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Author(s)
Yamada, Naomichi

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Q1 OR F1? WHICH TEXT IS CLOSER TO
SHAKESPEARE’S INTENTION?*
— THE CASE OF BRAKENBURY IN KING RICHARD III —

NAOMICHI YAMADA

For some time I have been comparing certain of Shakespeare’s plays with their source materials and trying thereby to discover his intention in dramatising them. In the process I have tended to use modern editions of Shakespeare for comparison, but in recent years I have been using early printed texts instead to investigate to what extent the authorial intention comes through in the respective early texts and to see which text seems to be closer to Shakespeare’s dramatic intention. In this paper I propose to study King Richard III by focusing in particular on Brakenbury, the lieutenant of the Tower of London and one of the minor characters in the play, and seeing how Shakespeare creates him in the substantive texts of the play — Q1(1597) and F1(1623) — by comparing them with their source. If differences in the handling of Brakenbury exist between these two texts and some authorial intention then becomes clear, we might be able to decide which text is closer to the author’s creative design.

I. Sources

It has been commonly agreed that in writing King Richard III Shakespeare used Hall and Holinshed as sources throughout, but it can be said that he used Holinshed directly as the main source because he followed Holinshed’s mistake in the second edition of 1587 and adopted and

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1 For one thing, modern editions of Shakespeare have been largely collated, and when investigating authorial intention the problem of choosing which edition to use for comparison with the source materials always occurs. It is thus preferable to go back to early printed editions, above all substantive texts, for proper comparison.

2 Among the papers I have published on this play so far are ‘The Tragedy of the Man Who “Bought a Glass” in King Richard III — Shakespeare’s Reinterpretation of Holinshed — (1),’ Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences (The Hitotsubashi Academy, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, 1993), Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 1-23, ‘The Tragedy of the Man Who “Bought a Glass” in King Richard III — Shakespeare’s Reinterpretation of Holinshed — (2),’ Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences (The Hitotsubashi Academy, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, 1994), Vol.35, No.1, pp. 1-31, and ‘On the F1-only Richard with ‘a Booke of Prayer in his hand’ and the Q1-only ‘Clock’ Passage — a Comparative Study of the Two Substantive Texts of King Richard III and its Main Source,’ in Japanese, to be published in GENGO BUNKA — Cultura Philologica — (The Hitotsubashi Language Institute, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, 2005), XLII, pp. 77-92. In ‘Fortinbras in Hamlet — A Study of Shakespeare’s Substantive Texts and the Sources — ’ in Japanese, GENGO BUNKA — Cultura Philologica — (The Hitotsubashi Language Institute, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, 2002), XXXIX, pp. 91-106, I used the Qi, Q2 and F1 of Hamlet for comparison.
incorporated into his play such of Holinshed's materials as the bleeding of King Henry VI's corpse in Richard's presence and the Rugemont episode, which do not appear in Hall. Of course, there are such passages as the misidentification of Rivers at II. i and the tale of the merchant at III. v, which are unique to Hall, and Hammond points out that "often the two texts are so close as to prohibit determining which was used." He concludes "that Shakespeare had both to hand, but that..., Hall was the primary source and Holinshed used chiefly for additional details." But it is clear that Shakespeare actually used Holinshed's second edition and made frequent use of its details throughout the whole play, which shows that, in dramatising King Richard III, he turned primarily to Holinshed for detailed historical descriptions. As this process of using source materials meets the fundamental conditions of a main or primary source, I propose in this paper to use Holinshed for comparison with the play in the first instance and then to refer to Hall if necessary.

II. Substantive Texts

As mentioned above, there are two substantive texts of King Richard III, the first Quarto of 1597 (Q1) and the first Folio of 1623 (F1). The other seven Quartos and three Folios are all derivative texts supposed to have been printed from the previous Quarto or Quartos, or printed immediately from the previous Folio text. These two substantive texts should be compared with Holinshed's Chronicles of 1587 to determine how they differ from each other in dramatising Brakenbury and what kinds of authorial intention are to be discovered there.

