"From the text of Shakspeare": William Charles Macready, *King Lear,* and the Theatrical Antiquarianism of Locrine

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I. Introduction

In response to William Charles Macready's 1838 production of *King Lear,* an article from London's Theatrical Examiner wrote that he had "restored to the stage Shakspeare's true *Lear,* banished from it, by impudent ignorance, for upwards of a hundred and fifty years."[1] The "impudent ignorance" was in reference to Irish poet Nahum Tate's 1681 adaptation of the play. This adaptation, typical of Restoration revision, cut the character of the Fool, created a romance between Edgar and Cordelia, and featured a happy ending in which Lear and Cordelia both live. Tate's version of the play was fashionable throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and many celebrity actors would persist in the tradition of using Tate's text over Shakespeare's. Macready's restoration, however, would oust Tate's Restoration adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear.*

Macready's decision to restore the "authentic" Shakespearean text of the play derives from a mindset of theatrical antiquarianism. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines antiquarianism as "The profession or pursuits of the antiquarian; taste for, or devotion to, antiquities."[2] While the phenomenon of antiquarianism was rife throughout many facets of nineteenth century British culture, it

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was particularly present within the theatre industry. For theatre practitioners, this mindset was customarily displayed through scenery, costumes, and stage properties in the pursuit of stage pictures that were reminiscent of a play's historical setting. Like his contemporaries, Macready also implemented antiquarian visual components to his plays; however, his work with the play text offered the most significant long-term impact on the stage. He focused on the text as a relic—or "antiquity"—through which he manifested his devotion to Shakespeare.

Macready and his contemporary news outlets claimed his 1838 production as a restoration. However, status as a restoration of Shakespeare's *King Lear* is more complicated than it initially appears. The prevailing claim about this production was that it was "From the text of Shakspeare," according to its playbills, and was thus resurrecting Shakespeare's original play text for performance.[3] And yet, Macready performed his own revisions of Shakespeare's "original." He textually altered the play, incorporating his own additions, deletions, substitutions, rearrangements, and reassignments. For that matter, Macready's base texts were contemporary, nineteenth-century print editions that conflated the quarto and folio versions of the play. Using these editions, he revised, rewrote, and rearranged the textual components of the play into something entirely new. In reality, the culmination of this was a performance script only adjacent to any "original" text; rather, he had created something that more closely resembled an adaptation of the play.

It is worth noting that Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier in their anthology, *Adaptations of Shakespeare,* acknowledge the difficulty in naming the textual products that are adaptations. They discuss several possible terms, including "alterations," "imitations," "spinoffs," "tradapations," "offshoots," and even "appropriations." Towards the conclusion of their discussion on labelling adaptations, they write that:

> Adaptation implies a process rather than a beginning or an end, and as ongoing objects of adaptation all Shakespeare's plays remain in process. Finally, to fall back on adaptation as the working label is to take advantage of its general currency. It is the word in most common usage and therefore capable of minimizing confusion.[4]

Central to this particular definition of "adaptation" is the idea that adaptations are in process. Shakespeare's plays are constantly undergoing some degree of adaptive work as fluid textual processes, as they are repeatedly edited and produced for the stage. Macready's work with *King Lear* exists within this conversation of adaptation not only because his productions exist in the larger historical process of *King Lear,* but also because they exist within their own decades-long process with the play. Similar to how Fischlin and Fortier return to the term "adaptation" for lack of a better term, then, I will refer to Macready's work with *King Lear* as that of an adaptation in the effort to reinforce the dichotomy between his perceived restorative reputation and his actual adaptive work.

Macready performed numerous edits to his production scripts of *King Lear,* but one of his most noteworthy augmentations to the play is his addition of a character named Locrine. Beginning with his 1834 production, he introduced Locrine while he prepared his prompt book. This character derives from the 1595 play, *The Lamentable Tragedie of Locrine,* a play once attributed to Shakespeare. It was this play that likely served as the primary source and inspiration for Macready's addition, since literary critics were still debating its authorship well into the nineteenth century. Using archival evidence, this essay will argue that Macready participated in *Locrine*'s ongoing debate of canonicity, which prompted his theatrically-antiquarian addition of the Locrine character in his productions of *King Lear.* I will begin with an examination of Macready's prompt books and the specific moments of Locrine's presence in the text. Following this will be a discussion of Macready's engagement with *Locrine*. Finally, the dramaturgy of Macready's inclusion of Locrine will be contextualized through an analysis of Locrine as Macready's artistic signature and manifestation of his theatrical antiquarianism.

