

# DID SAMUEL ROWLEY WRITE THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK?

Michael Egan

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Bushy: your uncles seek to overturn your state,  
to awe ye like a child, that they alone  
may at their pleasures thrust you from the throne.

Act 11 Scene 1: *Thomas of Woodstock*



ANTERIOR to the question of who wrote Shakespeare is the question: What did Shakespeare write? Among the likeliest new candidates for inclusion in the canon is the anonymous Elizabethan manuscript—held by the British Library—variously titled *Richard II Part One*, *Thomas of Woodstock*, and (for short) *Woodstock*. Readers of this journal may know that I recently published a long study ascribing this play to the author of *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. They may also be aware that MacDonald P. Jackson—“the most inventive scholar in attribution studies over the last thirty years,” according to Brian Vickers—thinks otherwise. Jackson’s view, that the play was written by Samuel Rowley around 1608, is set forth in his “Shakespeare’s *Richard II* and the Anonymous *Thomas of Woodstock*” (2001). The following critique is based on my 2006 book, *The Tragedy of Richard II, Part One: A Newly Authenticated Play by William Shakespeare*. Here, to avoid confusion, we’ll refer to the two plays by their traditional names, *Richard II* (RII) and *Thomas of Woodstock*, or *Woodstock* (TOW).

## *When you see me, You know me*

Jackson builds his case upon word usages and several stylistic features which he claims are shared by *Woodstock*<sup>1</sup> and Rowley’s single extant drama, *When you see me, You know me, Or the famous Chronicle Historie of king Henry VIII*, premiered May 1603; published 1605.<sup>2</sup> But *When You See Me* possesses little in common in form and spirit with *Woodstock*. Its action is dominated by a buffoon Henry VIII, closer to the Queen of Hearts than Shakespeare’s monarch, a bombastic tyrant who accuses everyone in sight of treachery and then—on the slightest counter-evidence, e.g., a short denial by the accused—immediately revokes the charge. The play’s most memorable line—“Within this houre she pist full sower and let a fart” (3056)—was no doubt intended as humor. For these and other reasons A.J. Hoenselaars mocks Rowley’s “implausible, ballad-like manner” (29), while F.P. Wilson dismisses *When You See Me* as “neither ‘historical’ nor ‘poetical,’” although “good for many a laugh,” and the play “was intended for those who had no brains to bring to the theatre or were content to leave them behind” (*Studies* 50).

The contrast with *Woodstock* is stark and unmistakable. *When You See Me* evinces nothing of the careful blueprinting, grand historical sweep, biting political concerns, vivid personal

dictions, sharp differentiations of character, inventive prose, flashes of lyricism, or tragi-comic portraits of Court and country life as revealed by the author of *Woodstock*. The two dramas issue from completely different sensibilities. Rowley was, as everyone agrees, little more than a hack (Honigmann 175n),<sup>3</sup> whereas “Neither in structure nor in the passing episode nor in the detail of touches of character and wry humour did the [author of *Woodstock*] write like a hack” (Rossiter 74-5).

Jackson makes no attempt to reconcile these judgments. Instead his data connecting *When You See Me* and *Woodstock* are principally though not exclusively numerical, including comparably high percentages of feminine endings,<sup>4</sup> pauses as registered by punctuation, metrical forms, vocabulary, and of course strong echoes of Shakespeare, especially from *Much Ado About Nothing*. These last round off his conclusion that *Woodstock* is a debtor play written c.1608, the argument being that while *Woodstock* may occasionally resemble Shakespeare, the echoes are stolen. Jackson is fully aware that by post-dating *Woodstock* he is turning a century of scholarship on its head, but feels that “If we are to read it in new historicist ways, we must place it, for the first time, within its rightful context” (57).

### Verse versus prose

Among the problematic aspects of Jackson’s analysis is that the Rowley canon consists of a single drama, whereas all the other candidates, including Shakespeare, are judged on the basis of many works in several genres. In an earlier and more rigorous study, Jackson himself had objected to the attribution of *The Revenger’s Tragedy* to Tourneur on the grounds that his “characteristics must be only deduced from one extant play,” setting his own choice, Middleton, “at a disadvantage” since he is represented “by a large corpus of surviving plays” (Middleton 168). Despite this, Jackson manages to make his case for Middleton, though the procedural issues remain unresolved.

A related but also unaddressed difficulty is that stylistically Jackson compares the Malone Society Reprint of *When You See Me* (1952) with *Woodstock: a Moral History*, Rossiter’s edition, which is unreliable as a text. So, for example, he cites Rossiter’s updated “Certiorari” for MS. “surssararys/sursseraris” (TOW 1.2.117, 5.6.27), which Rossiter, silently following Carpenter, introduced “to improve communication” (185).<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately Jackson accepts this emendation as an accurate MS. usage (31).<sup>6</sup> Nor does he mention Rossiter’s systematic removal of

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the play's Elizabethan noun-verb discords. Both distortions are of course helpful when assigning the play a more recent date.<sup>7</sup>

Jackson's reliance on Rossiter leads to more serious blunders. He treats 1.2.117-20 as if it were in verse, which is how Rossiter prints it, though actually the MS. (here as elsewhere) is ambiguous.<sup>8</sup> In his comment on 1.2.29-35 Rossiter remarks upon the "not uncommon puzzle" that sometimes the "verse 'changes over' to prose [while] the blank-verse rhythm sometimes continues, before fading out, or even (as here) goes and then returns again" (*Woodstock* 199).

There are many possible explanations for this, including scribal confusion, since, according to George Peele's editor: "distinguishing between prose and verse in Elizabethan dramatic texts is not always easy" (Hook 173n). My view is that the device may well be experimental, a kind of *prosiform* where rhyme and rhythm are woven in and out of the verbal texture to emphasize and/or decorate. It seems unnecessarily rigid in the worst academic way—lampooned long ago by Molière—to demand that dramatic speech *must* be either verse or prose. In the case of *Woodstock* it is often both, a deliberate mingling of styles. This practice is perfectly consistent with early Shakespeare—for example, in *Love's Labor's Lost*:

Holofernes: . . . O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

Nathaniel: Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book; he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink: his intellect is not replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts; And such barren plants are set before us, that we thankful should be—Which we of taste and feeling are—for those parts that do fructify in us more than he,/ For as it would ill become me to be vain, or a fool,/ So were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school. (4.2.23-31)

Note how verse and prose interweave, as in *Woodstock*. Rossiter calls this Anon's "betwixt and between style of sub-verse or iambic prose," quite forgetting that Shakespeare does it too.