III. Method of Comparison

Shakespeare is supposed to have written while turning over the pages of the Chronicles and to have repeatedly departed from and returned to his main source. It seems unlikely, however, that he would casually leave his source without any purpose; it is more natural to think that he would choose to leave it only because he could not fully satisfy his creative design with Holinshed’s descriptions. Non-Holinshed materials may therefore be regarded as clues to the authorial intention in dramatising the play, and our task is then to pick up Shakespeare’s original creations and alterations not found in Holinshed, to analyse them, to determine why Shakespeare wrote in that way, and finally to see which of the two texts, Q1 and F1, reveals the authorial intention more clearly and powerfully and can thus be considered closer to the dramatist’s intention.

IV. Comparison

In comparing the Q1 and F1 texts of King Richard III with Holinshed and investigating

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4 For the details of my methodology, see 'Two Tragedies in Harmony in Julius Caesar — Shakespeare's Reinterpretation of Plutarch — ', Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences (The Hitotsubashi Academy, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, 1986), Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 1-6.
the reasons for Shakespeare’s departures from his source, one thing which interests me greatly
is the way Shakespeare depicts Brakenbury. In the play this character actually appears on the
stage in three scenes: in the first scene (I. i), ushering Clarence into the Tower and being
stopped by Richard, he prevents the two of them from talking privately to each other; in the
second scene (I. iv) he either converses with Clarence (Q1), or appears after Clarence falls
asleep after talking with the Keeper (F1); in the third scene (IV. i), in front of the Tower, he
blocks Queen Elizabeth, the Duchess of York, Anne and Clarence’s daughter from visiting
Edward’s two sons, who are being kept in the Tower. Finally, in V. v, Stanley reads out
Brakenbury’s name as one of those killed on Bosworth field. Let us therefore compare the text
of Q1 and F1 in the four scenes, beside the relevant descriptions in Holinshed when such exist,
and see whether there is a clear-cut and consistent image of Brakenbury common to Q1 and F1
and whether there are any notable differences between the two texts.

(1) Act I, Scene I

Q1: Enter Clarence with a gourd of men. ..... / Bro. I beseech your Graces both to pardon
me: / His Maiesty hath streightly giuen in charge, / That no man shall haue priuate
conference, / Of what degree soeuer with his brother. / Glo. Euen so and please your
worship Brokenbury, / You may pertake of any thing we say: /.../ How say you sir, can
you deny all this? / Bro. With this (my Lord) my selfe haue nought to do. / Glo. Naught
to do with Mistris Shore, I tell thee fellow, /.../ Bro. I beseech your Grace to pardon me,
and withal forbeare / Your conference with the noble Duke. / Cla. We know thy charge
Brokenbury and will obey, / Glo. We are the Queenes abiects and must obey. /

F1: Enter Clarence, and Brakenbury, guarded. ..... / Bra. I beseech your Graces both to pardon
me, / His Maiesty hath straightly giuen in charge, / That no man shall haue priuate
Conference / (Of what degree soeuer) with your Brother. / Rich. Euen so, and please your
Worship Brakenbury, / You may partake of any thing we say: /.../ How say you sir? can you
deny all this? / Bra. With this (my Lord) my selfe haue nought to doo. / Rich. Naught to do with
Mistris Shore? / I tell thee Fellow,.../.../ Bra. I do beseech your Grace / To pardon me, and withal forbeare / Your Conference with the Noble Duke. / Cla. We know thy charge
Brakenbury, and wil obey. / Rich. We are the Queenes abiects, and must obey. /

As there is no corresponding description in Holinshed, these exchanges between Braken-
bury, Richard, and Clarence are Shakespeare’s invention. Here Q1 and F1 are almost the same
except for F1 having the two unique lines ‘Bra. What one, my Lord? / Rich. Her Husband
Knaue, would’st thou betray me?’, and Q1’s ‘his’ in ‘Of what degree soeuer with his brother’

