

INTRODUCTION

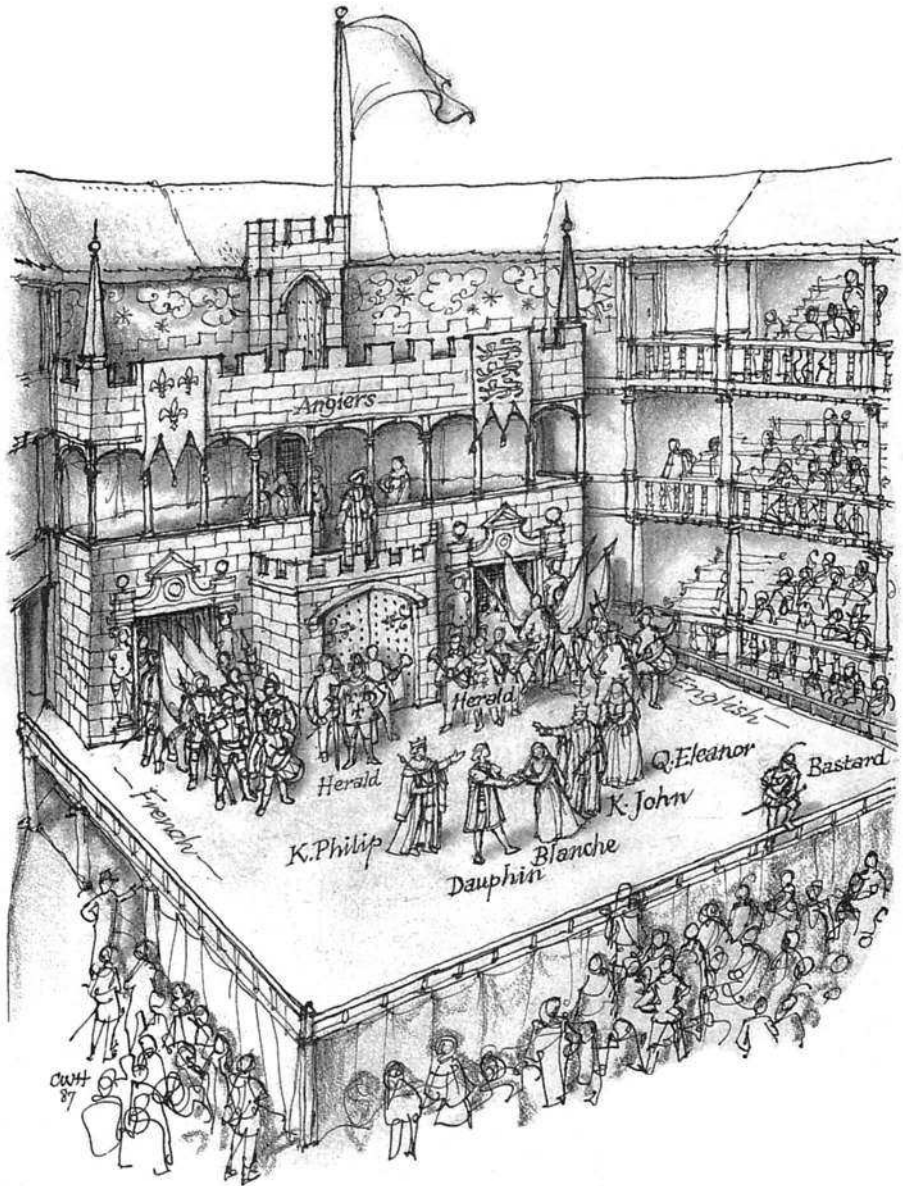
King John has had a distinguished tradition on the stage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and critics have admired parts of the play, especially its dramatic poetry and the roles of Constance and the Bastard. But with notable exceptions the play has been undervalued. It is commonly said that *King John* is poorly constructed, that the Bastard is or should really be the hero, and that Shakespeare lacked interest in the script. Much of this depreciation may be attributed to a readiness to treat it as a piece of hack work, a hasty rewriting and toning down of the patriotic, anti-Catholic propaganda of *The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England* (1591). However, from another perspective – assuming, as I do, that Shakespeare was the only begetter of *King John* directly from the chronicles and that it was written before *The Troublesome Reign* – the play appears not to be derivative but original theatre of a high order, expressing historical and political ideas of continuing value. Its design is complex and its stagecraft varied and dynamic. It appears from its stage history that responses of actors and audiences have been more than usually volatile over changing theatrical and cultural conditions of several generations, and failures to appreciate the play in the twentieth century may tell us more about ourselves than about Shakespeare's art. The time may be ripe for a fresh appraisal. Since the design is at once theatrical and historical, depending greatly upon transactions in performance between players and audience, this account begins with stage history and then looks at the play's craftsmanship – its dramatic speech and symmetries – before attending to its political and moral implications. The problems of date and relationship with *The Troublesome Reign* are reserved for the Appendix.

