



Henry IV, Part II

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Places Discussed

*London streets. This location is usually the realm of the comic chaos of lower-class life that constitutes much of the background of the play. The tavern-haunting Falstaff and his villainous companions embody the vigor, confusion, and immorality of London street life.

*Westminster Palace. Royal palace, adjacent to Westminster Abbey in London, where King Henry agonizes over the outcome of the rebellion of Northumberland and his accomplices. As his health wanes, his son Prince Henry arrives, and he advises the prince to keep his nobles busy by pursuing “foreign quarrels.”

King Henry had once been told that he would die in Jerusalem. After learning that a chamber in his palace is named “Jerusalem,” he orders that he be taken there to die, and his son becomes King Henry V.

Justice Shallow’s house. Gloucestershire location of Falstaff’s ludicrous efforts to recruit soldiers for the royal army.

*Warkworth Castle. Northumberland headquarters of the earl of Northumberland, head of the Percy family and a leader of the rebellion against Henry IV.

*Gaultree Forest. Yorkshire location of the deception and capture of the rebel leaders Mowbray, Hastings, and the archbishop of York by Henry IV’s other son, Prince John. The distance between Yorkshire and London makes it possible for the king and Prince Henry to dissociate themselves from this rather dishonorable action.

Bibliography:

Ornstein, Robert. *A Kingdom for a Stage*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972. In a critical study that includes all of Shakespeare’s history plays, Ornstein devotes a chapter to *Henry IV, Part II*. He describes Hal’s development and his rejection of Falstaff.

Pearlman, Elihu. *William Shakespeare: The History Plays*. Boston: Twayne, 1992. A valuable scholarly overview of the histories. The chapter on *Henry IV, Part II* is divided into numerous brief analyses of characters and themes.

Porter, Joseph A. *The Drama of Speech Acts*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. Analyzes speech and oratory in the second tetralogy. A chapter on *Henry IV, Part II* explores the contrasts between Falstaff’s speech and Hal’s.

Tillyard, E. M. W. *Shakespeare’s History Plays*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1944. Strong on historical interpretation, Tillyard’s study explores the important themes of the second tetralogy. Traces the growth and development of Hal’s character.

Henry IV, Part II: Henry IV, Part II

Traversi, Derek Antona. *Shakespeare: From "Richard II" to "Henry V."* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press. A close reading of the second tetralogy includes a chapter on *Henry IV, Part II* that emphasizes character development and style.

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