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5 For quotations from Holinshed, Ellis, ed. Holinshed’s Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland, VOL. 3,
England (New York: AMS PRESS, INC., 1965) is used, and for quotations from Q1 and F1, Greg, W. W., ed.
Richard the Third, 1597 (Shakespeare Quarto Facsimiles, No. 12, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1959) and
Moston, Doug, (prepared and introduced by), The First Folio of Shakespeare 1623 (Applause Books, 1995) are
used respectively. Long s is modernised. Smidt, Kristian, ed. The Tragedy of King Richard the Third — Parallel
Texts of the First Quarto and the First Folio with Variants of the Early Quartos — (Universitetsforlaget Oslo,
Humanities Press, New York, 1969) was also consulted.
in contrast to F1’s ‘your’ in ‘(Of what degree soeuer) with your Brother.’ Especially in the latter difference of ‘his brother’ and ‘your Brother,’ Shakespeare stresses F1’s Brakenbury facing Richard more directly and graphically than Q1’s because he is clearly speaking to Richard when he says ‘your Brother.’ It is true that Brakenbury addresses both Richard and Clarence when he first says ‘your Graces both’ in Q1 and F1, but he shifts and concentrates his attention on Richard more clearly and smoothly in F1, which moves from ‘your Graces both’ to ‘your Brother’ and then to ‘your Grace’ (meaning Richard only), than in Q1, which goes from ‘your Graces both’ to ‘his brother’ and then to ‘your Grace.’ He seems to avoid talking to Clarence; rather, he turns to Richard instead. In addition, and more importantly, Shakespeare creates here a Brakenbury, in both texts, who stops Richard and Clarence and requests them not to have a ‘private conference’ between themselves according to the king’s ‘charge’ and beseeches Richard again not to do so. Brakenbury is hereby developed as a loyal subject of King Edward and makes both Richard and Clarence obey the order in the end, though Richard does so ironically. Shakespeare, deviating from Holinshed, invents the king’s order of prohibiting any man of whatever degree from having a private talk with Clarence and a loyal Brakenbury who tells them of the order and asks them (and Richard in particular in F1) to refrain from conversing in private. What then is Shakespeare’s intention in this invention and in creating a slight difference in Brakenbury’s attitude towards Richard and Clarence in the two texts? We must discuss this question together with the other three scenes, but at least it can be said that, as early as the beginning of the play, he has observed the king’s ‘charge’ and has done so more faithfully by using ‘your Brother’ in F1 than by using ‘his brother’ in Q1.

(2) Act I, Scene IV

**Hol.:** ........................................

Q1: *Enter Clarence, Brokenbury.* / *Brok.* Why lookes your grace so heauily to day? / *Clar.* Oh I haue past a miserablenight, / So fullo fv gly sights, of gastly dreames, /.../ Sofull of dismall terror was the time. / *Brok.* What was your dreame, I long to heare yout ell it. / *Cla.* Me thoughts I was imbarkt for Burgundy, / And in my company my brother Glocester, / Who from my cabbine tempted me to walke, / Vpon thehatches/.../ Me thought that Glocester stumbled, and in stumbling, / Stroke me that thought to stay him ouer board, / Into the tumbling billowes of the maine. /.../ What vgly sights of death within my eies: /.../ *Brok.* Had yous u e hleisurei nt h etime of death, / To gaze vpon the secrets of the deepe? / *Clar.* Me thought I had, for still the enuious floud/ Kept in my soule,.../ *Brok.* Awakt youn ot with this sore agony. / *Cla.* O no, mydreame was lengthned after life, /.../ The first.../.../ Was my greatfatheri nl aw renowmed Warwicke, / Who cried alowd what scourge for perjury. / Can this darke monarchy a #oord false Clarence, / And so he vanisht,.../.../ Such terrible impression made the dreame. / *Cla.* No marueile my Lo: though it a #righted you, / I promise you, I am afraid to heare yout ell it. / *Bro.* I will my Lo: God giue your Grace good rest, / Sorrowe breake seasons,.../.../ Theresnothing di #ers but the outward fame. / 

F1: *Enter Clarence and Keeper.* / *Keep.* Why lookes your Grace so heauily to day.
O, I have past a miserable night, so full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights. What was your dream, my Lord, I pray you tell me? My thoughts that I had broken from the Tower, and was embarked to cross to Burgundy, and in falling strook me (that thought to stay him) overboard, into the tumbling billows of the maine. What sights of ugly death within mine eyes? All scattered in the bottom of the Sea.