Stage history

King John was in the past a favourite with actors and audiences because of its opportunities to depict passion in elaborate poetic and rhetorical speeches. Its complicated scenes and major roles require not only vocal power but intelligence to compass the changes of purposes and character. Yet the play's fortunes on the stage have fluctuated as much as that of any Shakespeare play. It must have attained some notoriety before it was published in the Folio, if it was known well enough to have been adapted by the author of *The Troublesome Reign* in 1591. Moreover, *The Troublesome Reign* was attributed to 'W. Sh.' on the title page of the 1611 reprint and to 'W. Shakespeare' in the 1622 quarto, as if the bookseller hoped to profit by the interest in the author and/or his well-known play. The part of Robert Falconbridge – legs like two riding-rods, arms like stuffed eel-skins, and a thin face – was apparently written for a ridiculously skinny actor, John Sincler (Sinclø, Sinklo), who played bit parts 1590–1604 for Strange's, Pembroke's, and the Chamberlain's Men. His name

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1 A possible staging of Act 2, Scene 1 in an early public playhouse (c. 1591), by C. Walter Hodges. This was the kind of stage in use before the introduction of a canopy supported on posts; see Glynne Wickham, “‘Heavens’, machinery, and pillars”, in H. Berry (ed.), *The First Public Playhouse*, 1979

is mentioned in the plot of the 2 *Seven Deadly Sins* (c. 1590), and in the stage directions of 3 *Henry VI* 3.1.1, *The Taming of the Shrew* Induction 88, and 2 *Henry IV* 5.4.1 for the part of Justice Shallow.¹ In addition to Francis Meres's listing it among Shakespeare's tragedies in 1598, there is a telling allusion to *King John* in Anthony Munday's *Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon* (acted about 1598, printed 1601): the characters John, Austria, Constance and Arthur appear in a dumb-show – and Hubert is addressed as 'Hubert, thou fatal keeper of poor babes' (sigs. D3^v, F4).² Since *Troublesome Reign* and the chronicles have Arthur much older than a 'babe', the reference is to Shakespeare's Arthur and Hubert. *King John* is also listed in a document (12 January 1669) along with *Richard III* as among plays 'formerly acted at Blackfriars [i.e. by the King's Men 1608–42] and now allowed of to his Majesties Servants at the New Theatre', and those plays were apparently intended in the first place for public theatres.³ Otherwise, no exact dates of performance survive until the 1737 revival at Covent Garden.

Then within a few decades *King John* became a popular play – in provincial theatres as well as in London. Although it was never among the greatest Shakespearean favourites, in the next 120 years it held the stage for about 58 seasons, and in some seasons (1760–1, 1766–7, and 1817–18) London theatregoers could compare rival productions.⁴ (There were North American tours and many indigenous productions, too.)