*Michael Egan has written or edited ten books, including studies of Ibsen, Mark Twain, and Henry James. All Shakespeare scholars have reason to be grateful to him for not only resolving this longstanding authorship puzzle, but for adding another rich and glittering history play to the Shakespeare canon. Although Egan adheres throughout to the Stratfordian theory of authorship, those who dispute it owe him further thanks. His convincing demonstration of Shakespeare's authorship of the anonymous Thomas of Woodstock suggests that the path will be easier for those who seek to bring other anonymous, but obviously Shakespearean, history plays such as Edmond Ironside, The True Tragedy of Richard the Third, and The Troublesome Raigne of King John, into the canon, where they belong.*

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The implications for the present debate are considerable. Not only does the mutual occurrence of Anon/Shakespeare's "betwixt and between style" help confirm the hypothesis that they are the same author, but, as we saw earlier, poetic inconsistencies of this sort may actually represent a literary experiment on Shakespeare's part, later abandoned. Auditors, as opposed to readers, would sense periodically that rhyme and verse were being used, allowing the playwright considerable variety and choice of manner.

Jackson overlooks all these possibilities and related difficulties, overlooking as well Schoenbaum's warning about the dangers of using dramatic poetry to measure style:

Verse peculiarities, which as a rule the investigator artificially isolates for analysis, can actually be understood only in relation to content. The cadences of the council chamber may be expected to differ from those of the boudoir . . . . The danger of scribal, compositorial or modern editorial interference casts a shadow over verse as over other tests; such interference may affect both rhythm and lineation. (185)

It's an editorial problem, then, though Jackson does not confront it. Following Keller's and Everitt's editions, I set 1.2.117-20 as prose, while Halliwell, Rossiter, Armstrong, and the Oxford Text Archives (the last two merely reprints of Rossiter) give verse. Parfitt and Shepherd on the other hand claim that the speech is in "rough Poulter's measure" (11n).

These uncertainties and textual disparities are alone sufficient to call Jackson's conclusions into doubt, since he generally cites proportions and percentages rather than specific passages. As Vickers notes in his critique of Donald Foster's claims for *A Funeral Elegy*: "literary statistics need to be based on a correct identification of the relevant verbal feature" (*Counterfeiting* xv). We have no idea which speeches in the MS. Jackson takes to be prose and which verse, and whose readings or edits he accepts, and why.<sup>9</sup>

More questionable still, a few of the passages Jackson cites contain his own "modernized" spelling and punctuation (61n34) which appear in no other extant edition. In other words he manufactures some of his own evidence—another failing he shares with Foster. Jackson is familiar with Frijlinck (whose text he selectively updates) and acknowledges Armstrong, Everitt and the Nottingham version, although he admits never to have seen the play's original edition by Halliwell and does not list Keller, the play's second editor, in his bibliography. A stylistic analysis of punctuation, vocabulary, versiform, etc., based on such loose criteria and on *Woodstock, a Moral History*, cannot be secure.<sup>10</sup>

### **Compound adjectives and feminine endings**

These reservations notwithstanding, I'm willing to stipulate the general thrust of Jackson's claims: there is, for example, a relatively high proportion of feminine verse-endings in *Woodstock*, though for the reasons indicated a hard figure cannot be determined. Unsurprisingly, this characteristic is also consistent with Shakespeare's early practice, as Jackson himself knows, though he fails to make—indeed, actively avoids—the obvious deduction:

Shakespeare is more liberal in his use of feminine endings within his early plays: most of the percentages remain within the range from four to eight, but for *2 Henry VI* and *3*

Henry VI they are ten and eleven, and for *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Richard III* they are as high as fifteen, sixteen and seventeen. Only one play considered by Timberlake,<sup>11</sup> *Sir Thomas More*, employs feminine endings as frequently as *Woodstock*, and only five others approach this rate with percentages of fourteen or more. Three of the five are by Shakespeare, who is obviously not a candidate for the authorship of *Woodstock* . . . . [A]part from Shakespeare, Munday is—so far as Timberlake’s very thorough investigation can tell us—the only dramatist of 1580-95 who was anything like as partial to feminine endings in his blank verse as was the anonymous playwright responsible for *Woodstock*.<sup>12</sup> (24-5)

However, Shakespeare’s authorial non-candidacy is not so self-evident as Jackson thinks, especially when his facts and figures are so clearly open to more than one interpretation. His last sentence above, for instance, implies that *Woodstock* may have been written by Munday and not Rowley. What are we to make of this? He doesn’t say. Another example of evidence that apparently goes two ways are Timberlake’s conclusions (see end notes 4 and 11).

But contrast again Jackson’s study of Middleton, where he observes that

Shakespeare’s early plays can be distinguished from the work of his fellow dramatists by the greater frequency with which they employ compound adjectives and words beginning with certain prefixes, of which *un-* is the most important. (152)

Assuming Jackson is right about Rowley, computing these data in the case of *Woodstock* would at the very least establish a “negative author check”—one of St. Clare Byrne’s criteria for authorial attribution (21-48)—and provide support for his elimination of Shakespeare. Yet he doesn’t do it. In fact, *Woodstock* contains a great number of compounds and *un-*words, and in proportions moreover wholly consistent with Shakespeare. The list includes: *three-score* (four times), *high-pric’d* (or *high-priz’d*) *under-officer*, *marriage-day*, *Janus-like*, *wild-head*, *English-bred*, *all-accomplish’d*, *twelve-month*, *topsy-turvy*, *white-headed*, *great-bellied*, *all-commanding*, *unheard-of*, *bacon-fed*, *pudding-eaters*, *Ox-jaw*, *twelve-month*, *smooth-fac’d*, *near-adjoining*, *behind-hand*, *non-payment*, *free-born*, *seven-times*, *now-intended*, and *hard-hearted*. I grant some of these are compound adverbs rather than adjectives, and that one or two are semantically ambiguous—*Ox-jaw*, for example, may be a one-word insult rather than an adjective qualifying the understood pronoun *you*. But the quibble is minor—instead of twenty-eight instances we have twenty-seven or twenty-six, so the general outcome stands untouched. Like Shakespeare, Anon likes compounds.

Also like Shakespeare, he is equally fond of the prefixes *un-* and *re-*. We find in the play at least twenty-seven examples of the first, including *undone* (three times), *ungracious* (twice), *unhappy* (twice), *undoes*, *unserv’d*, *unlike*, *unsophisticated*, *uncaput*, *unsettled*, *unwholesome*, *unmov’d*, *unskillful*, *unheard-of*, *unluckily*, *unwillingness*, *untam’d*, *uncontroll’d*, *unjust*, *uncertain*, *untouch’d*, *unrelenting*, *unreveng’d*, and *unknown*.<sup>13</sup> The prefix *re-* makes an appearance in the neologisms *redeliver* (*Woodstock*, 3.2.174) and *recomfort* (*Woodstock*, 5.1.106), typical Shakespearean coinages and characteristic of his fondness for them. The plays and *Sonnets* include *repurchas’d* (3 *Henry VI* 5.7.1), *retell* (*OTH* 1.3.365), *relume* (5.2.13), *re-edified* (*RIII*,