II. Locrine in Macready's Text

Macready's theatrical antiquarianism was so enduring that his productions of *King Lear* would not be complete without Locrine. Because of this, Macready would include Locrine in every one of his performances of *King Lear* for the rest of his theatrical career. This included productions from 1834, 1838, and 1851, along with

revived performances in other years. Macready is ordinarily credited with textual restoration, and there is some truth to this claim, but Locrine serves as one piece of evidence that he was also engaged in textual adaptation by means of his theatrical antiquarianism. This began with his prompt books.

Macready's prompt books are evidence of how he envisioned *King Lear* for performance. The scope of this study encompasses seven prompt books associated with Macready's performances of the play. Four of these prompt books are held by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. The remaining three are housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum's National Art Library in London. These prompt books vary in date, ranging from 1834 to 1851, comprising the majority of Macready's theatrical career. Some of these prompt books share similar edits, and others do not. Some are easily legible, and others are not. Each prompt book was its own unique iteration of a theatrical performance, but taken together these seven prompt books suggest an evolution of Macready's reading of the play, and the way he wished it to be executed on stage.

For Macready, Locrine was a necessary textual component for his productions of *King Lear.* Accordingly, Locrine exists in all but one of his prompt books. He is omitted from what is presumed to be a prompt book from Macready's 1834 production. Charles H. Shattuck dated this copy to Macready's 1834 production, while describing it as "a studybook or preparation copy."[5] A study book or preparation copy was the house copy or a stage manager's copy of the edited prompt book. These copies were meant to be master scripts, inclusive of all roles in the production. Locrine is absent from this copy, but that does not mean he was absent from the production. Gabriella Reuss discovered a comparable 1834 prompt book in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. She notes that Locrine appears in it, which could "lead us to consider the Victoria and Albert copy as the draft of the Bodleian one."[6] Furthermore, Locrine appears in playbills for the 1834 production. This confirms that Locrine was present in Macready's 1834 production of *King Lear,* making him a significant feature in all of Macready's productions of the play.

As his prompt books were prepared, Macready needed to revise his base texts in order to incorporate Locrine as part

of the play. Macready's next two prompt books are evidence of this, as Macready adapted the former Gentleman character to accommodate Locrine. These two prompt books come from Macready's 1838 production. Even though these two copies are dated to the same 1838 production, they differ dramatically in condition. While one is neat in presentation, with measured-out lines denoting line cuts and intact pages, the other has layers of handwriting crossed out and pages torn or missing throughout the book. Locrine, however, appears in both. In the first copy, housed by the Folger, he first appears in the handwritten dramatis personae list at the beginning of the prompt book, listed just after Oswald. In the base text's printed *dramatis personae,* contrarily, Locrine is absent, but the characters coming after Oswald are a Gentleman and a Captain. If these lists were placed side-by-side, Locrine's position in the handwritten list would correlate to the Gentleman character in the printed list. Because Locrine's lines come primarily from the former Gentleman character, we can infer that Macready intentionally transformed the Gentleman into Locrine for his performances.

Macready's modification of the Gentleman into Locrine was one of the consistent revisions across his prompt books. To complicate this, however, in the V&A Museum's corresponding 1838 prompt book copy, there is a possible likeness not between the Gentleman and Locrine, but rather between the Captain and Locrine. On this copy's corresponding handwritten *dramatis personae* page, there appears to be two layers of handwriting. The first layer seems to have "Captain" listed after Oswald—as is in the previous Folger copy—along with "Gentleman [to Cordelia]" listed after the Captain character. This Gentleman character was to be played by an actor referred to as Mr. Roberts, according to the handwritten actor list opposite the character list. The top layer of handwriting, however, changes this. The Gentleman character is crossed out entirely, and the Captain character is written over and replaced with "Locrine."[7] Connected to the handwritten "Locrine" is a line that crosses the page and points to Mr. Roberts. What this suggests is that Mr. Roberts was contracted initially to play the Gentleman character; somewhere in the casting process, however, this changed. The Captain character was dispensed with, and Locrine took the place of the Gentleman. Mr. Roberts then