Notable actors of the time took the roles of John, Constance, Hubert and the Bastard. At Drury Lane in 1745 Garrick and Mrs Cibber gave eight performances, her Constance being the main feature of this production, for her 'uncommon pathetic ardour in speaking', but Garrick was not wholly satisfied with his acting of John. He is said to have done well in the turbulent scene with Hubert (4.2) and in the death scene; however, it seems that he felt he could not generate sympathy for the king. Therefore in 1754 he shifted to the Bastard's role, and Mossop played John; in 1760–1 Sheridan was king to Garrick's Bastard, but Garrick lacked the physical stature.⁵ Henceforth, he took neither role, but the play continued to be performed by

¹ His other roles may have been Pinch in *The Comedy of Errors* and the Apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*. Edwin Nungezer, *A Dictionary of Actors . . . before 1642*, 1929; A. Gaw, 'John Sinco as one of Shakespeare's actors', *Anglia* 49 (1926), 289.

² Malone Society Reprints, 1964; Honigmann, p. lxxiii.

³ Irwin Smith, *Shakespeare's Blackfriars Playhouse*, 1966, pp. 503–4.

⁴ Eugene Waith, 'King John and the drama of history', *SQ* 29 (1978), 193–4, to which I am greatly indebted. C. B. Hogan supplies tables of performances in *Shakespeare in the Theatre 1701–1800*, 1952, 1, 239–44; 11, 319–33; these are supplemented by E. L. Avery et al., *The London Stage 1660–1800*, 1960–8, Index, 1979. H. Child outlines later performances in his succinct article in Wilson.

⁵ Thomas Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, 1784, 1, 54, 113, and *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick*, 1780, pp. 298–300. In a manuscript part-book for the role of King John belonging to Garrick (Folger Library MS.), Garrick composed a four-line speech on the last page, but not written into the part. It was perhaps tentatively meant to be placed among his final speeches, to generate that sympathy that Garrick strove for.

The Lamp of Life is Dry, thy Prayers O Father!
 At Worcester let these Mortal Bones have rest
 My Eyes refuse the Light – the Stroke is giv'n,
 Oh I am call'd – I wander – Mercy Heav'n!

Cited by H. W. Pedicord, 'Garrick produces *King John*', *Theatre Journal* 34 (1982), 447.

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Sheridan, Mrs Barry, Mrs Yates, and others. John Philip Kemble and his sister, Sarah Siddons, as John and Constance, began at Drury Lane in 1783 an intermittent series of performances, moving to Covent Garden in 1804. He continued until 1817, she until 1812; thereafter she gave public readings from Acts 3 and 4 of *John*. Among her most dazzling performances in Shakespearean roles were Constance, Lady Macbeth, Volumnia, and Queen Katherine. By most reports J. P. Kemble, unlike Garrick, got the necessary sympathy when he played a fine, kingly John, and it was thought that in the temptation scene (3.3) he evoked a ‘noiseless horror’, a ‘muttered suggestion of slaughterous thought’.¹ It was Hazlitt’s opinion, however, after admiring Kemble in the part for some years, that, compared to Edmund Kean, he was skilful but too studied, artificial, and solemn; he did not seem to feel the part.² Charles Kemble, a younger brother in the same family, joined the cast as a gentlemanly sort of Bastard in 1800. Charles Kemble is also noted for his later management of the troupe, when he ordered costumes and sets to be redesigned for historical ‘accuracy’, under the supervision of J. R. Planché for the November 1823 production. This was an important change in the staging of history plays, as we shall see.

William Charles Macready first played Hubert in Charles Kemble’s company in 1822, and was promoted to the role of John in 1823 (in America 1827). By October 1842, with his own company at Drury Lane, he had become the most resourceful, if not the most gifted, actor and manager of the century, and a new production of *John* was the last of Macready’s triumphs. Samuel Phelps, who once played Hubert with Macready’s company, took up the leading role and followed Macready’s revolutionary methods at Sadler’s Wells in 1844 and 1851, and at Drury Lane in 1865 and 1866. Charles Kean made his mark as John, imitating Macready (less successfully) at the Princess’s Theatre in 1852 and 1858 (American tours in 1846 and 1865). It is evident that by the 1830s *King John* was so familiar that it was honoured with a burlesque version, along with Macready’s other famous productions – *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Romeo*, *Macbeth*, and *Richard III*.³ After about 1866, however, the play almost disappeared from the London and New York stages.