3.1.71, TA 1.1.51), *re-salute* (1.1.75, 325), *re-united* (HV 1.2.85), *re-answer* (3.6.128), *re-survey* (5.2.81, Sonnet 32:3), *re-send* (AW 3.6.115), (PER 5.3.63), *respeaking* (HAM 1.2.128), *re-word* (HAM 3.4.144), and *re-quicken'd* (COR 2.2.117). By yet another of the many—and increasingly unremarkable—coincidences involving *Woodstock*, *redeliver*, used by the Spruce Courtier in 3.2.174, occurs not only in *Measure for Measure* (4.4.6), but also twice in *Hamlet* (3.1.63, 5.2.179). On the second occasion it is even given to essentially the same character, i.e., Osric, the Courtier's celebrated descendant. More remarkable still, the word is used in the same unusual sense: the recipient's response to a message, which in both cases is from a king to a prince.<sup>14</sup>

Among the specific pieces of evidence Jackson does compile is a list of forty-odd words or word-combinations taken from the text, including Rossiter's "Certiorari." Drawing on the OED and LION,<sup>15</sup> he shows that all were popular in the seventeenth century. In fact it's the strongest part of his case. Yet in the same breath he documents Shakespearean connections for many of his examples and establishes early usages (1590-1605) for others. His data are thus again open to more than one interpretation, including the possibility that *Woodstock* was written by Shakespeare in the 1590s and revised ten or fifteen years later (28-36). Since according to Jackson, Shakespeare is "obviously not" the author, he ignores this alternative, concluding smoothly that the play must and indeed can only be Jacobean. *Quod erat demonstrandum*.

But facts are stubborn things. In his more recent *Defining Shakespeare: Pericles as Test Case* (2003), Jackson is concerned among other matters to show how Elizabethan history plays of the same period tend to share a "vocabulary relationship," that is, a stock of common words and phrases (46). Citing the research of Eliot Slater, M.W.A. Smith and Hugh Calvert, he finds to his satisfaction that this is so and I see no reason to dispute the point. Jackson's illustrations are taken from 1590-5 when Shakespeare and several "non-Shakespearean history plays" drew on a pool of the same terms. What's truly stunning, however, is that, among the examples of 1590s dramas he lists, we discover none other than—"the anonymous *Woodstock*"!

### Sheep-biters and turkey cocks

So which is it? Is Jackson's *Woodstock* Jacobean, as in 2001, or Elizabethan, as in 2003? Of course *Defining Shakespeare*, the later study, gets it right—"the anonymous *Woodstock*" was written some time between 1590 and 1595. All the evidence proves it, including Jackson's own.

There are other problems with "Shakespeare's *Richard II* and the Anonymous *Thomas of Woodstock*." At one point Jackson observes that the terms *sheep-biter* (TOW 3.3.236) and *turkey-cock* (TOW 4.1.125), "used figuratively of persons," occur twice in *Twelfth Night* (2.5.5 and 2.5. 31). He insists that this coincidence is quite remarkable and again I don't disagree, since "in the whole of English drama" one finds no comparable instance (34).<sup>16</sup> This is not quite true—Jackson himself provides at least three other cases<sup>17</sup>—but it's his conclusion that interests us here. Anon, he claims, stole these tropes from Shakespeare.

Yet there is, as always, a range of possible explanations, including Shakespeare's theft from Anon and/or that he wrote both plays himself. Supporting the latter is that *sheep-biter* and *turkey-cock* are used in distinct senses—i.e., they're not borrowings at all nor even semantic parallels. In *Twelfth Night* the epithets are directed insultingly at Malvolio, and within twenty-five



lines of one another, whereas in *Woodstock* they occur in separate and unrelated scenes (4.1 and 3.3). Even more telling, *turkey-cock* is used affectionately: “This old turkey-cock, Tresilian, shall look to the law” (*TOW* 4.1.125-6) while *sheep-biter* describes a yokel (*TOW* 3.3.236). The targets not only contrast, but the language describing them inflects quite differently. If someone stole these locutions from Shakespeare, he made exceedingly creative use of his spoils, a claim quite at odds with Jackson’s assertion that the author was a hack.

Similar dissections could be carried out on several instances cited by Jackson, e.g., *invoke* (1.1.57); *ulcerous* (1.1.152); *sumpter* (1.1.217); *Limbo Patrum* (1.2.9); *Englised* (1.3.48); *homespun* (1.3.77); *scandalled* (1.3.125); *French hose* (2.3.93); *soothest* (4.1.60); *torturing* (4.3.161); and *miching* (5.1.263). All appear in *Woodstock* and variously throughout Shakespeare—*miching*, from *Hamlet* (3.2.137), will be the best known. But they are not necessarily plagiarisms as Jackson claims, even in his own terms; how could anyone be accused of stealing common terms like *homespun* or *French hose*? An equally plausible hypothesis—I would say far more plausible—is that the repetitions reflect one writer drawing on the resources of his own vocabulary.

Another and more serious deficit is Jackson’s discussion of Italian Cloaks (2.3.93), a hooded garment mentioned in Marlowe’s *Edward II*. The reference highlights Jackson’s reluctance to confront the fact that dating *Woodstock* fifteen years or more after *Edward II* also reverses nearly sixty years of Marlowe scholarship. In fact, he slides rather quickly over the whole matter. “Editors have noted verbal parallels with Shakespeare’s *Henry VI* plays and Marlowe’s *Edward II*,” he writes, adding: “These are discussed by Rossiter, *Woodstock*, 47-71” (38, 62). Indeed they are, though Rossiter’s analysis clearly establishes the sequence: *2 Henry VI-Woodstock-Edward II-Richard II*, which destroys Jackson’s case. It’s worth recalling too that the parallels between *2 Henry VI*, *Woodstock*, and *Edward II* are hardly just “verbal,” but extend to whole lines, speeches, scenes, characters and even major features of the plots.

### Historical quibbles

Among the other limitations of Jackson’s ahistorical stylometry is that he completely ignores references in *Woodstock* to 1590s issues and personalities, in particular the period’s rebellious turbulence. This is no minor matter: in Peter Clark’s view, the disorders of 1590-6, and especially those of 1592, when *Woodstock* was likely being written, “were among the most serious to menace the metropolis in the decades up to the Civil War” (54). In October 1590, a crowd of angry apprentices attacked Lincoln’s Inn; two years later in Blackfriars, “great multitudes of people . . . a great number of loose and masterless men” fought pitched street battles with prison authorities, resulting in several deaths. In August of the same year there were enclosure riots in west London, three months later another in Holborn, and in December “two or three hundred discontented sailors plotted to meet at St. Paul’s and march on the Court with their grievances”; it was said that, but for a leader, “all the commons would rise for they all disliked the state and government” (53).

Given these conditions, a drama that used a famous historical example to sanction “loyal rebellion,” even suggesting that its leadership might be supplied by a small group of nobles critical of the Crown, could hardly fail to attract attention and stir powerful emotions on all sides.