became the actor to play Locrine. A playbill from the 1839 revived performance of the 1838 production confirms that Mr. Roberts was in the Covent Garden company and playing Locrine. This establishes the probability that Mr. Roberts also played Locrine in Macready's landmark 1838 production the previous year. Alluding to the larger relationship between the Gentleman and Locrine, these characters continued to be in conversation with one another as Macready prepared his prompt books for each of his productions of the play.

As previously noted and as will continue to be the case in this discussion, Macready's prompt books remain evidence for his commitment to Locrine's presence in his productions of *King Lear.* This commitment was so persistent that even transcriptions of his prompt books featured Locrine. In 1839, actor and stage manager John Moore transcribed Macready's 1838 prompt book into his own personal copy. A handwritten addition on the bottom of the printed *dramatis personae* notes Locrine.[8] Because this copy is not only missing pages but also has passages cut and pasted onto existing printed passages, it is difficult to trace if Locrine maintains the same dialogue and blocking from earlier or later Macready productions. Additionally, Moore transcribed another copy of Macready's 1838 prompt book. While this copy may have been transcribed earlier, it corresponds to a performance at least a decade succeeding the original production, as it includes a playbill from an 1850 production of the play at New York's Bowery Theatre.[9] This prompt book's base text included a printed *dramatis personae* of the cast of Macready's 1838 production. Interestingly, Locrine appears in this printed list of characters and is played by Mr. Roberts, confirming the casting assigned by the previous prompt books. As Moore's two copies show, Locrine's presence in Macready's productions of *King Lear* was understood to be an important addition, so much so that subsequent transcriptions of his prompt books also retained Locrine.

Even when Macready went on tour, he took Locrine with him. His touring prompt book copy was assembled sometime between 1843 and 1844. Akin to the previous two prompt books, this copy was also a transcription of Macready's 1838 prompt book. According to Shattuck, this copy was "Probably Macready's touring book after 1843."[10] Following Macready's resignation from

management at Drury Lane in 1843, he was not engaged at either patent theatre in London. Instead, he embarked on an American tour, followed by a Parisian engagement in 1844, and an English provincial tour in 1845.[11] This prompt book, in all likelihood, was his touring copy of the play. Locrine features in this copy, entering alongside Curan at the start of the play. Even throughout his theatrical travels, Macready kept Locrine.

Perhaps the most significant of Macready's prompt books is his copy from his final performance of *King Lear* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket during his farewell tour in 1851. As expected, Locrine does not appear in the printed list of characters that begins the prompt book.[12] Nevertheless, Locrine appears handwritten in just a couple pages later when the script cues the processional order for actors to enter in the first scene of the play. Locrine enters alongside Curan, which replicates the previous prompt book's stage directions. Because this was Macready's final performance of the play, this prompt book can be interpreted as the final edited version of his *King Lear.* This copy chronicles the culmination of an editorial process that took almost two decades, with Locrine being featured in every phase of its development.

Taken together, this group of seven prompt books help to illuminate Macready's theatrical antiquarianism. Even though Locrine was not present in one of Macready's 1834 prompt books, Locrine was present in that production. Locrine would remain in each of Macready's productions and prompt books from that point forward. As seen in the prompt book transcriptions completed by Moore, Locrine also found his place in any reproduction of Macready's prompt books. The implication of this is that no production of *King Lear* by Macready would be complete without Locrine's presence. Locrine was Macready's textual necessity, fueled by his theatrical antiquarianism.