The leading actor-manager of the last quarter-century, Sir Henry Irving, never staged the play, but in 1899 Beerbohm Tree revived *John* at Her Majesty’s Theatre in an elaborate production that ran for 114 performances – a swan-song for the grand old way. A similar revival was performed by R. B. Mantell in Chicago and New York, 1909. After that, the play was infrequently acted, mostly in the art theatres and in provincial repertory companies. Significantly, the Bastard’s role, that was something of an embarrassment for most of the previous century, became the one

¹ James Boaden, *Memoirs of the Life of John Philip Kemble*, 1825, pp. 133–4.

² *A View of the English Stage*, 1906 edn, p. 271. Apparently Hazlitt fell under the spell of Edmund Kean’s acting, but he probably did not mean that Kean’s acting of John was superior to Kemble’s, for Kean played John in only three performances in 1818 at Drury Lane, cut short by illness, and apparently he was not in his best form. See Child’s ‘Stage-history’ in Wilson, p. lxxiv.

³ *King John*, (with the Benefit of the Act.) *A Burlesque, in One Act*, by Gilbert Abbott A-Beckett. See *Nineteenth-Century Shakespeare Burlesques*, II, 1977. The burlesque follows the plot closely, giving the fullest treatment to the popular scenes 3.3 and 4.1.

most sought after. At the Old Vic, Balliol Holloway played the Bastard in 1926 (and at Stratford in 1940), Ralph Richardson in 1931, and Richard Burton in 1953; Paul Scofield took the part at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1945, Anthony Quayle at Stratford in 1948, and Christopher Plummer at Stratford, Ontario, 1959.

King John did not fit into revivals of the cycles of Shakespeare's history plays, although Benson included it in his 'Week of Kings' at the Memorial Theatre in 1901. For forty years the play was generally treated as something of a stepsister, without a sufficient central character, according to reviewers, and by 1944 a theatre historian said that *King John* was 'now almost unknown as an acting play'.¹ Though there have been a few interesting productions since then, apparently *King Richard II*, virtually never shown on the eighteenth-century and seldom on the nineteenth-century stage, has taken *John's* place among the histories as one of the favourite vehicles for actors.²

Since performances of Shakespeare's history plays as a whole have not fallen into disrepute, it is worth considering what were the causes of such favour for *King John*, followed by almost total neglect. Eugene Waith suggests that when *John* was highly regarded it dramatised personal values for a critical audience, whose experience was enhanced by grand historical sets and costumes.³ Actors and audiences revelled in the passions of the characters; whereas nowadays the literary critics and directors have shaped the play to fit explicit political themes, turning it into ideological drama. Although Waith points out that the shift of emphasis did not necessarily cause the decline of *King John*, he rightly calls attention to the values of earlier performances that are now often neglected. Still, the search for specific explanations of the play's fortunes will tell us much about its staging.

Among the possible causes of favour and neglect, perhaps the most significant are (1) the appetite for political relevance, (2) the changes in style of acting, and (3) the rise of art theatres and the corresponding decline of the large patent theatres, which exaggerated stage sets and elaborated stage business. *King John* was potentially affected by these tendencies in the theatre.

First political relevance. Certain speeches in *John*, such as the king's defiance of the Pope's authority over a 'sacred king' (3.1.147–8), the Bastard's stirring attempt to encourage John to resist the Dauphin's invasion – 'Be great in act as you have been in thought' (5.1.45) – and the Bastard's final call for national unity have often been exploited on both sides of the curtain for their patriotic or political fervour. This was probably so from the very first performances in the 1590s, when audiences could cherish John's defiance of the Pope, and some probably recognised how closely John's anger with Hubert concerning his use of the king's warrant (4.2) resembles the great trouble that Secretary Davison suffered for his delivery of the queen's warrant for

¹ A. C. Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Actors*, 1944, p. 108.

² According to Sprague, *Shakespeare's Histories: Plays for the Stage*, 1964, p. 51, *Henry IV Part I* greatly declined in popularity in the nineteenth century; it apparently recovered slowly in the twentieth and is now the most frequently acted of the histories. *Richard III*, of course, has been a steady favourite since 1700.

³ Waith, 'Drama of history', pp. 192–211.

