years of Elizabeth's reign, plays patterned in the vein of the long, episodic dramas concentrating on a single major figure around which the action revolved. The Elizabethans' interest in history was enormous, and they were fascinated in finding analogues with reference to their own age. In the final decade of the sixteenth century they were particularly concerned about who ruled and who owned the property of the state, for an aging queen sat on the throne with no heir-apparent.

King Henry V was traditionally the greatest of all English monarchs. His achievements at Agincourt were even greater in the light of his seeming irresponsibility as the young Prince Hal. As a youth he spent much of his time with Falstaff and company, ignoring the affairs of state and the responsibilities of kingship soon to be thrust upon him. His father's despair and the scorn of various court factions is recorded by Shakespeare in both parts of Henry IV. Prince Hal's remarkable transformation from young wastrel to the
soldier-hero-king figure is detailed at some length by the two clerics in the first scene of Henry the Fifth. It is a story learned by every English school boy and one dear to the hearts of all Englishmen. The subject of the play is, indeed, "the mirror of all Christian kings."

Beginning with a great figure as both soldier and king, Shakespeare took pains to show the human side of the man as well, in his dealings with the defeated French, in his discussions with his common soldiers, and in his wooing of the French Princess. Shakespeare also included Henry's torment about his father's regicide and Henry's continuing attempts to atone for his father's sin. In no other Shakespearean history is such a complete, multi-dimensional major figure so treated. Henry the Fifth is really the culmination of the English chronicle play as a biographical pageant of an English hero-king. It has been described as the British national anthem.

The subject of the play then is the greatest of English heroes, not a tragic figure nor a pathetic one but a very human, good and great ruler. Immediately certain limits are imposed upon the treatment. The time and place are rather strictly determined. The play cannot be set in Illyria or Verona or Elsinore. The soldiers and officers who followed King Henry to Harfleur and ultimately to Agincourt are, with few exceptions, historical figures. The weak French King and his court and the extravagant and ostentatious display of the French forces are also based on fact, as are the King's wooing of and
marriage to the French Princess. The figures, events, time and place are such that this Shakespearean history is unique, and compared to all of Shakespeare's other plays Henry the Fifth may be considered as the dramatist's most English work.

The very nature of Henry the Fifth provided great theatrical appeal for a variety of audiences. The story of an intensely real hero and his remarkable victories served as a perfect analogue for those who assembled in the Elizabethan public playhouses. The honor and integrity of a soldier-king was ideal material for dramatic fare at the court of Charles I and in the Restoration theatres. The theatre-goers of the early eighteenth century found Prince Hal's youthful exploits to be a perfect foundation for the romance, intrigue, sentiment, and pathos attendant upon a battlefield monarch. King and country, faced with political and military threats both from within the realm and beyond its shores—the Jacobite Rebellion and the Napoleonic menace—could not have had a greater champion at the theatres than Henry the Fifth.

Between 1738 and 1789 most of the major Shakespearean actors of serious roles found the play ideal for their purposes. The single, major figure of King Henry could not be overshadowed by any of the other characters in the play. It was ready-made star material. John Philip Kemble, the first of the great actor-managers, included it in his second season of management and continued to produce it for
twenty-two years at three different theatres. For Kemble the play provided great dramatic poetry. William Charles Macready's fascination with the play spanned twenty-four years of his career. As an actor he became obsessed with the complexities of the character. As a director he found the text capable of illustration beyond the imaginations of his predecessors. The play seemed not only to lend itself to the new scenic techniques but was an ideal vehicle for their use. Samuel Phelps recognized the play's possibilities for exemplifying ensemble effort, and within his limited resources mounted a production that captured the imaginations of his Islington audiences. Charles Kean focused all of his antiquarianism, artistry, and affluence on a production of Henry the Fifth so that the historical truth of the drama might instruct as well as delight his audiences at the Princess's. With more resources at his command than any of his three major predecessors, Kean surpassed Macready in scenic splendor and Phelps in total ensemble. As the final production of his management, Henry the Fifth was described by many as Kean's greatest achievement and by some as the finest production of the play ever presented on the English stage.

*Henry the Fifth* is certainly not an actor-proof or a director-proof play. Quite to the contrary, the role of King Henry demands an actor of considerable vocal capacity and range, one with a physical demeanor capable of capturing and audience's imagination and holding
its attention, and one whose temperament and sensitivity can imaginatively grasp and suggest the variety of this unique man-soldier-king. Many of the other characters in the play—Pistol, Fluellen, Bardolph, Chorus, the French King—provide almost limitless possibilities for detailed and varied characterization. The poetry of the lines, the capacity for ensemble playing, and the possibilities for realizing the spectacle—gorgeous and grotesque—offer a challenge to the most imaginative director. It is not an easy play to do well.