It remains to ask how Locrine functions within Macready's *King Lear.* Admittedly, Locrine is a minor role in *King Lear.* His primary function is as a messenger, appearing briefly only to disappear once more. Studying Locrine's movement and dialogue from Macready's 1851 prompt book can illustrate the effect of his presence on stage. This prompt book was from his final performance of *King Lear,* and the penultimate performance of his career. Arguably, this means that this is a final copy of Macready's

King Lear—the culmination of decades of working on this play. Originally printed in 1811 from the George Steevens edition of the play, this edition was utilized in marking the edited script for performance. It should also be noted that any time Locrine has speech or blocking, his name is handwritten into the prompt book, visually replacing the Gentleman character's speech prefix in the printed text and adopting his lines. This means that Locrine was a deliberate choice throughout each of Macready's prompt books because he had to be actively written in every time he was to appear onstage.

From the start, this prompt book establishes Locrine as a courtier or messenger figure. In this prompt book, the first time we see Locrine within the play proper is in the opening procession of act one, scene one when Lear enters for the first time. Macready has called for Locrine to enter alongside Curan in a crowd of people, including at least six other lords, six ladies, and four officers, not to mention a herald carrying a crown, another officer with the map, and a physician with a sword.[13] What is significant here is that among at least nineteen onstage ensemble members, Locrine is named. To be given a name is to be given an identity versus being just another member in the crowd. Because Locrine was named and because he took the stage next to Curan, a previously-existing character, we can infer that he was not meant to be seen alongside the other minor, unnamed characters. Instead, we can equate him to Curan, who—in this particular prompt copy—is listed as a courtier. More than likely, this means that Locrine was also considered some kind of courtier.

Locrine's status as a courtier or messenger figure continues, and the blocking establishes his obedience to Lear. Following Lear's outburst in response to Cordelia's refusal of the love test, Lear says, "Call France;—Who stirs?" At this point, the prompt book's handwritten blocking calls for Locrine to "[go] off quickly."[14] From this, readers can infer that Locrine was the character going off to retrieve the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy. This is supported by the fact that Gloucester—the character typically charged with retrieving France in other scripts—does not exit from this scene. Locrine does, and while the printed text—not the annotated script edits—calls for Gloucester to re-enter with France and Burgundy later on, it is reasonable to believe that

Locrine is the one to escort them onstage. This bit of stage business would establish Locrine not only as a messenger, but a royal one, because of his display of obedience to Lear. This is furthered by his consistent presence onstage with Lear in the first half of the play. Following the stage business outlined by this prompt book, audiences don't see Lear enter any scene without Locrine until the storm scene. Because audiences consistently see Locrine with Lear, these scenes help authenticate Locrine as a royal servant whose loyalties lie with Lear.

Even when Lear is absent, Locrine remains a loyal servant to him. This is evident through his speech to other characters. While Locrine is a minor character and does not have many lines, those he does are reassigned to him from the former Gentleman character. The bulk of his dialogue comes in act three, scene one. This scene features just him and Kent—still disguised as Caius—onstage discussing the plight of Lear just before the storm scene. When Kent asks where the king is, Locrine replies, "Contending with the fretful element: / Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea, / Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main, / That things might change, or cease."[15] Locrine's speech here continues on for another eight lines describing Lear's turmoil. Once more, audiences see Locrine associated with Lear through his lengthy speech describing what Lear has experienced. Not only is the connection reinforced through Locrine's recollection of Lear's circumstances, but also through the fact that this means Locrine was there and witnessed Lear's actions. Once more, this ties Locrine to Lear. At the conclusion of this scene, Kent tasks Locrine with delivering his ring to Cordelia, and says that "she will tell you who your fellow is."[16] This confirms Locrine's status as a royal messenger associated with Lear, because Kent entrusted him to deliver a personal artifact to Lear's beloved daughter, which would, in turn, reveal Kent's identity to him.

Because of his loyalty to Lear, Locrine often demonstrates loyalty to Cordelia as well. The next scene in which Locrine appears is following Lear and Gloucester's reunion. This scene is often remembered as the scene in which Lear scatters flowers across the stage in his madness. Locrine enters towards the end, alongside the Physician, and attempts to approach Lear. This is unsuccessful, because Lear promptly leaves the stage with other attendants running after him. Nevertheless, Locrine speaks again

in this same scene. The disguised Edgar, who had been present to accompany his father, approaches him and inquires about the imminent battle:

> *Edgar:* Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?
> *Locrine:* Most sure, and vulgar: every one hears that
> Which can distinguish sound.
> Though that the queen on special cause is here,
> Her army is mov'd on.[17]

Once more, this prompt book has Locrine taking the former Gentleman's lines from the printed base text. This is Locrine's final moment of speech in Macready's production. Audiences can infer that, along with the Physician, Locrine was tasked to find Lear in this scene. Because, pages later, audiences see Lear accompanied by the Physician and Cordelia, it can be inferred that Cordelia was the one to task the Physician and Locrine to find Lear. This is reinforced by Locrine's recounting of Cordelia's purpose in Britain and the location of her army. It was already known that Locrine had seen Cordelia, following Kent's previous order to him. When Locrine returns in this scene to find Lear, he has returned as a messenger not for Lear, the British king, but for Cordelia, the French queen. Locrine's loyalty to Cordelia, then, is demonstrative of his loyalty to Lear.

This allegiance continues until the end of the play. The next time Locrine appears, audiences can infer that he had been used as a messenger between Cordelia and the Duke of Albany. In a scene that was completely cut from Macready's production, an unnamed messenger informs Cordelia that "The British powers are marching hitherward," to which she responds, "'Tis known before," because she already knew about the status of the British armies.[18] Although this passage was cut from the performance, it helps to inform Albany's lines later on when he shares with Edmund that "The king is come to his daughter," alluding to the recent reunion between Lear and Cordelia.[19] It would make sense that Locrine served as the intermediary for Cordelia and Albany to share this information, which explains why they knew about the other's actions. It also could explain why, at Locrine's next appearance, he stands with Albany. At the start of the final scene of the play, Albany enters with Locrine by his side. In Macready's prompt book, there is a

hand-drawn diagram on the page opposite of the text to coordinate the placement of each character. Goneril, Albany, and Regan stand in a line at the edge of the stage closest to the audience, but Locrine stands just diagonally behind Albany. Locrine's presence alongside Albany reinforces Albany's status as representative of and aligning with Lear and Cordelia. In this moment, Edmund had just delivered the news of Lear and Cordelia's capture. Albany is the highest-ranked character on the stage at that point, and he would have the power to release them. Because of this, Locrine likely would have remained with Albany until their release, at which point he could return to Lear.

Unfortunately, this is not the case, as Edmund had previously ordered the execution of Lear and Cordelia. Locrine is afforded one last display of loyalty to Lear. The final textual moment that the stage affords Locrine is in the closing scene of the play. Following the duel between Edmund and Edgar, Edmund reveals his plan to execute the king and his daughter. In a last attempt to save them, Macready calls for three knights, Locrine, Kent, and Edgar, to exit, in that order. The significance of this comes in Locrine's exit before Kent or Edgar, two characters with larger roles. Of the named characters in this stage direction, Locrine is the first to go and try to save Lear and Cordelia.[20] This action echoes an entire play of alignment to Lear. Because Locrine spent the duration of the play, and thus the duration of Macready's production, serving and representing Lear, audiences associate Locrine with the king. His final action, as the first named character to attempt to save them, can and should be read as a final gesture of loyalty—a servant doing anything to protect his master. This gesture fails and the group reenters just five lines later, preceding Lear with Cordelia's dead body. Locrine's reentrance is also of note, because instead of being the first of the named to reenter before Lear, he is the last. This completes Locrine's character arc: from the beginning of the play, Locrine is associated with Lear, and he ends it in the same way. Just before audiences see Lear enter carrying the dead Cordelia, they would see Locrine, presumably distraught at the loss. His final moment of stage business, then, is in reference to Lear's own grief. Locrine remains loyal to Lear until the end, so when Lear's heart breaks, Locrine's does too.

III. Locrine in Macready's Context

Macready's mindset of theatrical antiquarianism includes the use of sources from the English Renaissance to supplement his text and to create a Shakespearean relic or antiquity. As noted earlier, while there are many potential sources Macready could have employed in this pursuit, the most plausible is *The Lamentable Tragedie of Locrine,* a play first printed in 1595. Similar to *King Lear,* the *Locrine* play narrates the story of an ancient British king and illustrates how his choices lead to his downfall. Printed by Thomas Creede, the title page of the quarto credited the authorship of the play to "W.S."[21] Because of the possibility of Shakespearean authorship, *Locrine* was included in the printings of the Third and Fourth Folios. *Locrine* had therefore been connected to Shakespeare from its very inception and continued to be closely connected to Shakespeare for many years. The possibility of *Locrine*'s Shakespearean canonicity presumably influenced Macready's decision to name his character Locrine.