Taken straight—that is, without *Richard II* in mind—Anon proposes that an irresponsible monarch should be disciplined, not removed or executed, though one or two prominent heads might roll. But such a scenario would hardly have been appropriate during the early years of James I, following, as they did, so closely on the perceived horrors of the 1601 Essex rebellion.

Nor was Samuel Rowley even distantly a “political” author in this sense (or any other). Shakespeare on the other hand

may well be the greatest political thinker of his age, addressing himself to matters such as the enigmas of empire, statehood, and nationality, to clashes between ethical and political imperatives, [and] the possibilities for individual liberty within a society conceived of as a “body politic.”<sup>18</sup> (Hattaway 16)

Lilly B. Campbell also provides a well-documented case for the barbed and obviously conscious relevance of *Woodstock*'s most important political themes and episodes. These include the Queen's penchant for handsome favorites, her granting to them of tax and other financial privileges, and of course the possibility of deposition along Ricardian lines (168-9). Parfitt and Shepherd point out that among contemporary political events touched on is Sir John Smythe's mutinous campaign in Essex against impressment (1596), a local matter surely forgotten by the time James came to the throne in 1603 (16n). Another, dating from late 1592, involves the so-called “Spanish Blanks” discovered in the baggage of George Kerr, a Scottish Catholic traveling to Spain on behalf of the treasonous earls of Erroll, Angus, and Huntly. These signed but otherwise vacant sheets allowed their representatives to write in any terms necessary to assure the invasion of Scotland by King Philip II (Akrigg 119, 126).<sup>19</sup>

And finally, there are punning and other personal allusions to Elizabeth herself, gratuitous to the nth degree had the play actually been written five years or more after her death. As many have noticed, the masque's leader, Cynthia, deliberately evokes the living queen—Parfitt and Shepherd among others pointing out that: “With Cy[nthia] as Elizabeth, the speech is a restatement of the Tudor view that the Tudors saved England from the depredations of Richard III” (55n). Corbin and Sedge also note that the word “Elysium” (*Woodstock* 1.3.44) is “a punning reference and compliment to Elizabeth I” (68n).<sup>20</sup> Their general editor, David Bevington, sums it up well by observing that *Woodstock* is “deeply involved in the period of English history which the opposition literature of the time used to castigate Elizabeth,” adding that its “topical bias is evident in its thematic alteration of historical dates and personalities” (250). These facts, inferences and conclusions pose considerable difficulties for any Jacobean attribution.

### **Word combinations and parallels**

After his comment about *Edward II*, Jackson continues: “But a reader without preconceptions about the dating of *Woodstock* is as likely to be struck by apparent echoes of later Shakespeare plays, notably *Much Ado About Nothing*” (*Woodstock* 38). The word *preconceptions* is unnecessarily pejorative; I don't think Rossiter and Frijlinck, for example, brought any assumptions to the table. I prefer to call their dispassionate work, and that of the other scholars who disagree with Jackson, “informed judgments.”



Either way, the evidence Jackson adduces of parallel lines and scenes, intended to document the influence of Shakespeare on Samuel Rowley, only helps to support my argument for Shakespeare as the play's true author. For example, of *Much Ado About Nothing*, he notes:

In particular, the self-important malaprop Master Simon Ignorance, Bailiff of Dunstable ('You shall find me most pestiferous to assist ye' [3.3.131]<sup>21</sup>), seems to owe more than a little to Dogberry and his henchmen. The Bailiff who says, "Mine ears have heard your examinations, wherein you uttered most shameful treason, for ye said 'God Bless my lord Tresilian'" [3.3.180-1], sounds very Dogberry or Verges, and such orders from Bailiff Ignorance as "Come, sir, stand close" [3.3.132-3] and "I charge you in his Highness' name" [3.3.87] or from Nimble as "I charge ye in the King's name to stand till we have done with you" [3.3.82-3] may be paralleled in the scenes with Dogberry and the Watch: "You are to bid any man stand, in the Prince's name [3.3.25-6]; "Yet stand close" [3.3.103] "We charge you in the Prince's name. Stand" [3.3.164-5]; and "I charge you in the Prince's name, accuse these men" [4.2.37-8]. Nimble's question: "But how if we meet some ignoramus fellows, my lord?" [3.1.151]; his declaration that he and his colleagues will not "meddle with" women [3.1.154]; and his "Well, sir" [3.1.161], seem influenced by memories of the queries of Dogberry's Watchmen and his instructions: "How if a will not stand?" [3.3.27]; "How if they will not?" [3.3.44]; "How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?" [3.3.67]; "Well, sir" [3.3.49]; and: "meddle . . . with [3.3.52-3]. (38)

Jackson doesn't ask himself why the author of a Jacobean "History" would abduct, of all things, a secondary character from a ten-year-old comedy. And why, having stolen Dogberry, then proceed to alter him. Whatever the exact meaning of Jackson's qualified litotes—"Master Simon Ignorance . . . seems to owe more than a little to Dogberry and his henchmen"—he frankly overlooks the Bailiff's astonishing originality. The response that he was copied from Shakespeare must be tempered by recognizing, first, that the Bailiff is in fact not Dogberry but drawn only in his spirit (which is also that of Verges and Elbow and Dull) and second, that his portrait reveals a deeper understanding of the type than of Shakespeare's stage character. Frank Kermode, a better critic than Jackson and one who looks at Dogberry without "preconceptions," observes that "none of England's later dramatists could match Dogberry" (77). Nor any of the earlier, one might add, save Shakespeare himself. Kermode is so obviously right, it becomes immediately clear that Dogberry and Ignorance can only have been sketched by the same quill.

For Jackson's argument to work, Samuel Rowley must have possessed an unusually retentive memory, one that could recall many years later tiny phrases ("meddle with") and even conventional sentence fragments ("Well, sir . . ."). Indeed, his powers of recall rivaled Shakespeare's own who, according to Dover Wilson in the obverse form of this argument, remembered a host of details from Anon's *Woodstock* when composing its successor. As Sams remarks in a discussion of Shakespeare's "source plays" and the casual way scholars like Jackson deal with them:

All remaining problems are explained away as "plagiarism," whether by or from Shakespeare (again, either will do). If the former, the victim is called a "Source Play," meaning the victim of Shakespeare's shameless exploitation. This hypothetical theft is then called

anything but theft, such as adaptation, rewriting and so forth, which are then disguised as respectable activities. But how would they have looked to each Tudor playwright thus exploited, had he really been someone other than Shakespeare? (*Real Shakespeare* 180-1)

Jackson is by no means finished either, noting Rowley's intimate and apparently life-long familiarity with Shakespeare's works, together with his remarkable ability to integrate even the slightest bits and pieces in his own play. But of course Shakespeare's preeminence as a writer was not so apparent in the early seventeenth century as it is today. Jonson, among others, was always regarded much more highly in his own time,<sup>22</sup> "and it is not without significance that, of the twenty plays acted at Court by the King's players between September 1630 and February 1631, only one was Shakespeare's—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*—while ten were Beaumont and Fletcher's" (J.F. Danby qtd. in Kaufman 4).<sup>23</sup> As Vickers notes, the most popular drama of the day, judging by sales, was the anonymous *Mucedorus* (1598), revived in performance in 1609 and reprinted fourteen times in the next thirty years (446). Rowley's obsession with Shakespeare thus seems remarkably prescient.