Some of the actors and directors considered in this study realized, at the best, only competent productions of the play. Others, through different means and for different reasons, accomplished productions that seem to have been brilliant. But whatever results were achieved, each era with its actors and its managers chose to include this play in its repertoire. The fact that each age made this play its own and was able to use it for a variety of purposes and in equally varied means of production suggests that Henry the Fifth had a theatrical validity which transcended the temporal and cultural limitations of two hundred seventy-six years of English stage history.
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### APPENDIX A—Continued

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### APPENDIX A—Continued

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## APPENDIX A—Continued

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<td>Henry the Fifth</td>
<td>Shakespeare</td>
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<td>Samuel Phelps</td>
<td>Henry the Fifth</td>
<td>Shakespeare</td>
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<td>Henry the Fifth</td>
<td>Shakespeare</td>
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<td>Charles Kean</td>
<td>Henry the Fifth</td>
<td>Shakespeare</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>Times; Cole; Wilson</td>
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</table>
In Spartan bands to make heroic fire,
Renown'd TYRTAEUS strung his martial lyre;
TYRTAEUS, lame and weak, unskill'd to wield
The flying spear, or grasp the ponderous shield;
Nor by experience taught in just array
To form the files, and guide the doubtful fray:
Yet, heaven-inspired, he knew, beyond control
With strains sublime, to rouse the torpid soul,
Swell with proud hopes the heart, and, by his breath,
Kindle the love of Fame, the scorn of Death.
And shall the British Muse, 'midst war's alarms,
In silence rest, nor call her sons to arms?
Shall Britons yield an unresisting prey,
And own a base Usurper's foreign sway?
No—when Ye march to guard your sea-girt shore,
"Return victorious, or return no more!"

Greece, in her freedom's most propitious hour,
Waged impious wars, in quest of spoil, or power;
And Rome, through many an age, unjustly brave,
Fought to oppress, and conquer'd to enslave.
E'en the bright wreaths our EDWARDS, HENRIES, claim
Crown'd not the cause of Freedom, but of Fame;
While fond Ambition, with misguided zeal,
Sought England's glory more than England's weal.
But when, of old, to chase a foreign host,
The painted guardians of our Albion's coast,
O'er her white cliffs descending, from afar
On CAESAR'S legions pour'd the tide of war,
When scythed chariots swept th' ensanguined plain,
Then Bards, enraptured, sung this patriot strain:
"Ye generous Youths, who guard the British shore!
"Return victorious, or return no more!"
Nor lures by Int'rest or Ambition's charms,
But prompts to deeds, which fairer trophies yield
Than graced e'en Agincourt's immortal field,
And bids you guard, in free and gallant strife,
All that adorns, improves, or sweetens life.
Your Homes, by faithful Love and Friendship blest,
Each pledge of Love, now smiling at the breast,
Your Daughters, fresh in bloom, mature in charms,
Doom'd (should he conquer) to the Spoiler's arms;
Your Sons, who hear the Tyrant's threats with scorn,
The Joys, the Hopes, of ages yet unborn,
All, all, endear this just, this sacred cause,
Your SOV'REIGN's THRON, Your FREEDOM,
    FAITH, and LAWS.
Champions of Britain's cherish'd rights Ye stand:
PROTECT, PRESERVE, AVENGE your native land!
For lo! She cries, amidst the Battle's roar,
"Return victorious, or--return no more!"
## APPENDIX C

**COMPARISON OF KEMBLE'S 1811 TEXT WITH THE CONTROL TEXT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Control Text</th>
<th>Kemble's Text</th>
<th>No. of Lines Cut</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Palace</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>18½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence Chamber</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>140½</td>
<td>Cut parts of Salic Law, and honey-bee simile.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>I, iii.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Southampton</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, iii.</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>Cut &quot;And 'a babbled of green fields.&quot; About 20 lines of Boy's speech from III, ii transferred to end of this scene.</td>
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<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>II, iv.</td>
<td>II, iii.</td>
<td>21½</td>
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APPENDIX C—Continued

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<th>Scene Description</th>
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<th>Kemble's Text</th>
<th>No. of Lines Cut</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chorus III</td>
<td>Chorus III</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breach</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>14\frac{1}{2}</td>
<td>2 lines added. 18\frac{1}{2} lines transferred to IV, iii.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comics at Breach</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>20 lines transferred to II, iii.</td>
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<td>Before Harfleur</td>
<td>III, iii.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
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<td>English Lesson</td>
<td>III, iv.</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
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<td>French Palace</td>
<td>III, v.</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
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<td>English Camp</td>
<td>III, vi.</td>
<td>III, iii.</td>
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<td>4 lines of Kemble's added.</td>
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<td>French Camp</td>
<td>III, vii.</td>
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<td>129</td>
<td>27 of the remaining 32 lines in this scene are transferred to IV, ii.</td>
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<td>Chorus IV</td>
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<td>----</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>IV, i, and IV, ii.</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Kemble's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>IV, ii.</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>The 27 lines from III, vii are used here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>The 18(\frac{1}{2}) lines from III, i are used here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>11(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No lines cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vii.</td>
<td>IV, vii.</td>
<td>9(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Henry's Text</td>
<td>IV, viii.</td>
<td>IV, viii.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troyes</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>Major cuts in Burgundy's speech and wooing scene.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX C—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Control Text</th>
<th>Kemble's Text</th>
<th>No. of Lines Cut</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX D