An avid reader with numerous books to his name, Macready likely accessed *Locrine* through his ownership of a copy of the play. In 1839, Charles Knight first published his *Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere,* which included eight volumes of plays. The final volume of this edition was referred to as the Doubtful Plays; however, in its table of contents, it refers to the majority of the plays within the edition as "ascribed to Shakspere."[22] This maintains the possibility of Shakespearean authorship. After Macready's death in 1873, his personal library was auctioned. In the catalogue inventory of Macready's library were the eight volumes of Knight's *Pictorial Edition,* including the volume of *Doubtful Plays.*[23] This confirms that, at the time of his death, Macready had in his possession at least one copy of the *Locrine* play and was potentially engaged in its ongoing authorial debate. This is further reinforced by Macready's personal acquaintance with Knight. As Macready's diaries show, Knight had personally given Macready a copy of *King Lear,* and they had had at least one conversation in which they mutually disapproved of Tate's adaptation of the play:

> Copy of Lear from C. Knight, who gives a long disquisition upon the bad taste of N. Tate and those who acted his version of King Lear, but cannot spare one word for the successful

> attempt to place Shakspeare in his own form again upon the stage.[24]

This serves as proof that, in addition to exchanging titles between them, Macready and Knight had literary discussions pertaining to Shakespeare and the textual histories of his plays. This helps to establish as plausible that they would have discussed *Locrine*'s canonicity as well. Consequently, Macready's inclusion of the Locrine character in his productions of Shakespeare's *King Lear* signals his apocryphal reading and likely engagement with *Locrine*'s possible canonicity.

Locrine's possible status as canonical would not only serve as a manifestation of Macready's theatrical antiquarianism, but would also benefit the actor-manager by utilizing Locrine as an artistic signature. The nineteenth century theatrical arena of London saw steep competition between actors, which often developed into fierce rivalries. While American actor Edwin Forrest is often referred to as Macready's utmost rival because of the disastrous Astor Place Riot, it is English actor Charles Kean that potentially influenced Macready's introduction of Locrine. Kean's rise as an actor was in opposition to Macready, and the two would battle against each other's successes throughout their careers. Kean's envy towards Macready turned into an attempt to copy Macready's work. Macready knew that Kean was trying to copy his prompt books, so through the inclusion of Locrine, Macready left an artistic signature in his prompt books of *King Lear.* Moreover, the introduction of Locrine onstage could have served efforts to fight against Kean's plagiarism.

Aside from competition and envy over Macready's success with *King Lear,* it is unclear why Kean was so insistent on obtaining a copy. It is worth noting, however, that Kean's father, renowned actor Edmund Kean, had been among the first to attempt to stage a restoration of *King Lear* in the early 1820's.[25] Despite his efforts, his production had failed, leaving Macready to earn the reputation of being the restorer to Shakespeare's *King Lear* a decade later. Whatever reasons Kean had, he attempted on several occasions to copy Macready's prompt books.

Their rivalry eventually made it clear to Macready that he needed to protect his artistic integrity. In 1841, he wrote in his diary: "[Wilmott] told me that Mr. C. Kean wanted him to try to make out my adaptation of *King Lear* for him—that Wilmott