Had you such leisure in the time of death to gaze upon these secrets of the deep? Me thought I had, and often did I strive to yield the Ghost: Who almost burst, to belch it in the Sea. Awak’d you not in this sore Agony? No, no, my Dream was lengthen’d after life. The first Was my great Father-in-Law, renowned Warwick, who spake aloud: What scourge for Periurie, Can this dark Monarchy afford false Clarence? And so he vanish’d: Such terrible Impression made my Dreame. No marvell Lord, though it a righted you, I am afraid (me thinkes) to have you tell it. Ah Keeper, Keeper, I have done these things! (That now give evidence against my Soule) For Edwards sake, and see how he requits mee. O God! if my deep prayres cannot appease thee, O spare my guiltlesse Wife, and my poore children. Keeper, I prithee sit by me a-while, My Soule is heauy, and I faine would sleepe.

I will my Lord, God give your Grace good rest.

Enter Brakenbury the Lieutenant. Sorrow breaks Seasons.

There’s nothing divers, but the outward fame. Though the wording and word order are somewhat different throughout the scene, what these exchanges mean is almost the same in the two texts, with some 18 F1-only and 4 Q1-only lines to be considered. But as can be seen, during the time when Clarence wakes up, talks, and sleeps again, the most essential difference is the speech prefix: in Q1, Clarence talks to Brokenbury and Brokenbury is left to soliloquise after Clarence sleeps, whereas in F1, Clarence talks to the Keeper and then Brakenbury enters after Clarence goes back to sleep. In F1 there is thus no dialogue between Clarence and Brakenbury. As there is no description corresponding to this scene in Holinshed, all of the speech prefixes and dialogues are Shakespeare’s inventions and their intention must be examined. It must be remembered that Brakenbury (Brokenbury) is the lieutenant of the Tower of London who, in escorting Clarence to the Tower, met Richard and did not allow them to talk as the king ordered in Q1 and F1. Therefore Brokenbury’s behaviour in I. iv of Q1, in having a ‘private conference’ with Clarence, does not agree with the firm attitude he took towards Richard and Clarence in I. i, while the F1 Brakenbury, by handing over the role of conversational partner to the Keeper, continues to obey the king’s order and does not appear until Clarence falls asleep. Thus the F1 Brakenbury continues to be a loyal subject and comments on the sleeping Clarence with the Keeper for a witness nearby. Which of

D. L. Patrick points out, taking up Clarence’s later line of ‘Where art thou keeper, give me a cup of wine’ in Q1 after he awakes in the presence of the murderers, that ‘the line reveals the fact that in the Folio text we have the original arrangement and in the quarto a later alteration. The situation accords with the general purpose of the quarto to provide for more economical presentation and agrees with the natural probability that revision would result in the combination of parts rather than in their separation.’ (David Lyall Patrick, The Textual History of ‘Richard III,’ Stanford University Press, 1936, p. 21.)
the two texts is closer to Shakespeare’s intention?

After Brokenbury soliloquises (Q1) and Brakenbury enters and speaks moralistically beside the Keeper (F1), two murderers come up and talk to Brokenbury or Brakenbury. Holinshed describes the scene as follows:

Hol.: About this season, through great mishap, the spark of priuie malice was newlie kindled betwixt the king and his brother the duke of Clarence,... the duke...mooued the king with his dailie exclamation to take such displeasure with him, that fainallie the duke was cast into the Tower, and therewith adiudged for a traitor, and priuilie drowned in a butt of malmesie,...

No mention is made here of the lieutenant of the Tower and the ‘murtherers’ (Q1) or ‘two Murtherers’ (F1) sent by Richard. Holinshed, however, mentions Brakenberie much later in describing the deaths of Edward’s two sons, where Brakenberie rejects Richard’s request brought by John Greene to ‘put the two children [Edward’s two sons] to death’ but ‘the king... brake to him [James Tirrell] secretlie his mind in this mischeeuous matter....he sent him to Brakenberie with a letter, by which he was commanded to deliuer sir Iames all the keies of the Tower for one night, to the end he might there accomplish the kings pleasure, in such things as he had giuen him commandement. After which letter deliuered, & the keies receiued, sir Iames appointed the night next insuing to destroie them....’