### COMPARISON OF MACREADY'S 1839 TEXT WITH THE CONTROL TEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Control Text</th>
<th>Macready's Text</th>
<th>No. of Lines Cut</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>5 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Palace I</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence Chamber I</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>137 1/2</td>
<td>Cut most of Salic Law, and honey-bee simile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>II, iii of Control Text. Boy's speech from III, ii transferred to end of this scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus II</td>
<td>Chorus II</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>10 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southampton</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>45 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, iii.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Used as Macready's I, ii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>II, iv.</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Macready's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>13 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics at Breach</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Harfleur</td>
<td>III, iii.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Lesson</td>
<td>III, iv.</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>III, v.</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>38 1/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>III, vi.</td>
<td>III, iii.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>III, vii.</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>IV, ii.</td>
<td>IV, ii.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Macready's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>One line added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vii.</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>First 53 lines of scene cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Henry's Tent</td>
<td>IV, viii.</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troyes</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>Major cuts in Burgundy's speech and wooing scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

APPENDIX D—Continued
## APPENDIX E

### COMPARISON OF PHELPS'S 1852 TEXT WITH THE CONTROL TEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Control Text</th>
<th>Phelps's Text</th>
<th>No. of Lines Cut</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Two words changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Palace</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Cut most of Salic Law, Scots' references, and honey-bee simile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence Chamber</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transferred to follow Phelps's I, iii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>I, iii.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southampton</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Much of King's anger with the traitors is cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Phelps's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, iii.</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19 of the 27 lines of the Boy's speech from III, ii are transferred to end of this scene; the other 8 lines are cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>II, iv.</td>
<td>II, iii.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus III</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>This scene is all action, no dialogue. First 3 lines are transferred to III, ii; 14 of the last 18½ are transferred to IV, iii; 20 are cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics at Breach</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>First 3 lines from III, i are inserted here after line 20. Fluellen's first speech is re-written. Boy's speech is transferred to II, iii. The Jamy-MacMorris sequence is cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Phelps's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Harfleur</td>
<td>III, iii</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Many of King's threats cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Lesson</td>
<td>III, iv.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>III, v.</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>III, vi.</td>
<td>III, iii.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>III, vii.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus IV</td>
<td>Chorus IV</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>IV, ii.</td>
<td>IV, ii</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14 of the last 18\frac{1}{2} lines of III, i are used here after line 141.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Phelps's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>IV, v.*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>IV, v.*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vii.</td>
<td>IV, v.*</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Henry's Tent</td>
<td>IV, viii.</td>
<td>IV, vii.*</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troyes</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>Major cuts in Burgundy's speech and wooing scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Phelps's numbering of his scenes loses sequence, as follows: IV, iv is cut; IV, v is not re-numbered IV, iv; IV, vi is a continuation of IV, v, but is not re-numbered; IV, vii is re-numbered IV, v; and IV, viii is re-numbered IV, vii.
## APPENDIX F

### COMPARISON OF KEAN'S 1859 TEXT WITH THE CONTROL TEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Control Text</th>
<th>Kean's Text</th>
<th>No. of Lines Cut</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td>Chorus I</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Two words changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Palace</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence Chamber</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>I, i.</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>Cut most of Salic Law, Scots' reference, and honey-bee simile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus II</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>Transferred to follow Kean's I, ii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, i.</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southampton</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>Used as Kean's II, i.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastcheap</td>
<td>II, iii.</td>
<td>I, ii.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boy's speech from III, ii transferred to end of this scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>Chorus II</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Kean's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>II, iv.</td>
<td>II, ii.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Not numbered; used as part of siege of Harfleur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus III</td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not numbered; used as part of siege of Harfleur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Not numbered; used as part of siege of Harfleur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics at Breach</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Cut except for Boy's speech which is transferred to end of Kean's I, ii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Harfleur</td>
<td>III, iii.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Not numbered; used as part of siege of Harfleur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Lesson</td>
<td>III, iv.</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Palace</td>
<td>III, v.</td>
<td>III, i.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>III, vi.</td>
<td>III, ii.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Kean's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>III, vii.</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>The few lines not cut are inserted into Chorus IV, and are used with the tableaus of the French and English camps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus IV</td>
<td>Chorus IV</td>
<td>7½</td>
<td>The first 22 lines precede the few lines of III, vii that are inserted here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>IV, i.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Camp</td>
<td>IV, ii.</td>
<td>IV, ii.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>IV, iii.</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Cut in entirety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>IV, iv.</td>
<td>8½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Scene begins with 8½ lines of King's speech from IV, vii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Description</td>
<td>Control Text</td>
<td>Kean's Text</td>
<td>No. of Lines Cut</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>IV, vii.</td>
<td>IV, v.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>First 53 lines are cut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Henry's Tent</td>
<td>IV, viii.</td>
<td>IV, vi.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td>Chorus V</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Historical Episode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Camp</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>V, i.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troyes</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>V, ii.</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>Major cuts in Burgundy's speech and wooing scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cut in entirety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Books


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