told him he could not, and if he could he did not think he should be justified in doing it."[26] Just as Locrine was loyal to Lear, John Wilmott was loyal to Macready, protecting his artistic creation. Wilmott was Macready's chief prompter, a role that gave him the responsibility of marking the production prompt book and ensuring that actors knew their lines onstage. After Wilmott refused to share Macready's work, Kean's efforts to get a copy of Macready's *King Lear* continued. In 1845, while abroad on an American tour, Kean urged his friend Robert Clarke to write to John Pritt Harley, an actor at Drury Lane[27] at the same time as another prompter, George Cressal Ellis.[28] Clarke had written to Harley that Kean "requested me if I could to obtain a Prompt Book of Lear as acted by Macready."[29] It is unclear whether or not this attempt to copy Macready's prompt book was successful, but considering that Kean's efforts persisted after this, it seems he had yet to see his efforts come to fruition. This would not remain the case. Ellis, who was once assistant prompter to Wilmott, Macready's loyal prompter, had made copies of Macready's prompt books for his own personal collection. Before long, he "transcribed these for other actors," including copies made for "Samuel Phelps, Edwin Forrest, Charles Kean, and Hermann Vezin."[30] Kean would soon reach success. In an article discussing Macready's prompt books, Shattuck wrote:

> Among the 86 or more items of the Charles Kean prompt-book collection [at the Folger Shakespeare Library], at least seventeen prove to be transcriptions or transplantations of Macready materials—including prompt-books of ten plays, four books of scene designs, and three books of costume designs. They were prepared for Kean between 1845 and 1850 by George Cressall Ellis.[31]

Ellis was therefore responsible for a prolific scheme of plagiarized prompt books. Wilmott's loyalty to Macready in this instance had been fruitless; it was clear that Ellis's loyalty lay with Kean. This is only confirmed by Ellis's acceptance of a position in Kean's company at the Princess's Theatre in 1850. In turn, he was rewarded routinely with gifts, increases in salary, and numerous other favors from Kean.[32] Because of Kean's ceaseless pursuit, Macready's prompt books must be viewed as holding tremendous theatrical value.

Macready's antiquarian inclusion of Locrine offered protection, as it reinforced his artistic claim over his work. Because Locrine is not seen in other productions of *King Lear* at the time, he is entirely Macready's creation. Macready's use of Locrine in his prompt books acts as a maker's mark to identify clearly whose intellectual property the prompt books were. As early as 1834, Macready was considering publishing his prompt book of *King Lear.*[33] Adding a never-before-seen character into his productions served as insurance to protect his work in perpetuity. Should Macready have recognized his Locrine character in a production that was not his own, he would be able to discern that they had plagiarized his text, because Locrine functioned as the symbolic representative of his own intellectual property. It is also worth noting that one of Macready's closest friends, Thomas Noon Talfourd, was a member of Parliament at this time. In 1837, just a year before Macready's most prominent production of *King Lear,* Talfourd introduced the Copyright Act to Parliament. This act would build upon previously existing statutes in order to clarify and expand copyright protections for literary works.[34] Macready had created his own adaptation of *King Lear,* with Locrine as one of his editorial pieces of evidence, and at one point considered publishing it. This prompt book would have served as intellectual property, potentially protected under Talfourd's act. Macready was aware of Kean's attempts to copy his prompt books; he wrote about it in his diary. Hence, Macready needed something that could personalize his work. Macready, ever the theatrical antiquarian, incorporated Locrine, who served doubly as a manifestation of his theatrical antiquarianism and a strategy to protect his artistic integrity.

IV. Conclusion

To conclude, Locrine is a manifestation of Macready's theatrical antiquarianism, his impulse to reconnect his Victorian present with the Shakespearean past. Because of his mindset of theatrical antiquarianism, Macready used the text as a relic to exhibit his devotion to Shakespeare. Because it is possible that Macready understood *Locrine* to be the work of Shakespeare, he had a fitting source for creating a character. Locrine, in turn, became his artistic

signature that he used in order to protect his artistic integrity. Macready had utilized his own apocryphal reading, looking at what could have been a Shakespearean text, and incorporated it into his own work. His inclusion of the Locrine character serves as a manifestation of his theatrical antiquarianism because of his attempts to engage the *Locrine* play and pay homage to Shakespeare. The greater significance of Locrine is a revised understanding of Macready's status as having restored Shakespeare's *King Lear.* Locrine is one piece of textual evidence that Macready was not a restorer, but rather, an adapter who took theatrical liberty while editing his prompt books. In this sense, the playbills for his productions were right: Macready's *King Lear* was, indeed, from the text of Shakespeare—just adapted for the nineteenth century stage as a result of his own theatrical antiquarianism.

Notes

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