Therefore Shakespeare might have transferred Holinshed’s Brakenberie to this scene and made him read not ‘a letter’ but the commission, and accordingly hand over the keys to the murderers, though not to kill Edward’s sons but to kill Clarence. In fact, Brakenbury is completely eliminated from the exchanges that take place between Richard and Tyrrel later, before and after the sons’ murder. In any case, this is a clear departure from Holinshed, so that the dialogues between Brokenbury or Brakenbury and the murderers in I. iv can at least be Shakespeare’s alterations, if not pure inventions of his own.

Now let us compare the two texts of Q1 and F1:

Q1: The murtherers enter. / In Gods name what are you, and how came you hither? / Exe. I would speake with Clarence, and I came hither on my legs. / Bro. Yea, are you so briefe. / 2 Exe. O sir, it is better to be briefe then tedious, / Shew him our commission, talke no more. He readeth it. / Bro. I am in this commanded to deliuer / The noble Duke of Clarence to your hands, / I will not reason what is meant hereby, / Because I wilbe guiltles of the meaning: / There lies the Duke a sleepe, and there the Keyes. / Ile to the King, and signifie to him, / That thus I haue resign’d my charge to you. / Exe. Doe so, it is a point of wisedome. /

F1: Enter two Murtherers. / 1. Mur. Ho, who’s heere? / Bra. What would’st thou Fellow? And how camm’st thou hither. / 2. Mur. I would speak with Clarence, and I came hither on my Legges. / Bra. What so breefe? / 1. ’Tis better (Sir) then to be tedious: / Let him see our Commission, and talke no more. Reads / Bra. I am in this, commanded to deliuer / The Noble Duke of Clarence to your hands. / I will not reason what is meant heereby, / Because I will be guiltlesse from the meaning. / There lies the Duke asleepe, and there the Keyes. / Ile to the King, and signifie to him, / That thus I haue resign’d to you my charge. Exit. / 1 You may sir, ’tis a point of wisedome: / Far you well. /
Despite the differences in wording and word order between the two texts, the meaning of the exchanges is almost the same: both Brokenbury and Brakenbury are shown the commission by the murderers (though it is a false one made in fact by Richard), in which they are commanded by the king to deliver Clarence to them, and they obey the king’s order and make up their mind to visit King Edward to tell him that they have done what he ordered them to do. Both Brokenbury and Brakenbury thus maintain their loyalty to King Edward here as they did in I. i, though they are apparently skeptical of the commission, a little concerned about what will happen to Clarence once he is put under the control of the murderers, and are in reality deceived. It becomes clear that Shakespeare invents a Brokenbury and Brakenbury loyal to the king again after creating Brokenbury and the Keeper respectively talking with Clarence and making Brokenbury throw aside his loyalty and Brakenbury keep it. What is Shakespeare’s intention supposed to be here, and how is this incorporated into his overall design to dramatise Brakenbury?

(3) Act IV, Scene I

Hol.:  

Q1: Enter Quee. mother, Duchesse of Yorke, Marques Dorset, at / one doore, Duchesse of Glocest. at another doore. / Duch. Who meets vs heere, my neece Plantagenet? / Qu. Sister well met, whether awaie so fast? / Duch. No farther then the Tower, and as I ghesse / Vpon the like deuotion as your selues, / To gratulate the tender Princes there. / Qu. Kind sister thanks, weele enter al togither, Enter/ And in good time here the Lieutenant comes. Lieutenant. / M. Lieutenant, pray you by your leaue, / How fares the Prince? / Lieu. Wel Madam, and in health, but by your leaue, / I may not suer you to visite him, / The King hath straightlie charged the contrarie. / Qu. The King? whie, whose that? / Lieu. I crie you mercie, I meane theLord protector. / Qu. The Lord protect him from that Kinglie title: / Hath he set boundes betwixt their loue and me: / I am their mother, who should keepe me from them? / Du.yor. I am their Fathers, Mother, I will see them. / Duch.glo. Their aunt I am in law, in loue their mother: / Then feare not thou, Ile beare thy blame, / And take thy office from thee on my perill. / Lieu. I doe beseech your graces all to pardon me: / I am bound by oath, I may not doe it. Enter L. Stanlie. / 