At all events, Jackson continues his catalogue of borrowings:

Less strikingly, the plain-speaking Kent who proclaims that he does not fear to speak up in Lear's best interests, even at the risk of losing his life, and whose rebuke, "whilst I can vent clamour / From my throat I'll tell thee thou dost evil," provokes the King's "Hear me; on thy allegiance hear me!" (1.1.155-7), seems to be re-called in the plain-speaking Thomas of Woodstock's "Afore my God I'll speak, King Richard / Were I assured this day my head should off: / I tell ye, sir, my allegiance stands excused / In justice of the cause. Ye have done ill" [1.3.175-8];<sup>24</sup> and, on the level of vocabulary, not only is there the possible reminiscence of *Twelfth Night* [2.5], but Nimble's complaint that Tresilian is "monstrously translated" [1.2.76] sounds like a distant echo of Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595): "O monstrous! . . . Bless thee Bottom, bless thee Thou art translated" [3.1.117-18], since LION detects no other juxtaposition in English drama of the verb *to translate* with *monstrous* or its derivatives. The "spruce courtier" who enters *Woodstock* [at 2.2.130] "out-Osrics Osric," [Boas 155] of whom he must surely be a descendant, as he expiates on Court fashion before making his exit at [3.3.227]. One wonders too about the lines in *Woodstock* in which York proclaims that "This house of Plashey, brother, / Stands in a sweet and pleasant air, ifaith" [3.2.9-10], since he goes on to say that the surrounding trees "in summer serve for pleasant fans / To cool ye" [3.2.12-13]. Among the most haunting lines of *Macbeth* (1606) are those in which Duncan comments on the site of Macbeth's castle: "This castle hath a pleasant seat. The air / Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself / Unto our gentle senses" and Banquo adds his image of the breeding habits of the "guest of summer, / The temple-haunting martlet," mentioning "heaven's breath" and the delicate air [1.6.1-9]. In each case an ancestral home evokes *sweet*, *summer*, *pleasant air*, and the idea of gentle breezes. (39)

That the association of *monstrous* and *translated* are unique to Shakespeare and Anon is surely more credibly accounted for by co-authorship than by either theft or imitation.

Jackson identifies no fewer than three separate occasions where unique word combinations occur only in Shakespeare, in three different plays, and also in *Woodstock*: *translate* near *monstrous*, *sheep-biter* near *turkey-cock*, and *pelting* with *farm*. I would want to add a fourth: *fifteens* near *subsidy* in *2 Henry VI*. If Jackson is wrong about the dating question, which he is, and *Woodstock* in fact precedes *Richard II*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the revised *2 Henry VI*, then Shakespeare was either (*pace* Fluellan) an arrant, rascally, beggarly, lousy knave, or—less intemperately and surely more reasonably—the author of our play.

We should note also the significant caprice of the many reverberations Jackson uncovers, some of which are major, others minor to the point of triviality. Nor does Jackson ask himself why Rowley would seize upon, for example, Kent's outburst, but then completely ignore the greater theatrical possibilities of *Woodstock* as Lear, a deposed and aged ruler more sinned against than sinning, cruelly cast out by his young nephew, and so forth. A case for conscious analogies simply can't be made—which is, perhaps, the reason that they are not mentioned. The explanation, however paradoxical, is that Shakespeare created both works but with vastly different dramatic purposes in mind, and at widely separated moments in his artistic life.

Jackson additionally overlooks the fact that Anon goes further with his supposed “temple-haunting” echoes in 3.2 than merely evoking Plashy's gentle breezes. Actually the reference is used to launch an elaborate metaphor akin to the Garden Scene in *Richard II*. *Woodstock* concludes his speech:

And in faith, old York,  
 We have all need of some kind wintering:  
 We are beset, heaven shield, with many storms.  
 And yet these trees at length will prove to be  
 Like Richard and his riotous minions:  
 Their wanton heads so oft play with the winds  
 Throwing their leaves so prodigally down,  
 They'll leave me cold at last. And so will they  
 Make England wretched and, i' th' end, themselves. (3.2.14-22)

Not only is the whole moment taken in a completely different direction, but Anon does something theatrically more interesting with it than the greater dramatist whose work, we are asked to believe, he was merely imitating. While the general parallels are there, I for one don't find Duncan's scene-setting lines—they are little more than that—among the most haunting in *Macbeth*, a play filled with far more memorable speeches, and whose swift-moving action quickly eclipses the moment of the king's entry beneath Lady Macbeth's battlements. As we shall see, the coincident imageries are examples rather of Wilson Knight's “thought-parallels” or Caroline Spurgeon's “image clusters”—ideas typical of their creative source. I suspect Jackson's “haunting” means to strengthen his claims for Rowley's recollective powers. At all events he adds in an endnote:

It is reassuring to find that the apparent echo of *Macbeth* was independently noticed by Paul Reyher, according to Lambrecht's, “Sur Deux Prétendues de *Richard II*,” 125.<sup>25</sup>

Lambrecht also mentions (124) that in “The Non-Shakespearean *Richard II* and Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Part I*,” . . . John James Elson listed some verbal parallels between *Woodstock* and *1 Henry IV*, and detected a connection between the cowardly rogue Tresilian and Falstaff, of whom he supposed Tresilian to be a “forerunner.”<sup>26</sup> (62n47)

The quotes around “forerunner” are just a sneer. In fact, Elson does considerably more than merely list a few verbal parallels.

### **The chicken or the egg**

The final relevant sections in Jackson’s article have to do with literary sequence: Which came first, *Woodstock* or Shakespeare’s more famous play? As we’ve noted, Jackson’s view is that the anonymous work is the later, thus accounting for the manifold echoes between the texts; i.e., it’s simply plunder. (That another playwright would just naturally steal hand over fist from Shakespeare is one of the most insidious—because unspoken—tenets of modern Bardolatry.) Despite this, Jackson’s argument is curiously thin, comprised mainly of statements flatly disagreeing with everyone else: “One can only disagree” (52), or asseverations of the memorableness of certain lines and situations which “it seems not at all unlikely . . . arguably . . . might well have . . . presumably therefore . . . would naturally have been influenced by . . . may have,” etc. (52-4), impressed themselves on the feebler imagination of “the author of *Woodstock* [who] builds his play out of shreds and patches” (53).<sup>27</sup>

Against this special pleading we need to recall the cooler and more considered judgments of Anon’s superior qualities as a dramatist found in the work of Rossiter, Boas, Schell, Campbell and many others. Jackson’s strategy resembles Foster’s unsuccessful attempt to tar John Ford with the plagiarist’s brush, “an argument,” as Vickers notes, “used to dispose of the many similarities between the *Funerall Elegye* and Ford’s work” (*Counterfeiting* 297).