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the death of Mary Queen of Scots. Naturally, the adaptations like *Troublesome Reign* and Colley Cibber's *Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John* were more calculated to kindle popular fears of Romanism and rebellion than the original play. Cibber's abortive attempt to stage his improvement of Shakespeare (c. 1736, acted in 1745 amidst threats of a Jacobite uprising) testifies that Shakespeare's script was for some people not sufficiently inflammatory. Nevertheless, the controversy over reports of Cibber's mutilations precipitated the first revival of the original play in 1737. Similarly, Richard Valpy cut the text grossly and added patriotic speeches for a production by the boys at Reading Grammar School (1800), which was performed once at Covent Garden (1803); J. P. Kemble's company quickly followed the debased version by one much closer to Shakespeare's text (1804). Indeed, Kemble deleted most of the 'indelicate' and bitter passages from the Bastard's speeches (though not so many as Valpy, who, like Cibber, omitted the whole first act), and, appropriately for the Napoleonic era, Kemble added a bit of jingoism at 5.1.74 that survived for many years on the stage:

Sweep off these base invaders from the land:
 And above all; exterminate those slaves,
 Those British slaves, whose prostituted souls,
 Under French banners, move in vile rebellion,
 Against their king, their country, and their God.¹

Berbohm Tree's production was cut to make room for elaborate tableaux and a dumb-show of The Granting of the Magna Carta (4.1). One reviewer noted on the first night that the Bastard's final speech made heads turn to the box where sat Joseph Chamberlain, the embattled colonial secretary during the Boer War.²

Doubtless there is room in Shakespeare's histories, particularly in *John* and *Henry V*, for speeches and events that satisfy a thirst for political relevance, to which audiences in this century have not failed to respond. Thus, when *John* was staged at Stratford in the dark days of 1940 – the first time in 25 years – the reviewer for *The Times* on 9 May noticed that the Bastard stands 'truculently and . . . humorously for the English spirit against whoever seems to threaten its survival'. The play gained a 'new momentousness', for Balliol Holloway played the character of the Bastard 'with a lively sense of its present relevance'. At the other end of the political spectrum, public cynicism and disaffection with politics and war in the late 1960s and early 1970s may account for two more adaptations of *John*: Dürrenmatt's travesty in London in 1968, and John Barton's gallimaufry at Stratford in 1974.³ Unlike these crude versions, however, the monumental staging of the play at the Weimar National Theatre, 1980, depicted graphically the horrors of war, with explosions and sirens,

¹ *John Philip Kemble Prompt Books*, ed. Charles Shattuck, 1974, vol. 5, p. 52; C. Shattuck, *William Charles Macready's 'King John'*, 1962, p. 10.

² *The Speaker*, 30 Sept. 1899, p. 346.

³ *The Times*, 15 Nov. 1968, p. 9; R. L. Smallwood, 'Shakespeare unbalanced: the Royal Shakespeare Company's *King John*, 1974–5', *SJH* 112 (1976), 79–99. A performance closer to Shakespeare's script, at Stratford in 1970, made fun of the medieval power politics, in a Brechtian style (*The Times*, 16 June, p. 8).

without sacrificing the serious impact of the play.¹ The occasion of that production was probably the proposal in 1979 by the United States, with the assent of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, to deploy 572 Pershing missiles in West Germany.

Since political relevance as a basis for *King John*'s popularity is a spasmodic phenomenon, it is not likely to have directly caused the radical shifts of favour or disfavour. But such resonances are not insignificant, for the genuine patriotic and political interest of the script seems to have precipitated revivals, in which actors and spectators then discovered that it is an engaging drama: 'The history which makes such hard reading is surprisingly alive on the stage', said one reviewer in 1940, and it is 'an unexpectedly satisfying treatment of the play' to see John as a brilliant opportunist with an 'intensely political mind' (1953).²

The styles of acting in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also account for much of *King John*'s appeal, for nearly every minor character has a passionate speech of some sort, with modulations of conflicting feelings suitable for exhibition in an age of sensibility. The major roles, John, Constance, the Bastard, and even Hubert, also offer actors the opportunity for development – what Stanislavsky later called 'perspective' – and within scenes an actor has many a chance to show his skill and judgement in big speeches fitted for a display of virtuoso acting.