F1: Ente the Queene, Anne Duchesse of Gloucester, the / Duchesse of Yorke, and Marquesse Dorset. / Duch. Yorke. Who metes vs heere? / My Neece Plantagenet, / Led in the hand of her kind Aunt of Gloster? / Now, for my Life, shee’s wandring to the Tower, / On pure hearts loue, to greet the tender Prince. / Daughter, well met. / Anne. God gie your Graces both, a happie / And a ioyfull time of day. / Qu. As much to you, good Sister: whither away? / Anne. No farther then the Tower, and as I guesse, / Vpon the like deuotion as your selues, / To gratulate the gentle Princes there. / Qu. Kind Sister thankes, wee’le enter all together: / Enter the Lieutenant. / And in good time, here the Lieutenant comes. / Master Lieutenant, pray you, by your leaue, / How doth the Prince, and my young Sonne of Yorke? / Lieu. Right well, deare Madame: by your patience, / I may not suffer you to visit them, / The King hath strictly charg’d the contrarie. / Qu. The King? who’s that? / Lieu. I meane, the Lord Protector. / Qu. The Lord protect him from that Kingly Title. / Hath he set bounds betwene their loue, and me? / I am their Mother, who shall barre me from them?
/Duch.Yorke. I am their Fathers Mother, I will see them. /Anne. Their Aunt I am in law, in loue their Mother: / Then bring me to their sights, Ile beare thy blame, / And take thy Office from thee, on my perill. /Lieu. No, Madame, no; I may not leaue it so: / I am bound by Oath, and therefore pardon me. / Exit Lieutenant. / Enter Stanley. /

Here, Queen Elizabeth, the Duchess of York and Anne, ignorant that Richard is to be crowned the next day, meet in front of the Tower to visit the princes held there, and the Lieutenant obstructs them. There are some 6 F1-only lines, but during the time the Lieutenant appears before them, talks to them and exits, though the wording and word order are somewhat different, the meaning of the text is almost the same. And as there is no description corresponding to this scene in Holinshed, these dialogues are Shakespeare’s invention. Shakespeare thus invents the Lieutenant who, informing them of Richard’s coming to the throne, will not allow Queen Elizabeth, the Duchess of York or Anne to visit their respective sons, grandsons or nephews on the ground of oath and Richard’s charge and disappears. Consequently the Lieutenant, who once urged Richard not to have a ‘priuate conference’ with Clarence on the ground of Edward’s charge, shows himself loyal to the king whether the king is Edward or Richard. Therefore by deviating from Holinshed, Shakespeare continues to maintain Brakenbury’s loyalty to the king, in this case Richard, in this scene in both texts.

(4) Act V, Scene V

Hol.: There were slaine beside him, Walter lord Ferrers of Chartleie, sir Richard Radcliffe, and Robert Brakenberie lieutenant of the Tower, and not manie gentlemen more....


Q1 and F1 mention Brakenbury among the dead as in Holinshed after the battle at Bosworth: he fought on Richard’s side and thereby remained loyal and faithful to Richard to the last.

V. Conclusion

When we thus compare the four scenes in Q1 and F1 as a whole with Holinshed, it becomes evident that Shakespeare, by departing from his main source, intends to create Brakenbury as loyal to the king throughout the play with the one exception of Q1’s Brakenbury who enters with Clarence at the outset of I. iv and, against King Edward’s order, has a ‘priuate conference’ with him. In the same scene, on the other hand, F1 has a Brakenbury who, with the Keeper substituting for him, is kept from talking with Clarence by having him enter after the latter falls asleep. Therefore F1 follows Shakespeare’s overall intention of inventing
a constant Brakenbury in having him observe the kingly charge and remain loyal in I. iv, whereas Q1 proves to go against Shakespeare’s intention. As far as I. iv is concerned, F1 can thus be regarded as closer to the authorial intention than Q1; moreover, as far as Brakenbury in the four scenes as a whole is concerned, F1 has the more loyal Brakenbury because he has a face-to-face talk with Richard when he says ‘your Brother,’ and already avoids a ‘priuate conference’ with Clarence as early as I. i. For this reason, in Brakenbury’s case, F1 is closer to Shakespeare’s intention throughout the play.