Among Rowley’s supposed piracies is the celebrated phrase, “pelting farm” (*TOW* 4.1.136, *RII* 2.1.60). According to Jackson, “Rowley or another” simply took the expression from Shakespeare, based either on seeing *Richard II* in performance or reading it in 1597, 1598, “or conceivably in the Quarto of 1608” (55).<sup>27</sup> But of course it’s much more significant than that, since *Woodstock* (4.1.126-230) shows the King turning his whole realm into a “pelting farm.” Jackson should thus argue that Anon built an entire scene upon a single phrase in Shakespeare, just as he apparently created the whole of *Woodstock*’s bluff personality from Gaunt’s passing observation that his brother was a “plain, well-meaning soul” (*RII* 2.1.128).

Jackson agrees that “the important point” is that “pelting farm” in *Woodstock* was deleted from the MS. while it was being transcribed, but doesn’t say why or indeed what the excision might be supposed to signify (54-5). As Rossiter shows, the elision was almost certainly made by the author himself. But why? Given the play’s “shreds and patches” there seems no reason to remove such a tiny remnant when much larger pieces were left in place. This would be especially true if the entire scene were constructed merely to justify its pilfered use. Jackson unfortunately offers neither explanation nor speculation. We might also observe with Vickers that if a successor to Shakespeare wanted to put himself in the same league, he would have kept the reference, hoping that “readers will recognize the borrowing” and make the association (87).

The other problem Jackson confronts is Gaunt's characterization of Woodstock as "plain" and "well-meaning," which Jackson admits "strains the historical record." But in the opinion of most scholars it's the strain that clinches the priority of the anonymous drama. According to G.K. Hunter:

*Richard II* clearly owes certain fictional perspectives to *Woodstock*. . . . Most obviously at 2.1.128, where Thomas of Woodstock is represented by Gaunt as a "plain, well-meaning soul" (as in *Woodstock* but not elsewhere). (209)

and Thomas Marc Parrott:

That Shakespeare knew *Woodstock* is proved not only by the repeated verbal parallels between it and *Richard II*, but by similar conceptions of the character of Gloucester. Shakespeare makes John of Gaunt refer to him as "My brother Gloucester, plain, well-meaning soul," and in *Woodstock*, Gloucester glories in the epithet "plain Thomas". . . . This, of course, contradicts the character of the historic Gloucester, a turbulent, ambitious and intriguing noble. (231)

Jackson's answer is that "noblemen in Shakespeare's histories habitually revise the past," so why not in this case too? (55) Besides: "Woodstock exerted no influence whatever upon *Richard II* because *Woodstock* was written after *Richard II*. . . . But whoever wrote *Woodstock* certainly knew *Richard II*," etc. (56-7). Jackson's argument becomes dizzily circular at this point: his hypothesis proves his hypothesis.

The crux of course is not that the turbulent duke's memory is rehabilitated, but that it is rehabilitated *in these particular terms*, i.e., as a "plain, well-meaning soul." In fact, Woodstock's blunt good nature is entirely irrelevant to the plot of *Richard II* where his only role is to be murderously done away with by the king. Nothing is lost by, for example, "My brother Gloucester, brave, stout-hearted man," or "My brother Gloucester, loyal to thy crown," etc., both of which are clearer and more quickly apprehended than the rather imprecise original. *Plain* can mean *ordinary looking, unadorned, not deceitful*, and more. Which is it? And why? *Well-meaning* signifies, among other things, *ineffectual good intentions*, a concept fleshed out in *Woodstock* but otherwise vague in this context, as Rossiter observes.

Rossiter also shows how overwhelmingly improbable it is that a later *Woodstock* would follow up these fleeting hints in such major ways, in effect creating an entire dramatic personality out of almost nothing, a shred and a patch in fact, though a minor gesture in the other direction would make perfect sense. Rossiter offers similar observations about Gaunt's use of "pelting farm" in *Richard II*.

There are further anomalies that Jackson needs to address. The Marlowe issue aside, if Rowley or some other playwright in the seventeenth century did actually set out to create what would have been a conscious prequel to Shakespeare's play, why did he make the joins so bad? Why give us Lapolee instead of Mowbray, a simple name selection, and why kill off Green, knowing that he turns up alive and kicking in *Richard II*? A dead Robert de Vere works just as well, indeed even better since he would be truer to the historical record, including Richard's likely homosexual attachment and theatrical display of grief at his death (Saul 461). We may wonder





This engraving from 1790 was based on the only image we have of Richard II, the painting in Westminster Abbey,

further why Anon introduced the infamous caterpillars at all, confusing the time lines, about which everyone since Keller has complained. De Vere, Simon Burley, and others would have filled these roles just as satisfactorily, marked the era plainly as pre-1399, and hewed more to the facts.<sup>28</sup> As Bullough says: “It is hard to believe that any play written after Shakespeare’s would set chronology at such defiance or separate the destruction of Bushy, Bagot, and Greene from the downfall of the King” (3.360).<sup>29</sup>

And why (we may additionally ask) leave out the young Bullingbrook who, as an Appellant Lord, did fight at Radcot Bridge and, by no coincidence, helped depose the king briefly in December, 1387? Why unhistorically give the role to his father, away from England until November, 1389. Why depict him as a rebellious firebrand, contradicting Shakespeare’s revered elder statesman? Among other things, Bullingbrook’s personal attachment to Woodstock could have been fleshed out, thus giving greater context to the opening of *Richard II*. The ironies and foreshadowings offered by including the future

Henry IV would seem irresistible, making *Woodstock* consistent with an early introduction rather than the discrepant history of Jackson’s thesis, and with one composed in ignorance of the sublime artistry that lay ahead.

On the technical level, what about Partridge’s case for textual stratification, and the survival in the play of forms and usages characteristic of the 1590s, such as the sixteenth-century word *lyneing* (2.3.0.s.d),<sup>30</sup> the archaic use of *country* for *county* (3.3.65, OED), the antique spelling of the word *Intendiments* (5.1.142), which Shakespeare himself had abandoned by 1599?<sup>31</sup> What about the repeated Elizabethan noun-verb discords? While it’s true that the practice survived into Jacobean times, its occurrence was rare, so its extensive usage in *Woodstock* is more likely to support the case for an earlier composition. Jackson cites Partridge approvingly, but does not acknowledge that in general his work undercuts the case for Rowley.