Garrick certainly played John passionately, although his delivery was said to be more natural than that of his contemporaries.³ For example, when he uttered 'O, when the last account 'twixt heaven and earth / Is to be made . . .' (4.2.216):

Garrick snatched the warrant from [Hubert's] hand, and grasping it hard, in an agony of despair and horror, he threw his eyes to heaven, as if self-convicted of murder, and standing before the great Judge of the quick and dead to answer for the infringement of the divine command.⁴

Mrs Cibber was remembered for Constance's last speech 'Oh Lord! my boy!' which she delivered 'with such an emphatical scream of agony as will never be forgotten by those who heard her'. Yet she depicted the variety of emotions, in her opening speeches of 3.1, 'with the utmost harmony and propriety, all the succeeding changes of grief, anger, resentment, rage, despondency, reviving courage, and animated defiance'.⁵ Sarah Siddons tells how, off-stage, she worked up her emotions for Constance's opening lines to 3.1, 'Gone to be married!' Keeping her dressing-room door open, she could hear the goings-on upon the stage – 'the terrible effects' of the reconciliation of England and France and the marriage contract between the Dauphin and Blanche. The 'sickening sounds' of their march 'would usually cause the bitter tears of rage, disappointment, betrayed confidence, baffled ambition, and, above all, the agonizing feelings of maternal affection to gush into my eyes'.⁶ The point of this oft-repeated story is not just her real tears but the mixture of feelings that caused them.

¹ Armin-Gerd Kuckhoff, 'Shakespeare auf den Bühnen De DDR in Jahre 1980' *SJW* 118 (1982), 151–5.

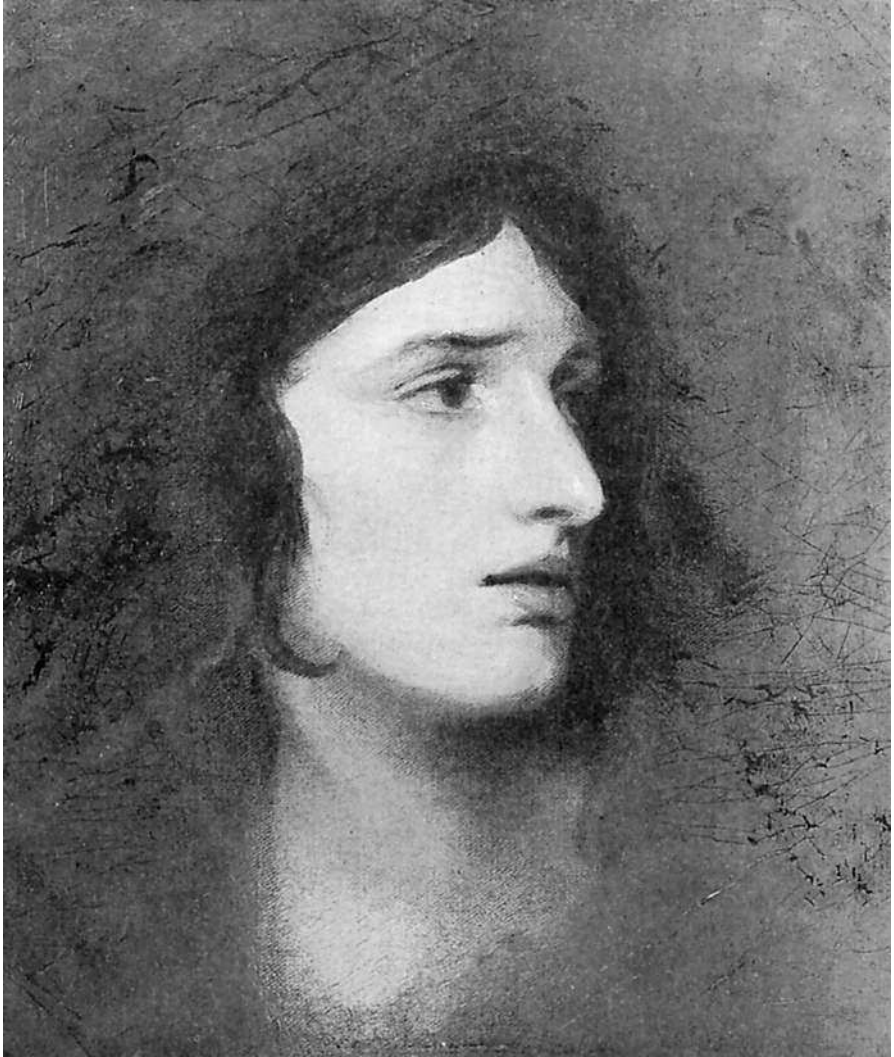
² *The Times*, 28 Oct. 1953, p. 5.