Why, furthermore—given Jackson’s possible dates for the MS.—were act and scene divisions omitted, typical of pre-Jacobean practice, but later added by some other hand? What about the fact that interest in history plays faded rapidly after 1600 and was all-but dead by 1608-10, rendering a Jacobean *Woodstock* a virtual anachronism?<sup>32</sup> How does Jackson explain the persistence in the text of the manifold blasphemies banned from the stage by the 1606 “Acte to restraine the Abuses of Players,”<sup>33</sup> and account for the use and presence of a masque which, according to Ewbank, Boas, Stavropoulos, and Corbin and Sedge, “does not follow the elaborate



patterning of the Jacobean masque”<sup>34</sup> On the contrary, the inset masque in *Woodstock* conforms closely in style and content to the Elizabethan model, and must thus in Jackson’s terms be accounted a puzzling incongruity.

Last—and, it seems to me, most fatally for the Rowley hypothesis—why would the playwright tactlessly insert that notorious phrase describing the King of England as “Superior Lord of Scotland” (2.2.111) with a Stuart on the throne known to dislike such remarks, and understandably so? Even if his distaste were not common knowledge—which it was—simple courtesy would rule it out. James had made his feelings known as early as 1598, when George Nicolson wrote to Burghley from Edinburgh:

It is regrated [regretted] to me in quiet sort that the comedians of London should in their play scorn the King and people of this land and wished that it may be speedily amended and stayed, lest the worst sort getting understanding thereof should stir the King and country to anger thereat.<sup>35</sup> (Melchiori 13)

No Jacobean dramatist could fail to be aware that two of the three authors of *Eastward Ho!*, Ben Jonson and George Chapman, were imprisoned in 1605 merely because a character in the play had poked fun at the King’s Scots accent. (The third, John Marston, avoided the same fate by fleeing the country). It’s inconceivable that Anon would deliberately run the same risk, multiplied of course by his portrayal of a bi-sexual monarch irresponsibly indulging male favorites.

Beyond these considerations, the phrase, “Superior Lord of Scotland,” is itself an important temporal marker of the early 1590s, since it was almost *de rigueur* at the time to make such comments on the English stage. A similar reference—“Edward England’s king and Scotland’s lord”—appears just as casually in Peele’s *Edward I* (TLN 632), a history play almost exactly contemporaneous with *Woodstock*. By the same token, the expression’s subsequent removal from *1 Richard II* is comprehensible only if the play was indeed censored for a revival, and a visible one at that, after James’s accession. Parfitt and Shepherd make a similar point: “Such correction must post-date the Jacobean union of the crowns” (25n). Thus the original text has to be Elizabethan and so first performed well before 24 March, 1603—the day the Queen died.

If Jackson is right, Rowley filched his drama from *Richard II*, *2 Henry VI*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Twelfth Night* and (anomalously) *Edward II*. And that’s just his count—Rossiter identifies many more Shakespeare plays containing references and repetitions. My own data show that, in fact, *Woodstock* is echoed in every single known Shakespeare work, including *Edward III*, his sections of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the *Sir Thomas More* fragment, the *Sonnets*, “The Phoenix and the Turtle,” and the long poems as well. This not only makes Samuel Rowley the world’s all-time champion plagiarist, but one who did most of his plagiarizing from memory, since publication of the First Folio was still approximately fifteen years away. Jackson hesitates to propose a hard composition date, but not even he suggests that *Woodstock* was written after 1623, Rowley having died in 1624.☹

## Notes

1 Discovered and first published by J.O. Halliwell as *A Tragedy of King Richard the Second* (1870), the play has been published ten times. The best-known editions are those edited by A.P. Rossiter (1946) and Geoffrey Bullough (1960). The most recent edition is my own (2006).

2 *When you see me, You know me* was premiered by Prince Henry's Men, Rowley's company (formerly the Admiral's Men) in 1604, most likely at Henslowe's Fortune Theatre. It was registered with the Stationers on February 12, 1605, then published in quarto by the bookseller Nathaniel Butter.

3 Rowley keeps popping up as everyone's favorite author of anonymous plays, including *The Taming of a Shrew*, *Orlando Furioso*, and *The Famous Victories of Henry V*. Elsewhere in his edition Honigmann discusses the phenomenon of "Rowley plays" (lv-lvi).

4 Jackson's figures are largely culled from Philip W. Timberlake: *The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse* (1931).

5 No other edition except Armstrong (a copy of Rossiter) gives "Certiorari."

6 Jackson repeats the error on page 36.

7 The editorial habit of "correcting" Elizabethan noun-verb discords was first noticed by E.A. Abbott in *A Shakespearian Grammar* (1996), a well-known study still referenced by scholars, though Jackson neither cites it nor lists it in his bibliography. See also *A Short History of the Text and Variorum Notes* 1.3.115 (124-8); Parfitt and Shepherd (14n.); Corbin and Sedge (72n.); and Eric Sams's essay, "Shakespeare's Language and Richard II."

8 Sometimes the prose is not ambiguous, but Rossiter prints it as verse anyway, giving the impression of very poor poetry indeed. Readers unaware of the misrepresentation may well conclude that the author could not possibly be Shakespeare. See for example my *Text and Variorum Notes* (5.2.34-5, vol 2, *The Tragedy of Richard II, Part One*.)

9 Jackson is an experienced Shakespeare scholar who should know that this is a perennial problem. In the Folio *Merry Wives of Windsor*, for example, thirty-seven prose passages are incorrectly printed as verse. (Riverside 356).

10 Jackson's excellent study of Middleton operates at a much higher level of intellectual integrity. It was prepared under the general direction of Prof. Erwin A. Stürzl, head of the Salzburg Studies in English Literature project, and Dr James Hogg, editor of the Jacobean Drama Studies series.

11 Jackson describes *The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse* as "meticulous," "very thorough," etc. However, he overlooks Timberlake's equally meticulous and thorough conclusion that revisions not shown in the MS. of *Woodstock* were probably introduced after the play's composition but before the existing copy was made—in other words, the MS. is a transcript of an earlier drama. (71-2.) Far from supporting Jackson's thesis, Timberlake undermines it.

12 Jackson's observation is consistent with his book on Middleton where he observes *inter alia* that a relatively high rate of feminine endings is "associated with Shakespeare's early plays but not with the plays of most other dramatists of the time" (152). In an article principally concerned with Shakespeare's hand in *Sir Thomas More*, Thomas Merriam confirms the general point: he grants Jackson's argument, but "*More's* proportion of feminine endings, similar to *Woodstock's*, cannot be accommodated by post-dating the play to the seventeenth century. *More's* high proportion of feminine endings associates it more with Shakespeare's habits of the 1590s than with any other playwright, including Munday" (30-1).