³ Perhaps this meant that Garrick did not intone the lines.

⁴ Davies, *Miscellanies*, 1, 70.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1, 56, 35.

⁶ T. Campbell, *Life of Mrs Siddons*, 1834, 1, 215.



2 The sorrowful countenance of Sarah Siddons, by an unknown artist

Francis Gentleman's 'Essay on Oratory' in Bell's edition of Shakespeare (1774) emphasises the importance of skilful acting that will evoke sympathy from an audience by careful exhibition of mixed feelings. Thus John's speech to Hubert (3.3) is a 'picture of deep diffident cruelty':

It is impossible for words to express, or imagination to paint, a finer representation of dubious cruelty, fearful to express itself, than this address of John's to Hubert exhibits; the hesitant

circumlocution, with which he winds about his gloomy purpose, is highly natural, and the imagery exquisite. To do this scene justice, requires more judgment than powers . . .¹

And J. P. Kemble, for all his grace, stateliness and solemnity, was said to be ‘unsurpassable in John’s scenes of cold-blooded villainy’.² It seems that Kemble consciously applied Hume’s theory of tragedy to his acting of the role, mixing ‘a leading passion of secret inquietude’ with dignity and grace, so that the audience could overcome their disgust. ‘A brooding, romantic, heroic dignity . . . made up the sublime quality of his King John. By making John’s guilt a central aspect of his performance, he further ensured that no moral sensibilities would be offended.’³

But Macready outdid his predecessors in John’s temptation scene with Hubert; his mixed emotions were described as ‘a masterly exhibition of coward villainy’. One could see the fantastical thought of murder rising in his mind, but ‘conscience-stricken fear and doubt of Hubert’s compliance’ delayed his utterance. There was a ‘meanness alike in his cajolery and exultation’.⁴ It is not surprising that Macbeth was Macready’s greatest role, where he had more such opportunities for conflicting emotions – shame, fear and lust for power.

It is clear that Macready thought out the role of John intelligently, noting the opportunities for artful gradations of feeling and inner conflicts. Whereas earlier actors used John’s defiance of Pandulph (3.1.147) merely as a way to get applause,

Macready threw into his manner and expression, the irritation of an aggrieved selfishness—his ire was birthed in a sense of encroachment on *his* privilege to tithe and tax – Shakespeare understood kings as well as he did Pandulphs, and knaves in humbler garb.⁵

Macready, moreover, thought he recognised more precisely than his predecessors the development of John’s character. After years of trying various strategies, in 1842–3 he played the role ‘almost as hero-king, yet incipiently vicious’ in the first two acts and part of the third; then ‘John as coward-king and villain thereafter’ – in the temptation scene (3.3), in his remorseful confrontation with Hubert (4.2), and in the agonies of his death. ‘He was careful not to give the character away, so to speak, by too many signs of weakness or meanness in the early scenes.’⁶ The major change came in 3.3, when his confident manner gave way to hesitation and dissimulation, an example of his skilful transitions. According to one critic,

A gloom, which came in sudden contrast to the previous bustle of the drama, seemed to usher in the conversation between John and Hubert. A change had come over the play. It was a foreboding look that John cast on Arthur, the tongue faltered as the horrible mission was intrusted to Hubert. For a moment the countenance of the king beamed as he said ‘Good

¹ Cited by Waith, ‘Drama of history’, p. 202, who believes that this suggests that the performance was ‘thought of primarily in terms of emotional responses it evokes’. Perhaps so, but display of skill and judgement were prized, as the quotation indicates.