13 The count of 27 must be approximate because the last pages are missing. According to figures provided by Gerald E. Downs, Shakespeare uses 724 different "un-" words, distributed thus: *Midsummer*

*Night's Dream*, 18; *Much Ado About Nothing*, 20; *The Tempest*, 21; *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 23; *Venus and Adonis*, 23; *Julius Caesar*, 23; *Love's Labor's Lost*, 26; *1 Henry VI*, 29; *Taming of the Shrew*, 30; *Titus Andronicus*, 30; *As You Like It*, 3; *Henry V*, 33; *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, 33; *Twelfth Night*, 34; *Timon of Athens*, 34; *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 34; *2 Henry VI*, 34; *All's Well That Ends Well*, 37; *3 Henry VI*, 37; *1 Henry IV*, 40; *Macbeth*, 41; *Cymbeline*, 41; *Troilus and Cressida*, 43; *Romeo and Juliet*, 46; *King John*, 47; *The Winter's Tale*, 48; *Coriolanus*, 49; *Rape of Lucrece*, 49; *Othello* 50; *Richard II*, 50; *Measure for Measure*, 50; *King Lear*, 55; *Richard III*, 57; *Hamlet*, 68 (SHAKSPER).

14 Riverside editorially alters the word to *deliver*. Most other editions, including F1, give *redeliver*. Jackson recognizes the relationship between the Courtier and Osric though not the repetition of the word; his view is that Samuel Rowley or another simply stole the character from Shakespeare. The situation is evidently more complex than this, however, as I show in my discussion of *Hamlet* in *Richard II, Part One*.

15 *Chadwyck-Healey Literature on Line* (LION), a huge electronic database with easy-to-use search and comparison features. Unfortunately the results are not always reliable, though Jackson treats them as such. This leads him to claim incorrectly, for example, that “clear OED antedatings [of Shakespeare] are exceptional in *Woodstock*,” citing among his instances the word *fifteens* (a tax of one-fifteenth) (29). But in fact *fifteens* appears in *2 Henry VI*, 4.8.20-3, in a collocation with *subsidy* identical to *Woodstock*, 4.1.169. (My thanks to Rainbow Saari for this point.)

16 Jackson further notes that, in *Henry V*, Pistol is said to be “swelling like a turkey-cock” (5.1.15), that is, as a simile as opposed to the metaphors in *Twelfth Night* and *Woodstock*.

17 The others are Marlowe's *Edward II*, Greene's *James IV* and Peele's *Edward I*.

18 On the subject of Shakespeare's politics, see also Tim Spiekerman: *Shakespeare's Political Realism: The English History Plays* (2001); Martin Dzelzainis: “Shakespeare and Political Thought” in *A Companion to Shakespeare* (1999); and Alexander Legatt: *Shakespeare's Political Drama: The History Plays and the Roman Plays* (1988).

19 It is also said that while Mary Queen of Scots was acting as her mother's regent in Scotland, her mother, Mary of Guise, gave her signed pieces of blank paper to issue in her name.

20 The identification is discussed in more detail by Sandra Billington in *Mock Kings in Medieval Society and Renaissance Drama* (226, 229-30).

21 Jackson references Frijlinck's line numbers but quotes his own “modernized” versions of her text. Here I substitute square-bracketed references to the equivalent lines, but don't edit Jackson's quotes. For Shakespeare, Jackson cites editors Wells and Taylor in *The Oxford Shakespeare* (1988) while I substitute the equivalent lines in *The Riverside Shakespeare* (1997). This is especially necessary in Jackson's case because he gets some of his own references wrong, e.g., a passage from *Midsummer Night's Dream* assigned to 3.2 when it is actually 3.1.

22 Shortly after his death, Jonson's admirers published *Ionsonus Virbius: or, The memorie of Ben. Jonson revived by the friends of the Muses* (London: printed by E.P. [Elizabeth Purslowe] for Henry Seile, 1638). No such eulogy appeared for Shakespeare; indeed, his passing went virtually unnoticed.

23 Danby also notes: “There was a time when Beaumont and Fletcher seemed the universal genius-es, combining qualities which avoided on the one hand Jonson's laboured calculation of effect and on the other Shakespeare's merely random happiness . . . . The judgment is no doubt a mental aberration. But it was broadspread in the seventeenth century, typical of a class and a time” (153).

24 That Jackson cites the 1608 Quarto of *The History of King Lear* suggests that he considers *Woodstock* to be no earlier than 1608.

25 Jackson depends heavily on G. Lambrecht's article: "Sur Deux Prétendues de *Richard II*" (1967). Forker notes that Long's analyses "convincingly refute" Lambrecht's conclusion that *Woodstock* is "postérieur" to Shakespeare (117n.). We may note too that the Nottingham editors also recognize the connection between *Woodstock*, 3.2.9-13 and *Macbeth*, 1.6.1-9 (Parfitt 35n.).

26 Elson in fact calls Tresilian "but a lame forerunner," adding cautiously that Shakespeare "may well have been indebted to [him] for some traits of his masterpiece" (181-2). Bullough makes similar observations (177-8, 264) as do A.R. Humphreys (xxxvi-xxxvii) and Richard Helgerson (153-4).

27 Jackson argues like a prosecutor, not a critic. The phrase intentionally suggests that Anon is to Shakespeare as Claudius is to Hamlet's father, a murderous usurper.

28 "The four greatest beneficiaries of Richard's favour in the 1380s were the chancellor, Michael de la Pole; the chamberlain, Robert de Vere; the under-chamberlain, Simon Burley; and John Beauchamp of Holt, the receiver of the chamber from 1385 to 1387" (Tuck 73) ". . . The elevation of Greene and Bagot, although unhistorical, mirrors the advancement of Richard II's friends, Burley, de la Pole (Earl of Suffolk) and de Vere (Duke of Ireland) earlier in the reign" (Corbin 74n.).

29 Again, Jackson seems unaware of Bullough, whose views deserve at least a nod of recognition.

30 See OED. Both Corbin and Sedge and the Nottingham editors note that *lyneing* "is a common sixteenth-century term for any material used to line or back another" (Corbin 94n, Parfitt 27n). Cf. *Richard II* (4.62-3): "The lining of his coffers shall make coats / To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars."

31 *Henry V*, 1.2.144: "We . . . feare the maine intendment of the Scot."

32 "And if we ask what the prevailing kinds of drama are [in 1607], we shall find that while romantic comedy and romantic tragedy persist, but with striking differences, there is a vogue for satirical comedy or 'comic satire,' and that the play whose theme is based on some episode in English history has almost disappeared" (Wilson qtd. in Kaufmann 9).

33 The Parliamentary Act of 1606 prohibited "any person or persons . . . in any stage play, interlude, show, maygame, or pageant [to] jestingly or profanely speak or use the holy name of God or of Christ Jesus, or of the Holy Ghost or of the Trinity. . . ." Many plays were consequently revised, most famously two versions of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, (1603, 1608) and *Hamlet*, whose F1 text differs from its Quartos.

34 Corbin and Sedge, *Thomas of Woodstock*, 45 n76; Janet C. Stavropoulos: "A masque is treason's license," (1988); Inga-Stina Ewbank: "These Pretty Devices: A Study of Masques in Plays," (1967); F.S. Boas: "The Play within the Play" (1927).

35 Melchiori cites research by A.R. Braunmuller in *Calendar of State Papers Relating to Scotland* 8.188.

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