² Shattuck, *Kemble Prompt Books*, p. ii.

³ Maarten van Dijk, ‘John Philip Kemble as King John’, *Theatre Notebook* 29 (1975), 23–4.

⁴ *Spectator* and *Atlas* (1842–3), cited by Shattuck, *Macready’s ‘King John’*, p. 49.

⁵ C. R. Pemberton, *The Monthly Repository*, Jan.–Feb. 1834, cited by Sprague, *Histories*, p. 16.

⁶ Shattuck, *Macready’s ‘King John’*, pp. 48–9.

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Hubert', but the gloom returned when he said 'Throw thine eye on yonder boy.' That he did not look Hubert in the face when he proposed 'death' was a fine conception.¹

A reviewer for the *Spectator* thought it was 'conscience-stricken fear and doubt of Hubert's compliance' that delayed the utterance of the word. Nevertheless, like the critic in the *Atlas*, some did not care for Macready's 'gasping and spasmodic' utterance 'as though he had done the deed he desires to have done, and was spirit-stricken, pouring forth the baleful secrets of his agonized soul'.² This was part of the actor's other favourite device, borrowed from Mrs Siddons: the illusion of suppressed passion, achieved by dropping his voice and speaking in a harsh whisper that could be heard in the last row of the auditorium.

Aside from the mixture of tender and violent emotions the great actor-managers featured a heightened style of delivery to encourage the spectators' approbation. The leading actor set the tone and commanded the stage like a *prima donna*. Secondary characters had to keep their eyes on the star while he spoke to them, and he delivered most big speeches facing the audience, like arias, which invited applause, and were followed by the actor's obligatory bow. For example, the young James O'Neill (the playwright's father) was given friendly advice by the noted American actor Joseph Jefferson after O'Neill's first performance of a role in Jefferson's company: 'My boy, you got six rounds of applause tonight, and that is good. Very good. But there are eight rounds in the part and we must get them.'³ Just so, Thomas Davies noted that the short battle scenes in Act 5 of *John* were 'often neglected by actors of some merit, because not attended with expected applause', but it is to Garrick's credit that he evoked applause even in these scenes. Mrs Cibber's stinging reproach of Austria beginning 'O Limoges, O Austria!' (3. 1. 114 ff.) 'was so happily modulated by a most accurate ear, that every material word in this uncommon burst of indignation was impressed so judiciously and harmoniously upon the audience that they could not refrain a loud and repeated testimony of their approbation' (*Miscellanies*, p. 38). In other words, they not only applauded but applauded again and again throughout the speech, and she bowed again and again.⁴ Such rapport with the audience (familiar to us in grand opera) was appropriate for and reinforced by a self-conscious and explicitly artful style of acting. But when the pendulum swung from a tentative realism in the mid 1800s to an even more natural style of acting, in Irving's lifetime and later, the passionate speeches and the declamatory rhetoric of *King John* lost much of their appeal.

Signs of change were discernible by mid century, when actresses turned away from the complex of motherly love and a 'lofty and proud spirit' of Constance, as Mrs Siddons played her. Although Helen Faucit learned to conduct herself in a 'queenly' way, her voice lacked strength; she emphasised 'the feminine, the subtle, and the ideal rather than the bold and overwhelming'.⁵ But with Mrs Kean there was no

¹ *The Times*, 25 Oct. 1842.

² Cited by Shattuck, *Macready's 'King John'*, p. 49.

³ A. and B. Gelb, *O'Neill*, 1962, p. 24.

⁴ See C. B. Hogan (ed.), *The London Stage*, part 5, vol. 1, pp. xcii–xciii.

⁵ Carol J. Carlisle, 'Helen Faucit's acting style', *Theatre Survey* 17 (1976), 38–56. There was a disagreement about her acting of Constance, but apparently she managed the tender moments well (Shattuck, *Macready's 'King John'*, p. 51).